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**AUSMUS, Martin Russey, 1932-
SOME FORMS OF THE SEQUENCE NOVEL
IN BRITISH FICTION.**

**The University of Oklahoma, Ph.D., 1969
Language and Literature, general**

University Microfilms, Inc., Ann Arbor, Michigan

THE UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA

GRADUATE COLLEGE

SOME FORMS OF THE SEQUENCE NOVEL IN BRITISH FICTION

A DISSERTATION

SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE FACULTY

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the

degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

BY

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Norman, Oklahoma

1969

SOME FORMS OF THE SEQUENCE NOVEL IN BRITISH FICTION

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ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I wish to thank Mr. Robert C. Brown for his editorial assistance and Dr. Rudolph Bambas, Dr. Jack Kendall, Dr. Roy Male, and Dr. John Paul Pritchard for their services on my committee. I especially wish to thank Dr. A. J. Fritz for his guidance--both in and out of class--and for his patience as this paper slowly grew.

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SOME FORMS OF THE SEQUENCE NOVEL IN BRITISH FICTION

CHAPTER I

THE GENRE EXPLORED

Within the past thirty years, numerous critics have devoted much attention to the variety of genres in prose fiction. Among others, Northrop Frye discussed four forms of prose fiction in Anatomy of Criticism;¹ William Van O'Connor gathered a variety of critical essays in Forms of Modern Fiction;² Robert Scholes and Robert Kellogg traced the traditions and technical essentials of prose fiction in The Nature of Narrative;³ these and numerous other critics⁴ have attempted to provide critical distinctions applicable to prose fiction.

Yet relatively little attention has been paid to one of the major genres of the twentieth century--the sequence novel. Joseph Warren Beach, who coined the term, tentatively identified it in The Twentieth Century Novel.⁵ Elizabeth M. Kerr dealt with it in her Master's thesis, doctoral dissertation, and A Bibliography of the Sequence Novel, and James W. Lee, pursuing her line of investigation, extended Miss Kerr's studies somewhat further.⁶ But beyond these few works, critics have paid scant heed to the sequence novel as a genre.

One reason for this lack of attention perhaps lies in the

confusing plethora of terms available to critics. Thus, trilogy, "three-decker," tetralogy, cycle, chronicle, "roman fleuve," series, and saga are all used to designate novels in sequence. However, none of these terms implies more than quantity or chronology. For instance, these three quotations illustrate the inadequacy of the word trilogy as a critical term:

- (1) For the publication of this final and originally intended form of his famous trilogy, Mr. Waugh, before his death, eliminated all repetitions and corrected discrepancies and abrupt transitions from one book to the next.⁷
- (2) To browse through any book of the Ring trilogy is to get hooked once more into the whole legend.⁸
- (3) The entire trilogy is an event of great moment. For it heralds the arrival not just of a brilliant new dramatist but of one who may very well come to revolutionize the American theater.⁹

In each of these quotations, the word trilogy is used as though it were a critical distinction. In truth, it distinguishes nothing beyond quantity. It does not indicate that Waugh's Sword of Honor is three separate novels united by theme and character, whereas Tolkien's The Lord of the Rings is one continuous narrative split into three parts by the decision of the publisher. Nor does the term trilogy indicate the generic differences between the prose fictions of Waugh and Tolkien and the poetic dramas of Lowell.

Much the same confusion and inadequacy exist in the other designations often employed. As far as the term itself indicates, there are no differences between the Tietjens tetralogy of Ford Madox Ford¹⁰ and the Bolingbroke tetralogy of William Shakespeare.¹¹ Nor does the term chronicle show the differences in genre, or even in quantity, between

William Thackeray's poem "The Chronicle of the Drum"¹² and the thirteen novels in Henry Williamson's A Chronicle of Ancient Sunlight.¹³ Similarly, the term saga does not adequately differentiate between The Laxdoela Saga,¹⁴ an Icelandic poem, and The Forsyte Saga, a British prose fiction.¹⁵ The hopeless inadequacy of these terms to convey useful critical distinctions is indicated by the fact that The Forsyte Saga is a "trilogy" which Joseph Conrad called a "cycle"¹⁶ and which Galsworthy considered part of a "chronicle."¹⁷

In brief, then, the terms usually employed to designate novels in sequence fail to convey any distinct, useful meaning. Consequently, because no meaningful terminology is widely accepted and perhaps because the multiplicity of terms implies a multiplicity of forms, critics have paid little heed to the sequence novel as a genre.

Yet the sequence novel does possess several characteristics which identify it as a distinct genre of prose fiction. First, a sequence novel consists of three or more separately published novels. Second, a sequence novel is united by elements of setting, plot, and character. Third, a sequence novel explores a single major theme.

A variety of reasons may account for the separate publication of the individual parts. An author may publish one book and only later decide to continue with a sequence. Galsworthy, for instance, completed The Man of Property in 1906, but did not conceive of the idea for The Forsyte Saga until 1918;¹⁸ thereafter he published In Chancery (1920) and To Let (1921). In addition, an author may publish separate volumes because the scope of his major theme is too vast to be contained in only one volume. Thus, Zola's Rougon-Macquart sequence, the social history

of an entire French family, runs to twenty volumes; C. P. Snow's Strangers and Brothers sequence, which deals with problems of power and morality in the contemporary worlds of business, education, and science, now contains nine volumes. On the other hand, an author may find that separate publication better implements his theme. For example, Compton Mackenzie's sequence, The Four Winds of Love, consists of six separate novels,¹⁹ each of which examines a particular kind of love relationship. But perhaps one of the most compelling reasons for separate publication is financial. Most sequence novels require at least three years to write. In all probability, however, an author whose livelihood depends upon his writing could not afford to allow three or more years to pass without publishing a novel. For example, although Arnold Bennett conceived of the Clayhanger sequence as a unit,²⁰ he found it necessary to publish the three volumes separately, Clayhanger in 1910, Hilda Lessways in 1911, and These Twain in 1915. Interspersed among these three, he wrote and published three novels which he knew would be profitable: The Card (1911), The Regent (1913) and The Price of Love (1914). However, for whatever reasons an author may publish his volumes separately, each novel stands as an artistic entity in itself, but, when considered together, the separate volumes constitute a greater whole--the sequence novel.

Of course, not all novels published in several volumes are sequence novels. Most publishers in the nineteenth century found it convenient and profitable to issue novels in three or more separate volumes. As Amy Cruse reports the practice, "Novels were almost invariably published in three volumes at ten shillings and sixpence a volume."²¹ Obviously,

publishers, book-sellers, and lending libraries found this practice three times more profitable than handling the same novel in a single volume. Consequently, the majority of novels in the nineteenth century were first published, as books, in multiple volumes; as examples, works as widely diversified as Thackeray's Henry Esmond, Wilkie Collins' The Moonstone, and Rhoda Broughton's Cometh Up as a Flower were issued in three volumes, and George Eliot's Middlemarch even appeared in eight.²² After attacks upon the practice by George Moore and Edmund Gosse and after the success of the inexpensive one-volume editions of W. H. Smith, multiple-volume publication abated in the early 1880's. For a time, as Miss Cruse says, "New volumes by popular authors continued to be published in three-volume form."²³ But, as Stevenson points out, "By 1892, the 'three-decker' was extinct."²⁴

Multiple-volume publication of a single work still occasionally occurs, however. A modern example is J. R. R. Tolkien's The Lord of the Rings.²⁵ Recounting the adventures of Frodo Baggins and his friends as they try to destroy the Master Ring and save their world from domination by Sauron, the narrative is long (running to 1,191 pages, including maps and appendices); moreover, the plot falls into three natural divisions: the formation and then break-up of the Fellowship of the Ring, the various adventures of the Sundered Fellowship, and the destruction of Sauron and the Ring. Consequently, the whole novel was published in three separate volumes: The Fellowship of the Ring in June, 1954; The Two Towers in December, 1954; and The Return of the King in October, 1955. Nevertheless, despite their separate publication, the individual volumes are not separate novels. For instance, Gandalf's reappearance in The Two Towers

loses its significance and dramatic effect unless one has read of his plunge into the fiery abyss in The Fellowship of the Ring. Similarly, the whole desperate need to destroy the Master Ring motivates all of the action in the last two volumes; consequently, these volumes are incomprehensible without one's having read the chapter entitled "The Council of Elrond," in The Fellowship of the Ring, wherein this motivation is established. Thus, the individual volumes themselves do not stand as independent novels and therefore cannot be read and enjoyed as separate works, as, for instance, The Man of Property or Clayhanger may be.

In brief, in contrast to a single novel merely published in three or more volumes, a sequence novel itself contains three or more novels, each of which is a separate artistic entity, but which also form an artistic whole.

The second generic characteristic of the sequence novel is the means by which the separate volumes do indeed constitute a whole. Most sequence novels are related from volume to volume through the continuity of the three traditional elements of fiction--setting, plot, and character. Of these three, setting is the least cohesive, for the action in a sequence may move from geographic point to point. However, an author may choose to locate the action of his entire sequence in only one area. He may focus upon a large multitude of inhabitants, in order to reveal the temper of life in the selected locale; or he may focus upon a single character or small group, in order to reveal significant relationships between individuals and their environment. Thus, Trollope develops a six-novel sequence in his imaginary shire of Barchin, and Lawrence Durrell

concentrates the action of The Alexandria Quartet in that Egyptian city.

However, the use of a consistent setting is not in itself enough to constitute a sequence novel. Thomas Hardy, for instance, set a number of his novels in his imaginary region of Wessex; yet other than setting, little relationship exists among the separate novels. Similarly, Bennett wrote eleven novels set in the British industrial area which he called the Five Towns; of these, however, only the three in the Clayhanger sequence are related to each other. Consequently, even though published separately and set in each author's selected locale, neither Hardy's Wessex novels nor Bennett's eleven Five Towns novels constitute a true sequence novel.

Plot is a more important cohesive element than setting.²⁶ Although each separate volume will have its own plot structure, the sequence as a whole will be tied together by an inclusive structure. Because all narration progresses through time, the inclusive structure of many sequence novels will be chronologically sequential, with each separate volume presenting a portion of the total time and story contained in the whole work. For instance, Ford's Parade's End depicts the end of an epoch in British society through the experiences of Christopher Tietjens in trench warfare and marital misfortunes. The whole sequence covers a span of approximately eight years. Specifically, Some Do Not... covers five years, from some of Christopher's experiences preceding the war to his second tour on the French front in the third year of the war, from 1912 to 1917. No More Parades details a few days during Christopher's second tour of duty, in 1917. A Man Could Stand Up narrates Christopher's experiences a few months before the end of the war and the events of Armistice

Day, in 1918. The Last Post presents the events of one day in 1919, approximately a year after the end of the war. Thus, despite Ford's use of mnemonic regressions, loopings, and other distortions of chronology within each volume, the sequence as a whole proceeds chronologically. The events of each volume provide a foundation upon which the subsequent novel builds. Thus, the sequence gains a continuity through plot.

However, some sequence novels, particularly those which employ multiple first-person or mixed points of view, are not presented in a chronological progression. Nevertheless, the plots of the individual novels are usually linked by a cause-effect pattern. For example, even Lawrence Durrell's complexly constructed and sometimes baffling Alexandria Quartet reveals such patterns—though sometimes in reverse. For example, Justine,²⁷ the first volume, poses numerous puzzles such as the nature of Justine's love for Darley and the reason for Capodistria's death. However, Balthazar,²⁸ the second volume, not only covers substantially the same time span and events as Justine, but also supplies insight into the causes of these events. Thus, whatever the mode of narration—whether strictly chronological or not—various links between the plots of the separate novels tie the entire sequence together to form an inclusive structure.

The inclusive narrative of a sequence novel necessarily manifests an important characteristic of plot: it records a completed process of change. That is, from an original stasis presented in the first volume, the entire sequence traces a thematically significant change in situation, in a character's moral nature, in an individual's thought, in a familial or social milieu, or perhaps in a combination of these elements. For

instance, Ford's Parade's End shows not only the changes in Christopher's situation and thought, but also those in British society. Similarly, Durrell's Alexandria Quartet traces a change in the moral character and thought of Darley, through his growing understanding of events and his deepening artistic sensibilities. Thus, even though divided into separate volumes, the inclusive narrative of a sequence novel as a whole characteristically shows some thematically significant, completed change.

Character is as strongly a cohesive element as plot. If plot can provide continuity in a sequence novel, it logically follows that the actors in the plot who appear consistently in the separate volumes also provide links. Thus, in Parade's End, Christopher, Sylvia, and Valentine Wannop play major roles in all four volumes; similarly, Mark Tietjens, General Campion, and Macmaster also appear consistently. These characters thereby provide continuity in the fictional "world" of the entire sequence. However, many sequences possess continuity because they focus upon the life of a single individual. Such a novel is T. H. White's The Once and Future King,²⁹ a retelling of the Arthurian legend: The Sword in the Stone recounts Arthur's youth, his tutelage by Merlin, and his ascension to the throne; The Queen of Air and Darkness relates the young king's struggles to rule and his troubles with the Clan of Orkney; The Ill-Made Knight narrates Arthur's problems with Lancelot and Guinevere; The Candle in the Wind tells of the break-up of the Round Table and the death of Arthur; yet the four volumes, by focussing upon the life of King Arthur, have the effective continuity of a single novel. Similarly, A Chronicle of Ancient Sunlight, a thirteen-volume bildungsroman, gains continuity by narrating the birth, youth, and maturation of Phillip Maddison, the central figure.

Each volume is a separate novel, but all focus upon the life of one person and thereby achieve continuity.

Some sequence novels, however, do not focus upon a single individual. Novels of this type, particularly those which employ multiple first-person narrators, often shift the focus of attention from one character to another as the sequence moves from one volume to the following. Thus, one character may have the principal role in the first volume but play a subordinate role in subsequent volumes. Such is the case of Joyce Cary's "Political Trilogy":³⁰ in Prisoner of Grace, Nina Woodville recounts her marriages to Chester Nimmo and Jim Latter; in Except the Lord, Nimmo tells of his youth, his family, and his early failures; in Not Honour More Jim narrates his part in the General Strike and the failure of his marriage to Nina. In each novel, all three characters appear, but from various view points and with various emphases: in the second volume, Nimmo makes only passing reference to Nina and Jim; in the first and last volumes, all three have important parts, but are seen from different perspectives. Thus, the sequence as a whole gains cohesiveness through continuity of character.

However, not all works in which the same character or group of characters appears in separate volumes are sequence novels. Numerous series exist which, in volume after volume, recount the adventures of an individual or group of people. Edgar Rice Burrough's Tarzan, Edgar Stratemeyer's Rover Boys and Tom Swift, and Rex Stout's Nero Wolfe are all principal characters in long series; even Ian Fleming's James Bond is the tough hero of an enormously popular current series. Yet these works are not sequence novels: they are episodic in nature, moving from

adventure to adventure, and beyond the central character, they have little or no relationship linking the volumes. In a sequence novel, the action of later volumes logically follows from that in the preceding volumes. Thus, King Arthur's troubles and death in The Candle in the Wind stem from conflicts with the Orkney Clan, established in The Queen of Air and Darkness, and from the romance of Lancelot and Guinevere, depicted in The Ill-Made Knight; therefore, the final volume is the culmination of all that has gone before. But a series usually has no sequential development and makes no attempt to build an inclusive structure.

Nor does the re-appearance of a large group of people in separate works necessarily constitute a sequence novel. Some authors have created a fictional "world" of places and people and have used the same characters, with varying degrees of importance, in numerous separate works. Perhaps the supreme example is William Faulkner's Yoknapatawpha County. Faulkner created a region whose inhabitants repeatedly appear in sixteen volumes of novels and short stories. Quentin Compson, for instance, is both a narrator in Absalom! Absalom! and a principal character in The Sound and the Fury; members of the McCaslin family appear in Go Down, Moses, The Unvanquished, and Intruder in the Dust; members of the Snopes family also appear frequently, such as, Ab in "Barn Burning" and The Hamlet, Byron in Sartoris and The Town, Clarence in Sanctuary and The Mansion. Yet in no sense could all of these Yoknapatawpha County works be considered a sequence novel. Only in three works--The Hamlet (1940), The Town (1957), and The Mansion (1957)—did Faulkner create a sequence novel: these three novels focus upon the Snopes and their rise to power and wealth. Thus, although the repeated appearance of characters in Faulkner's Yoknapatawpha

County works gives a sense of solidity and realism to his fictional "world," the works as a whole lack the continuity of character and the inclusive structure that characterize a true sequence novel.

Besides the unity gained through continuity of setting, plot, and character, a sequence novel possesses a third major generic trait: it develops a single dominant theme. Though each volume within the sequence may have its separate theme and though minor themes may appear, all of the volumes, when considered together, must manifest a greater ultimate theme.

In literature, theme is the central or dominating idea of a work. It is an abstract conception embodied in the particulars of setting, action, and character. It is the artist's belief or his conception of "a general law of life"³¹ made concrete in his art. Richard M. Eastman, for example, indicates the relationship between idea and art in this way:

A novelist . . . is not a preacher nor a systematic philosopher. He cannot develop his life wisdom primarily through direct exhortation or reasoned essays. His first business is to show the lives of imaginary people, through which his wisdom must appear dramatically, in the vital terms by which his characters discover or lose their own worth.³²

In her original study of the genre, Elizabeth M. Kerr identifies three major subjects with which sequence novels usually deal: a life history, such as Proust's Remembrance of Things Past; a family history, such as Zola's Rougon-Macquart sequence; or a social panorama, such as Trollope's Barsetshire novels. However, as a common characteristic in various sequential treatments of these three subjects, Miss Kerr finds that theme serves as one of the unifying elements. For instance, in reference to Balzac's La Comédie Humaine, she remarks,

Dealing with an enormous mass of extremely diversified material, he [Balzac] had the wisdom to choose a strong central theme, and, with this constantly uppermost in mind, to create the separate works like links in a great chain. . . . His aim was to make one out of many, and many out of one.³³

However, a sequence novel is not merely a number of volumes which concern the same subject or develop the same theme. A number of works may focus upon the same subject or deal with related themes but lack other unifying elements. They are what Louis Bromfield, in the "Foreword" of Possession, calls panel-novels:

Possession is in no sense a sequel to The Green Bay Tree. The second novel does not carry the fortunes of the characters which appeared in the first; it reveals speaking chronologically, little beyond the final pages of the earlier book. . . . The two are what might be called panel novels in a screen which, when complete, will consist of at least a half-dozen panels, all interrelated and each giving a certain phase of the ungainly, swarming, glittering spectacle of American life.³⁴

Bromfield wrote only four instead of six novels in his "screen"; in the "Foreword" to the final novel, he says,

A Good Woman is the last of a series of four novels dealing from various angles with a strongly marked phase of American life. The book was planned, without being in any sense a sequel, as part of a picture. . . . Taken together the four might be considered as a single novel with the all-encompassing title of Escape.³⁵

Thus, the panel-novel is a series of novels primarily tied together only by theme.

Galsworthy's work best illustrates the differences between a panel novel and a true sequence novel, for Galsworthy wrote both. His panel series is a satiric survey of a stratum of English society. Galsworthy speaks of his panel in a letter he wrote in 1911:

The leading spiritual limitation respectively of the four sections of upper-class society has been the satiric idea . . . behind The Man of Property, The Country House, Fraternity, and The Patrician.

I started the job with The Island Pharisees, where it's in a measure outlined, and have now got through!³⁶

Serving as the seminal work of the series, The Island Pharisees (1904) exposes the self-righteous hypocrisy of the English upper-class. The Man of Property (1906) attacks the vicious materialism of wealthy businessmen; The Country House (1907) ridicules the pompous self-importance of the squirearchy; Fraternity (1908) mocks the idealistic ineptness of the intellectuals of London; The Patrician (1911) dissects the class consciousness of the aristocracy. Thus, the five novels focus upon a broad subject ("upper-class society") and pursue various facets of a single theme ("spiritual limitation"). But they are in no other way related: no elements of plot or specific setting link them, and no characters reappear in the separate novels. The only unity they possess is that of similar themes. Thus, they constitute a panel, not a sequence novel.

By contrast, The Forsyte Saga is clearly a sequence novel. Twelve years after publishing The Man of Property, Galsworthy decided to continue the story of the Forsyte family. Consequently, in two subsequent novels, Galsworthy follows the same principal characters, Soames, Irene, and young Jolyon; uses the same principal setting, the house on Robin Hill; and develops the conflicts generated by Soames' and Irene's disastrous marriage in The Man of Property. More important, he explores the same theme, the "spiritual limitation" imposed by an obsessive "sense of property." In these ways, a sequence novel, such as The Forsyte Saga, possesses a unity derived from the development of an ultimate theme.

The sequence novel as a genre of prose fiction is, therefore,

distinguished by three principal characteristics: it consists of closely related but separately published novels; it gains unity through links of setting, plot, and character; yet most importantly, it explores and ultimately affirms a single major theme.

A problem common to all sequence novelists is that of maintaining this inherent continuity between the separate volumes. Because separate publication means that a year or more may lapse between the reader's obtaining each volume, each must therefore stand alone as an individual reading experience, yet must also contribute to the whole of the sequence. Evelyn Waugh acknowledges this problem in the "Preface" to his Sword of Honor:

The three books, of which this is a recension, appeared throughout a decade with the less than candid assurance (dictated by commercial interest) that each was to be regarded as a separate, independent work. It was unreasonable to expect the reader to keep in mind the various characters; still more to follow a continuous, continued plot.³⁷

Waugh's solution was to excise "repetition and discrepancies," remove "tedious" passages, and fuse the three volumes into a long, single-volume work. This solution, however, is not practicable for most sequences, because of their length and complexity. The problem for most authors, then, is to include in each succeeding volume after the first as much of the preceding volumes as is necessary to make it intelligible to a reader. In commenting on sequence continuity, Miss Kerr has remarked,

The problem of making each volume of a sequence complete and independent in content is a practical one of reminding or informing the reader of the past life of the main character. Some system of overlapping or linking is necessary, peculiar to sequence form and constituting what may be called sequence technique as distinguished from technique applicable to ordinary novels.³⁸

Such sequence continuity may be maintained by either external or internal links. External links are not integral parts of the narrative but extraneous reminders directly from the author. For example, prefaces to the separate volumes, such as those in the Carfax edition of Cary's two sequences, may reveal the relations between the volumes and provide the author an opportunity to discuss his theme and techniques; such prefaces, however, do not usually provide the reader with knowledge of previous actions. In addition, footnotes to the text may refer the reader to pertinent passages in preceding volumes, or a brief summary, reminding the reader of what has thus far occurred in the sequence may also sometimes provide the necessary linkage. In general, however, external links are not much employed by modern novelists.

Much more frequently employed are internal links, elements within the narrative itself. Some links are merely suggestions or allusions, without expository value, that recall the previous volumes to the reader. Thus, an author may begin each volume with parallel descriptions of the same or a similar scene, or he may describe the same scene with which the preceding volume concluded. Somewhat more directly, an author may continue a subsequent volume without significant break from the preceding one. For instance, four pages from the conclusion of The Memoirs of A Fox-Hunting Man, Sassoon's George Sherston says,

Spring arrived late that year.

.
As for me, I had more or less made up my mind to die; the idea made things easier. In the circumstances there didn't seem to be anything else to be done.³⁹

Then, in the first lines of the subsequent volume, Memoirs of an Infantry Officer, he repeats these passages:

I have said that spring arrived late in 1916, and that up in the trenches opposite Mametz it seemed as though winter would last forever. I also stated that as for me, I had more or less made up my mind to die because in the circumstances there didn't seem anything else to be done. Well, we came back to Morlancourt after Easter. . . .⁴⁰

Such a continuation is facilitated by the consistent point of view throughout the sequence. However, even if the author shifts narrators, he may allude to the preceding volume. For example, To Be A Pilgrim, the second volume of Cary's "Artist Trilogy," begins thusly:

Last month I suffered a great misfortune in the loss of my housekeeper, Mrs. Jimson. She was sent to prison for pawning some old trinkets which I had long forgotten. My relatives discovered the fact and called in the police before I could intervene. They knew that I fully intended, as I still intend, to marry Sara Jimson.⁴¹

Such a beginning both provides an intriguing introduction for To Be A Pilgrim and also reminds the reader of the characters and events in Herself Surprised.

Other kinds of internal links have a more directly expository value: their purpose is not merely to remind the reader of anterior events but also to provide adequate information about them. One method is direct authorial exposition, such as that in the second chapter of Trollope's Barchester Towers or the first four pages of Galsworthy's In Chancery. Another device is the use of documents such as letters or diaries; such a device sometimes may both present necessary exposition about past volumes and motivate action in the present one, as does young Jolyon's letter of Jon in Galsworthy's To Let. Still another method of presenting expository links is through a motivated dialogue similar to the technique in drama: characters talk among themselves and thus reveal necessary information to the reader. Again, such dialogue may provide both motivation for

present events as well as exposition of past action. Yet perhaps the most common technique is that whereby exposition is filtered through the consciousness of the characters: the author presents the character's thought processes and, hence, in Beach's terms, "The scene of action [is] transferred to the character's mind."⁴² Thus, the character's memory becomes the vehicle for the necessary expository facts. For instance, Ford Madox Ford's Some Do Not... ends with an angry parting between Christopher and Sylvia Tietjens.⁴³ The subsequent volume, No More Parades, opens with Christopher in the trenches. Interspersed among his military activities and conversations are memories of Sylvia and their parting:

Sylvia Tietjens had been excruciatingly unfaithful, in the most painful manner. He could not be certain that the child he adored was his own.... That was not unusual with extraordinarily beautiful--and cruel!--women. But she had been haughtily circumspect.

Nevertheless, three months ago, they had parted.... Or he thought they had parted. Almost complete blankness had descended upon his home life.

.
He had imagined himself parted from his wife. He had not heard from his wife since her four-in-the-morning departure from their flat, months and eternities ago, with the dawn just showing up the chimney-pots of the Georgian roof-trees opposite. In the complete stillness of dawn he had heard her voice say very clearly "Paddington" to the chauffeur, and then all the sparrows in the inn waking up in chorus.... Suddenly and appallingly it came into his head that it might not have been his wife's voice that had said "Paddington," but her maid's....⁴⁴

Thus, Christopher's memories provide the reader of No More Parades with an exposition of Sylvia's character, the bases of conflict between the couple, and the necessary knowledge of some of the anterior events. This method of internal linkage has several advantages over other methods: the character's memories can more successfully convey the emotions associated

with past events; the memories augment the sense of continuity by making the past a more integral part of the present; and memories, while serving as exposition, can also provide cogent motivation for current action. The great versatility of this method, then, undoubtedly accounts for its being the most commonly used of all techniques for expository linking.

Some sequence novelists also use anticipatory devices designed to lead the reader from one volume to the subsequent one. A few authors use explicit external statements about succeeding volumes; Bennett, for instance, appends this note to the last page of Hilda Lessways: "The later history of Hilda Lessways and Edwin Clayhanger will form the theme of another novel."⁴⁵ Lawrence Durrell uses a similar but more subtle form of links in the Alexandria Quartet; at the end of each volume (except Mountolive), he appends "Consequential Data" or "Workpoints"; these are brief scenic or character sketches which not only recall the action just past, like the plink of drops after a violent rainstorm, but also presage the content of the subsequent volume. For example, in the "Consequential Data" at the end of Justine, Durrell places this passage:

Landscape-tones: steep skylines, low cloud, pearl ground with shadows in oyster and violet. Accidie. On the lake gun-metal and lemon. Summer: sand lilac sky. Autumn: swollen bruise greys. Winter: freezing white sand, clear skies, magnificent starscapes.⁴⁶

Then, in the first lines of the subsequent volume, Balthazar, he repeats these images:

Landscape-tones: brown to bronze, steep skyline, low cloud, pearl ground with shadowed oyster and violet reflections. The lion-dust of desert: prophets' tombs turned to zinc and copper at sunset on the ancient lake. Its huge sand-faults like watermarks from the air; green and citron giving

to gunmetal, to a single plum-dark sail, moist, palpitant:
sticky-winged nymph. . . . Mareotis under a sky of hot
lilac.

summer: buff sand, hot marble sky.
autumn: swollen bruise-greys.
winter: freezing snow, cool sand.
clear sky panels, glittering with mica.
washed delta greens.
magnificent starscapes.⁴⁷

Similarly, a paragraph in the "Workpoints" at the end of Balthazar fore-
shadows some of the action of Mountolive:

Narouz always held in the back of his consciousness the
memory of the moonlit room; his father sitting in the
wheelchair at the mirror, repeating the one phrase over
and over again as he pointed the pistol at the looking-
glass.⁴⁸

The paragraph anticipates an important scene which runs for four pages
and includes these lines:

. . . he saw the invalid confronting himself in a moonlit
image, slowly raising the pistol to point it, not at his
temple, but at the mirror, as he repeated in a hoarse croaking
voice, "And now if she should fall in love, you know what
you must do."⁴⁹

More commonly, however, authors use an internal anticipatory
device, including in the narrative remarks such as "at that time" or "he
was later to learn." For instance, near the conclusion of Williamson's
The Phoenix Generation, this sentence appears: "In the dark days that
lay ahead he was to remember that last peace-time party at Captain
Runnymede's. . . ."⁵⁰ Purely an anticipatory device, the sentence
foreshadows the substance of the following volume, Phillip Maddison's
bitter experiences during World War II. However, the anticipatory device
may be simply an abrupt termination such as that Sassoon uses at the end
of Memoirs of an Infantry Officer: "Next morning I went to Edinburgh. . . .

And with my arrival at Slatford War Hospital this volume can conveniently be concluded.⁵¹ Or the device may be a conclusion at a pregnant moment. Thus, The Phoenix Generation ends as the Germans invade Poland and Phillip Maddison returns to his English farm to prepare for air-raids and invasion. The reader, therefore, can logically anticipate the narrative burden of the subsequent volume, A Solitary War, Phillip's involvement in World War II.

Needless to say, many novelists use various combinations of these expository and anticipatory links, both internal and external, to augment the inherent continuity of setting, plot, character, and theme in their sequences.

Whatever linking devices an author may use, or, indeed, whether he uses many or none, his sequence will be one of the two general types found within the generic pale of the sequence novel—either open-end or closed-end. The principal and obvious difference between these two types is the nature of their structure or form. One may tentatively stipulate two definitions. First, an open-end structure is one in which the sequence novel as a whole does not complete a movement from beginning to middle to end; it moves as though toward no destination in particular; it completes no process of change. Though the separate volumes themselves may and, indeed, should contain a well-defined structure, the whole sequence lacks the formal completeness that a resolution of plot and an ultimate revelation of theme provide. Thus, the structure is "open" in the sense that a continuation of the story is possible, that a culmination of the theme is necessary, or that a process of change needs completion.

In contrast, a closed-end sequence novel progresses logically (though not necessarily chronologically) from beginning to middle to end; it marches as though toward a pre-determined goal; it embodies a completed process of change. Its unity is that which Schlegel (though speaking of drama) describes: it "will consist in the direction towards a single end; and to its completeness belongs all that lies between the first determination and the execution of the deed."⁵² Thus, though the individual volumes contain their own structures, each division also constitutes part of the progress of the inclusive structure toward resolution of plot or ultimate revelation of theme. Thus, the structure is "closed" in the sense that continuation is either impossible, artistically inadvisable, or thematically unnecessary.⁵³

Several qualifications, however, must clarify these terms. First, some sequence novels are written with no pre-determined structure in the author's mind. Trollope, for instance, wrote The Warden, the first of the Barsetshire sequence, under the impetus of anger at corruption in the church and sensationalism in journalism; he says,

I had been struck by two opposite evils,--or what seemed to me to be evils,--and with an absence of all art-judgment in such matters, I thought that I might be able to expose them, or rather to describe them, both in one and the same tale.⁵⁴

But, as Lionel Stevenson reports,

The characters that he had invented, and the cathedral town that he had visualized in such detail, refused to fade from his mind, and so he wrote a longer novel, Barchester Towers, with the same setting.⁵⁵

Thus, with so little plan in mind that his brother supplied the plot for Doctor Thorne, the third in the sequence,⁵⁶ Trollope moved from novel to novel. Actually, he illustrates his own lack of pre-conception of

the sequence when he relates how he decided to "kill off" Mrs. Proudie in The Last Chronicle of Barset:

It was with many misgivings that I killed off my old friend Mrs. Proudie. I could not, I think, have done it, but for a resolution taken and declared under circumstances of great momentary pressure.

It was thus that it came about. I was sitting one morning at work upon the novel at the end of the long drawing-room of the Athenaeum Club. . . . As I was there, two clergymen, each with a magazine in his hand, seated themselves, one on one side of the fire and one on the other, close to me. They soon began to abuse what they were reading, and each was reading some part of some novel of mine. The gravamen of their complaint lay in the fact that I reintroduced the same characters so often! "Here," said one, "is that archdeacon whom we have had in every novel he has ever written." "And here," said the other, "is the old duke whom he has talked about till everybody is tired of him. If I could not invent new characters, I would not write novels at all. Then one of them fell foul of Mrs. Proudie. It was impossible for me not to hear their words, and almost impossible to hear them and be quiet. I got up, and standing between them, I acknowledged myself to be the culprit. "As to Mrs. Proudie," I said, "I will go home and kill her before the week is over." And so I did.⁵⁷

With such spontaneous plot-planning, a sequence could hardly possess a pre-conceived inclusive structure. Eventually, with no goal in mind, Trollope apparently lost interest in his Barsetshire sequence, for he abruptly terminated it in The Last Chronicle of Barset and moved on to work he found more interesting, his "Parliamentary" sequence.⁵⁸ Sequences such as Trollope's gain unity more through continuity of setting, character, and thematic focus than through "direction toward a single end." Consequently, since any resolution or ultimate revelation of theme is missing, or at best ineffectively accidental, such sequences are usually left "open" in structure.

As a second clarification, some sequences possess only the structure which life itself gives. These sequences are invariably long and

autobiographical. Yet to the extent that life is structured in a birth-maturation-death sequence, they, too, possess a structure. Such a sequence is Williamson's A Chronicle of Ancient Sunlight. Closely autobiographical, the thirteen-volume sequence has thus far carried its central figure, Phillip Maddison, from his birth, early schooling and first romances, adolescence and later romances, experiences in World War I,⁵⁹ readjustments to civilian life, jobs, engagements, marriage, the death of his first wife, his remarriage, failure as a farmer, and growing success as a writer. In the thirteenth volume, A Solitary War (1966), Phillip endures the bitter hardships of World War II. Such sequences do sometimes gain a spurious structure from historical events. Thus, the fictional Phillip Maddison serves during The Great War, just as the real Henry Williamson did. But that such a structure is indeed spurious is revealed through Williamson's handling of these events in the sequence. For instance, as J. Middleton Murry reports it:

How Dear is Life, fourth in the series,⁷ covers the brief months between Phillip's leaving school in the autumn of 1913 and his first shattering experiences as a raw member of the London Highlanders round about Ypres in the winter of 1914. It is all of the highest quality; but perhaps it suffers a little, if considered as a separate novel, because the narrative up to the outbreak of the war would more naturally have formed part of Young Phillip Maddison. But that is the fault of the exigencies of publishing, not the author's.⁶⁰

Sequences such as Williamson's apparently possess only that structure which life gives and move only in the direction in which life moves--toward death. Consequently, in that they too often only record the life-experience rather than extract significance from it, such sequences usually lack an inclusive structure of plot or theme. Thus, they of necessity tend to be "open."

A third clarification is that some extant sequences are fragments of projected structures. In some instances, the author may die before finishing his sequence. Wyndham Lewis, for instance, planned a four-novel sequence to be titled The Human Age; he published The Childermass in 1928, but suspended the project until 1955, when he published two more volumes, Monstre Gai and Malign Fiesta. However, in 1957, before he could complete The Trial of Man, the fourth in the sequence, he died. Another such instance, but of greater magnitude, is Balzac's The Human Comedy. Balzac's conception of The Human Comedy was "one of the author's boldest intentions, that of giving life and movement to a whole fictitious world. . . ." ⁶¹ To this end, Balzac wrote ninety-two novels and stories, which he arranged under three main divisions ("Etudes de Moeurs," "Etudes philosophiques," and "Etudes analytiques") and six sub-divisions ("Scènes de la vie privée," "Scènes de la vie de province," "Scènes de la vie parisienne," "Scènes de la vie politique," "Scènes de la militaire," and "Scènes de la vie de campagne"). ⁶² As the titles of the divisions and sub-divisions indicate, The Human Comedy is linked together by theme, setting, and character. ⁶³ But, as Arthur Canfield states,

From the first Balzac thought of his works as parts of a whole rather than as independent and self-sufficient units. More than once he defended himself against his critics by telling them that they must wait till they had seen some other parts not yet built before judging of the edifice he was constructing. ⁶⁴

Balzac indeed built a mighty edifice, but before he could lay the last stone, he, too, died. Consequently, the structure of The Human Comedy remains unfinished. In other cases of fragments, however, an author may simply grow tired of his sequence or become engrossed in something else,

and abandon it. While writing Hilda Lessways, Arnold Bennett, for example, began a series which Lionell Stevenson calls "the comic anti-thesis" to Clayhanger.⁶⁵ In The Card (1911), Denry Machin, by lying, cheating, and practising "genteel blackmail," becomes the youngest mayor of his town; in The Regent (1913), Denry continues his outrageous career in London and becomes a wealthy theatrical producer. Both because Bennett was amused by the audacious Denry and because the series was profitable, he planned still a third volume, in which he apparently intended for Denry to connive his way into the House of Commons. However, before Bennett even began this volume, World War I erupted, and he turned his attention to relief committees, patriotic pamphlets, and completion of his serious work, the Clayhanger sequence.⁶⁶ After the war, he never returned to the Denry Machin sequence. Hence, it remains unfinished and "open." In other cases, an author may not have yet completed his sequence, even though he is working toward a "closed" end. For example, Anthony Powell intends his Music of Time sequence to contain twelve novels, grouped into four segments or "movements" of three novels each.⁶⁷ He therefore has a pre-conceived plan and is obviously working toward a resolution and an ultimate revelation of theme. However, he has thus far completed only eight of the anticipated twelve novels. In each of these instances, what actually exists for the reader today is an incomplete sequence. Whether or not the author followed a pre-conceived plan is now irrelevant; he has not finished. What actually exists is an open structure.

A fourth clarification is that while some sequences contain a "closed" structure, they are so inordinately long that progress toward

a culmination of plot and an ultimate revelation of theme is difficult to recognize. Though Aristotle was speaking of drama, his remarks on the length of a work are pertinent to the sequence novel:

An animal, or indeed anything which has parts, must, to be beautiful, not only have these parts in the right order but must also be of a definite size. Beauty is a matter of size and order. An extraordinarily small animal would not be beautiful, nor an extraordinarily large one. Our view of the first is confused because it occupies only an all but imperceptible time, while we cannot view the second all at once, so that the unity of the whole would escape us if, for example, it were a thousand miles long. It follows that, as bodies and animals must have a size that can easily be perceived as a whole, so plots must have a length which can easily be remembered.⁶⁸

E. M. Forster also touches upon the same pertinent point:

The intelligent novel-reader, unlike the inquisitive one who just runs his eye over a new fact, mentally picks it up. He sees it from two points of view: isolated, and related to the other facts that he has read on previous pages. Probably he does not understand it, but he does not expect to do so yet awhile. The facts in a highly organized novel . . . are often of the nature of cross-correspondences and the ideal spectator cannot expect to view them properly until he is sitting upon a hill at the end.⁶⁹

But upon what Mt. Everest must one sit in order to view the "cross-correspondences" in the solid mass of interwoven stream-of-consciousness thoughts, sensory impressions, and memories in the twelve volumes of Dorothy Richardson's Pilgrimage?⁷⁰ Forster's further remarks help explain this difficulty:

Memory and intelligence are closely connected, for unless we remember we cannot understand. . . . The plot-maker expects us to remember, we expect him to leave no loose ends. . . . And over it [the novel], as it unfolds, will hover the memory of the reader (that dull glow of the mind of which intelligence is the bright advancing edge) and will constantly rearrange and reconsider, seeing new clues, new chains of cause and effect, and the final sense . . . will not be of clues or chains, but of something aesthetically compact, something which might have been shown by the novelist straight away, only if he had shown it straight away it would never have become beautiful.⁷¹

In other words, proportion is a significant consideration in the structure of a sequence novel. If the "chains of cause and effect" in a novel of average length impose burdens upon a reader's memory, what enormous loads must the reader of a long sequence novel carry? But, "unless we remember we cannot understand." Ironically, one of the most severe strains upon a reader's memory is a work based upon mnemonic phenomena, Proust's Remembrance of Things Past.⁷² Divided into seven major parts but originally published in sixteen volumes over a period of fourteen years, Remembrance of Things Past is an extremely complex narrative dealing with tangled familial relationships, social situations, love liaisons, and various other experiences of the narrator, Marcel. Moreover, Proust's narrative techniques of "unconscious" associations, musical motifs, and time shifts make the work even more complex. Nevertheless, the entire sequence possesses a "closed" structure: the final part, The Past Recaptured, brings the narrative to a resolution, reveals the ultimate theme, and returns in cyclical manner to the themes introduced in the "Overture" in the first volume.⁷³ Yet the very length and complexity of the work seem inimical to coherent structure. Similarly, the twenty volumes of Zola's Rougon-Macquart sequence impose considerable strain upon a reader's ability to perceive any pattern present in the whole work, but a pre-conceived pattern does exist. The enormous scope of the sequence is indicated by its subtitle: "Histoire Naturelle et Sociale d'Une Famille Sous le Second Empire." F. W. J. Hemmings describes Zola's intentions thusly:

The innovation intended in Les Rougon-Macquart was to show the successive flowering of three, four, even five interlinked generations, to construct vertically down a genealogical line,

not simply horizontally over a social superficies. As he promised his publisher, Lacroix, in the general plan he submitted in 1869, he would not only "study the whole of the Second Empire, from the coup d'état down to the present day," but he would also "study in a family the questions of common blood and environment."⁷⁴

For twenty-four years and through twenty separate novels, Zola pursued his plan. He referred to Doctor Pascal, the last volume, as the book which would give the whole sequence the effect of "the serpent in a coil with its tail in its mouth."⁷⁵ His achievement is to a degree indicated by this remark by Armand Lanoux:

Quant à l'architecture, elle est romaine. Non seulement elle est superbe dans Germinal, mais c'est dans tout l'ensemble qu'elle se manifeste encore en dépit des inévitables inégalités et des dégâts du temps, dans ces Rougon où le dernier tome répond en écho au premier, après le long rythme des temps forts et des temps faibles qu'impose la succession alternée des épisodes.⁷⁶

But, "unless we remember we cannot understand." Even though the sequence consists of separate volumes and is thus designed to be read in parts, when the structure is considered as a whole, the nearly 5,000 pages of the Rougon-Macquart sequence demand phenomenal feats of memory: one will not perceive the "tail" in the "mouth" unless one clearly remembers the "mouth." Thus, although a sequence may be "closed," its length sometimes prevents apprehension of its structure: the "unity of the whole" escapes us. In this sense, the longer a sequence, the more "open" it seems.

A final clarification must also be made: viewed without regard to theme or author's intention, almost any literary work is capable of continuation. Henry James makes this point in the "Preface" to Roderick Hudson:

Really, universally, relations stop nowhere, and the exquisite problem of the artist is eternally but to draw, by

a geometry of his own, the circle within which they shall happily appear to do so.⁷⁷

And, as Robert M. Adams says,

Even Hamlet, which has killed off eight major characters before the final curtain falls, could be prolonged by anyone perverse enough to care about young Fortinbras' accomplishments as a monarch or Hamlet's fate in the other world.⁷⁸

In the same perverse spirit, a closed sequence novel could be continued beyond its proper bounds. For instance, had he so wished, Joyce Cary could have extended his "Political Trilogy" with a fourth novel told by Georgina Nimmo, a fifth by Tom Nimmo, a sixth by Sally (Lady Bootham), a seventh by Aunt Latter, an eighth by whoever happened to be left, and so on. But Cary properly "closed" his sequence. Galsworthy, however, chose to continue his. Although The Forsyte Saga is closed and complete in itself,⁷⁹ Galsworthy continued to record the lives of Soames, Fleur, Jon, and Michael Mont in three subsequent novels, The White Monkey (1924), The Silver Spoon (1926) and Swan Song (1928), gathered under the inclusive title of A Modern Comedy. And then, still not content, he further narrated the stories of characters who had appeared in A Modern Comedy in three more volumes, Maid in Waiting (1931), Flowering Wilderness (1932) and Over the River (1933), under the inclusive title of End of the Chapter. Apparently Galsworthy yielded to the "perverse" temptation to follow the lives of his characters beyond their existence in the first closed structure. Thus, even though a sequence is logically and thematically complete, the author can, if he wishes, pursue the "relations [that] stop nowhere."

One must therefore recognize these modulations of the ideal sequence form: some sequences follow no pre-conceived plan of structure;

some have only the natural structure that life itself gives; some are the incomplete fragments of an intended structure; some are in truth closed but appear to be open because of their great length; and any sequence can be capriciously continued. Despite these modulations, one can nevertheless discern two general types of sequence novels--those with an open and those with a closed structure.

However, in a consideration of structure in prose fiction, two facts are important: theme controls form, and content reveals theme. From the artist's perspective, theme determines the choice of subject, governs the manner of presenting the materials (setting, incident, plot, character, symbol), and most important, shapes the form of the work. From the reader's perspective, a novel's subject, material, and their formal arrangement lead to an imaginative apprehension of the theme. Harold Weston states the matter incisively: "Theme, exercising a restrictive influence on the choice of . . . incidents, moulds them into a certain form, which will convey to the reader's imagination a message which the theme cannot convey directly."⁸⁰ As though to clarify this statement, Bernard Malamud says,

If theme, inartistically handled, hardens to exo-skeleton, or drops like printer's ink from the center of the fiction--if, in other words, it has become "message"--then the failure is of the art. . . . It becomes when the form is right, a part of the fabric of the fiction, as though through a process of crystallization in time. . . ."⁸¹

Even though both critics have only the usual single-volume novel in mind, their remarks apply even more pertinently to the sequence novel, for it is largely the pressure of the theme which determines whether a sequence will be open or closed, whether the "fabric of the fiction" will

be a loosely woven ribbon or a tightly knit bow. That is, the scope and complexity of the theme will largely determine the choice of subject and the nature of the structure of the work.

Miss Kerr has stated that sequence novels deal with one of three general subjects: the life of an individual, family life, or social phenomena. But, indeed, with what else can a novel deal? These are the traditional yarns for the novelist's loom: Fielding traces the experiences of an individual in Tom Jones; Smollett focuses upon the family of Matthew Bramble in The Expedition of Humphrey Clinker; Thackeray paints a social panorama in Vanity Fair. In other words, the general subjects of the sequence novel are in truth the general subjects of all novels.

But subject, of course, is not synonymous with theme. One might say that Crane's The Red Badge of Courage, Hemingway's A Farewell to Arms, Manning's Her Privates We, and Heller's Catch-22 have essentially the same subject: a young man's initiation into life through the fires of war. But no one could say that the themes of these four novels are essentially the same. It is the pressure of the theme that determines how the novelist treats his subject.

How the novelist treats his subject is almost infinitely variable. To a degree, however, the novelist is limited by the tastes and techniques of his day. Smollett employed a well-established narrative technique in his epistolary novel, The Expedition of Humphrey Clinker; Trollope, using block characterization, panoramic narration, and authorial comments, wrote the most popular novels of his era. Yet today, except as a quaint archaism, no modern novelist is apt to employ the epistolary technique as his primary

narrative method, nor is any novelist who hopes for critical or popular success likely to write a novel imitating Trollope. To a degree, the novelist is also limited by the mode within which he consciously or unconsciously writes: the "romantic" novelist treats his material in a different manner than does the "naturalistic" novelist, whose treatment, of course, differs from that of the "impressionistic" novelist. Indeed, it is largely the differences in how he presents his material that categorizes a novelist as "romantic," "naturalistic," "impressionistic," or whatever. For instance, in a rather Polonian commentary, Galsworthy tries to place himself in relation to some of his peers:

The book [The Patrician] discloses me finally as an impressionist working with a realistic or naturalistic technique. Whereas Wells is a realist working with an impressionistic technique, Bennett a realist with a realistic technique, Conrad an impressionist with a semi-impressionistic, semi-naturalistic technique, and Forster an impressionist with a realistically impressionistic technique.⁸²

The very fact that such categories could exist emphasizes the great variety of ways that a novelist may treat his subject, yet still in accordance with his theme.

However, when prose fiction is viewed as a whole, some elements appear as constants, no matter what the theme: fiction always deals with people and their actions of a particular place and time. Thus, the constants are character, incident, plot, and setting. But within these, under pressure of the author's theme, great variations of treatment are possible. The setting may be generalized, the merest background against which action may occur, as in the novels of Ivy Compton Burnett; it may be particularized in exact, concrete details, as in Zola or Sinclair Lewis; or it may be particularized and imbued with symbolic value, as is Egdon

Heath in Hardy's The Return of the Native. Similarly, incident within the novel may be physical, from the bone-crushing heroics of James Bond to the significant glance of Isabel Archer; it may also be mental, whether a memory of the past, thought of the present, or speculation about the future; or it may be either narrated or dramatized, that is, told or shown.⁸³ Plot—the arrangement of incidents into significant structure⁸⁴—may be mechanical or organic;⁸⁵ it may contain sub-plots; or it may be open or closed. In addition, character may be explicitly stated or gradually revealed; it may be presented through external details of feature, dress, and action; or it may be revealed through interior thought processes.⁸⁶ Thus, all of the elements of fiction are subject to technical variations; the novelist molds these elements to create the form of his novel and to convey his theme by his choice of various techniques.

Of these techniques, two of the most important are the novelist's handling of time and point of view: time is the train of chronology by which the incidents of the story proceed; point of view is the "angle" of narration the novelist employs. Both techniques are important in any consideration of fiction; however, they are of especial importance in a consideration of the sequence novel.

The next chapter will briefly consider the nature and roles of time and point of view as techniques of fiction and will indicate how they serve as differentia in the structure of sequence novels.

FOOTNOTES: CHAPTER I

¹Princeton: University of Princeton Press, 1957.

²Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1959.

³New York: Oxford University Press, 1966.

⁴A complete enumeration would have to include older but still valuable studies such as those of Percy Lubbock, The Craft of Fiction (London: Jonathon Cape, 1921); Edwin Muir, The Structure of the Novel (London: Hogarth Press, 1928); E. M. Forster, Aspects of the Novel (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and Company, 1927); Carl H. Grabo, The Technique of the Novel (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1928); and Harold Weston, Form in Literature (London: Rich and Cowan, 1934).

⁵New York: Appleton-Century, 1932.

⁶"The Sequence Novel: Fictional Method of a Scientific Age," (unpublished Master's thesis, Department of English, University of Minnesota); "The Twentieth Century Sequence Novel" (unpublished doctoral dissertation, Department of English, University of Minnesota, 1941); A Bibliography of the Sequence Novel (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1950). In her thesis, Miss Kerr is primarily concerned with the origins of the sequence novel, tracing it back to Balzac, Hugo, Zola, and Goethe; in her dissertation, she examines the three principal subjects of sequence novels (the individual life-history, the family, and the social milieu) and some of the technical variations pertinent to each subject; in her Bibliography, she lists the major sequence novels published up until 1950. James W. Lee, "The Sequence Novel: Theory of a Genre," a paper read to the South Central Modern Language Association, Baton Rouge, Louisiana, October 28, 1967. Though his approach is essentially the same as hers, Lee goes beyond Miss Kerr by adding a fourth subject category—any series of events treated from a multiple point of view. Though our studies necessarily have some material in common, my paper employs an approach completely different from Lee's or any of Miss Kerr's.

⁷The Griffin, XV (December, 1966), 6. The quotation refers to Evelyn Waugh's Sword of Honor (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1966). Italics are mine.

⁸Peter Beagle, "Tolkien's Magic Ring," Holiday, XXXIX (June, 1966), 128. The quotation refers to J. R. R. Tolkien's The Lord of the Rings, 3 vols. (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1954-1955). Italics are mine.

⁹Robert Brustein, "Introduction" to The Old Glory by Robert Lowell (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 1965), pp. xiii-xiv. Italics are mine.

¹⁰Published collectively as Parade's End (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1950) but originally published separately as Some Do Not... (1924), No More Parades (1925), A Man Could Stand Up (1926) and The Last Post (1928).

¹¹Richard II, I Henry IV, II Henry IV, and Henry V.

¹²The Complete Poems of W. M. Thackeray (New York: Frederick A. Stokes and Brother, 1888), pp. 7-23.

¹³Williamson uses this as an inclusive title; the individual volumes are The Dark Lantern (1951), The Donkey Boy (1952), Young Phillip Maddison (1953), How Dear is Life (1954), A Fox Under My Cloak (1955), The Golden Virgin (1957), Love and the Loveless (1958), A Test to Destruction (1960), The Innocent Moon (1961), It Was the Nightingale (1962), The Power of the Dead (1963), The Phoenix Generation (1965), and A Solitary War (1966). All are published by Macdonald of London.

¹⁴Trans. by A. Margaret Arent (Seattle: University of Washington Press, for American-Scandinavian Foundation, 1964).

¹⁵John Galsworthy (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1940).

¹⁶Letter to John Galsworthy, dated November 1, 1921, in H. V. Marrot, The Life and Letters of John Galsworthy (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1936), p. 509.

¹⁷"Author's Preface," The Forsyte Saga, pp. xi, xii.

¹⁸Letter to H. Granville-Barker, dated January 30, 1921, in Marrot, op. cit., p. 497.

¹⁹The East Wind (1937), The South Wind of Love (1937), The West Wind (1940), West and North (1940), The North Wind (1944), and Again to the North (1946); all published by Dodd of New York.

²⁰While still gathering material and even before deciding upon a title for the first volume, Bennett made plans for the third: "Wed, Dec. 1: Noted, for third novel in trilogy, scene in train, and Shield's dentist scene, in special notebook." The Journals of Arnold Bennett, 3 vols. (New York: Viking, 1932) I, p. 347.

²¹The Victorians and Their Books (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1962), p. 311.

²²Gordon S. Haight, "Introduction" to Middlemarch (Riverside Edition; Houghton Mifflin and Company, 1956), p. xxi. That the publisher's eye for profits encouraged separate publication is indicated by the fact that Middlemarch appeared in 1872 as an eight-volume edition, in 1873 as a four-volume edition printed from the same plates, and in 1874 as a one-volume edition; only after the initial interest of the book-buying public

had waned did the publisher offer more compact and less expensive editions.

²³Cruse, op. cit., p. 336.

²⁴Lionel Stevenson, The English Novel: A Panorama (Boston: Houghton Mifflin and Company, 1960), p. 410.

²⁵Tolkien, op. cit.

²⁶Plot will be further discussed in Chapter III. For the present, R. S. Crane's definition of plot seems most pertinent: "The plot of any novel or drama is the particular temporal synthesis effected by the writer of the elements of action, character, and thought that constitute the matter of his invention. It is impossible, therefore, to state adequately what any plot is unless we include in our formula all three of the elements or causes of which the plot is the synthesis; and it follows also that plots will differ in structure according as one or another of the three causal ingredients is employed as the synthesizing principle. There are, thus, plots of action, plots of character, and plots of thought. In the first, the synthesizing principle is a completed change, gradual or sudden, in the situation of the protagonist, determined and effected by character and thought (as in Oedipus and The Brothers Karamazov); in the second, the principle is a completed process of change in the moral character of the protagonist, precipitated or molded by action, and made manifest both in it and in thought and feeling (as in James's The Portrait of a Lady); in the third, the principle is a completed process of change in the thought of the protagonist and consequently in his feelings, conditioned and directed by character and action (as in Pater's Marius the Epicurean). All these types of construction, and not merely the first, are plots in the meaning of our definition; and it is mainly, perhaps, because most of the familiar classic plots, including that of Tom Jones, have been of the first kind that so many critics have tended to reduce plot to action alone." "The Concept of Plot and the Plot of Tom Jones," in Critics and Criticism, ed. R. S. Crane (Phoenix Books; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1963), pp. 66-67.

²⁷Justine (New York: E. P. Dutton and Company, 1957).

²⁸Balthazar (New York: E. P. Dutton and Company, 1958).

²⁹A Berkley Medallion Book; New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1958. The separate volumes and dates of publication are The Sword in the Stone (1938), The Queen of Air and Darkness (1940), The Ill-Made Knight (1941), and The Candle in the Wind (1958).

³⁰Prisoner of Grace (1952), Except the Lord (1953), and Not Honour More (1955). All are published by Michael Joseph of London.

³¹Harold Weston, op. cit., p. 201. Mr. Weston argues that the artist views life (his experience and that of others), finds significance there, and presents this significance—"a general law of life"—as the theme of his work.

³²A Guide to the Novel (San Francisco: Chandler Publishing Company, 1965), p. 58.

³³"The Sequence Novel: Fictional Method of a Scientific Age," pp. 16-17.

³⁴The Louis Bromfield Trilogy (New York: Halcyon House, 1926), n. p.

³⁵A Good Woman (New York: Frederick A. Stokes Company, 1927), n. p.

³⁶Quoted in Marrot, op. cit., p. 316.

³⁷Sword of Honor, p. 9.

³⁸"The Twentieth Century Sequence Novel," p. 528. I am indebted to Miss Kerr for the basic information in this particular section. However, all illustrative citations are my own.

³⁹Siegfried Sassoon, The Memoirs of George Sherston (New York: Doubleday, Doran and Company, 1937), pp. 372-373. This single-volume edition contains all three of the volumes in Sassoon's sequence. However, each separate volume maintains its own pagination. Consequently, in subsequent citations, I will cite the separate volume title and page number.

⁴⁰Memoirs of an Infantry Officer, p. 9. Italics are Sassoon's.

⁴¹First Trilogy (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1958), p. 1. This single-volume edition contains all three novels; however, each is separately paginated.

⁴²Beach, op. cit., p. 183.

⁴³For an important demonstration of how Ford sacrificed a concluding "big scene" in the interests of the architecture of the whole sequence, see Frank Macshane, "A Conscious Craftsman: Ford Madox Ford's Manuscript Revision," Boston University Studies in English, V (Winter, 1961), 178-184.

⁴⁴Farade's End, pp. 299, 315. Unspaced ellipses are Ford's.

⁴⁵Hilda Lessways (New York: E. P. Dutton and Company, 1911), p. 533.

⁴⁶Justine (New York: E. P. Dutton and Company, 1957), p. 247.

⁴⁷Balthazar (New York: E. P. Dutton and Company, 1958), p. 13. Italics are Durrell's.

⁴⁸Ibid., p. 249.

⁴⁹Mountolive (New York: E. P. Dutton and Company, 1959), p. 38.

⁵⁰The Phoenix Generation, p. 352.

⁵¹Memoirs of an Infantry Officer, p. 322.

⁵²August W. Schlegel, Lectures on Dramatic Art and Literature, trans. John Black (London: George Bell and Sons, 1883), p. 240.

⁵³The terms open and closed are perhaps rendered ambiguous by uses to which other critics have put them. Robert M. Adams employs both terms in his Strains of Discord: Studies in Literary Openness (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1958). To him, "the open form is literary form . . . which includes a major unresolved conflict with the intent of displaying its unresolvedness" (p. 13). Thus, Donne's "Third Satire: On Religion" possesses a united and rounded structure but does not answer the questions raised, because such questions on religion are unanswerable. For Adams, a "closed" form neatly resolves all conflicts and answers all questions. In "Narrative Time and the Open-Ended Novel" (Criticism, VIII [Autumn, 1966], 362-376), Beverly Gross accepts Adams' definition but holds that "the shape of the novel is its handling of time"; to Miss Gross, an "open" novel is "a current of time revealing and expressing itself through action." Thus, a novel which does not reach an "all-embracing stasis," such as Joyce's Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man, she considers to be "open." Somewhat more esoteric is the use to which Alan Friedman puts the terms in his The Turn of the Novel (New York: Oxford University Press, 1966). Friedman analyzes prose fiction in light of the structure of experience seen within a character's conscience, a movement from innocence to experience or sophistication. If the moral or ethical threats to the conscience are allayed, the form is "contained"; for instance, the libidinous impulses of a young man plunged into worldly experience, such as Tom Jones, are contained if the novel ends in the young man's marriage. Friedman says, "By a closed novel . . . I mean a novel in which that underlying ethical form, the stream of conscience [sic], is finally contained. By an open novel, I mean a novel in which the stream of conscience is finally not contained" (p. 16). Though my usage of the terms perhaps comes closer to Adams', I mean essentially that a closed sequence novel completes the inclusive pattern toward which the novelist apparently was working, but an open-end sequence novel does not.

⁵⁴Anthony Trollope, An Autobiography (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1947), p. 78.

⁵⁵The English Novel, p. 321.

⁵⁶An Autobiography, p. 97.

⁵⁷Ibid., pp. 230-231.

⁵⁸Stevenson suggests that Trollope's abandonment of the Barsetshire novels also signalled his shift from a "placid atmosphere" to a "cynical mood" seen in the "savage indictment of human nature" in The Way We Live Now (The English Novel, pp. 360, 379).

⁵⁹Williamson devotes five volumes to these five years in Phillip Maddison's life: How Dear is Life, the summer of 1914 and the first battle of Ypres; A Fox Under My Cloak, 1915 and the battle of Loos; The Golden Virgin, 1916 and the battle of the Somme; Love and the Loveless, 1917 and the battle of Passchendaele; A Test to Destruction, 1918 and the Armistice. By contrast, volume twelve, The Phoenix Generation, covers a whole decade, beginning in May, 1929, and ending in September, 1939.

⁶⁰Katherine Mansfield and Other Literary Studies (London: Constable, 1959), p. 157.

⁶¹Arthur G. Canfield, The Reappearing Characters in Balzac's "Comedie Humaine" (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1961), p. 1.

⁶²For an exhaustive analysis of Balzac's divisions, see Brucia L. Dedinsky, "Development of the Scheme of the "Comedie Humaine": Distribution of the Stories," in The Evolution of Balzac's "Comedie Humaine", ed. by E. Preston Dargan and Bernard Weinberg (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1942), pp. 22-187.

⁶³For an interesting analysis of how Balzac employed this last linking element, see Canfield, op. cit.

⁶⁴ibid., p. 1.

⁶⁵The English Novel, p. 449.

⁶⁶For an account of the autobiographical significance of these works and of their creation, see Dudley Barker, Writer by Trade (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1966).

⁶⁷James J. Zigerell, "Anthony Powell's Music of Time: Chronicle of a Declining Establishment," Twentieth Century Literature, XII (October, 1966), 138-146.

⁶⁸On Poetry and Style, trans. G. M. A. Grube (The Library of Liberal Arts; Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1958), p. 16.

⁶⁹Aspects of the Novel, p. 87.

⁷⁰Miss Richardson's twelve volumes are collected in Pilgrimage, 4 vols. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1938). For a useful discussion of the theme and structure of the sequence, see Caesar R. Blake, Dorothy Richardson (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1960).

⁷¹Aspects of the Novel, p. 88.

⁷²Remembrance of Things Past, trans. Charles Scott-Moncrieff, 2 vols. (New York: Random House, 1932). For useful analyses of Proust's work, see Germaine Bree, Marcel Proust and Deliverance from Time (London: Chatto and Windus, 1956); Wayne C. Booth, The Rhetoric of Fiction (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961), pp. 290-292 et passim; Margaret Church, Time and Reality: Studies in Contemporary Fiction (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1962); and C. W. M. Johnson, "Tone in A la Recherche du Temps Perdu," in Forms of Modern Fiction, pp. 201-210.

⁷³Beverly Gross, op. cit., maintains that Proust's sequence is structurally "open" because it does not reach a "temporal stasis." However, in Remembrance of Things Past, the entire narrative leads to Marcel's experiences with the paving stones, the napkin, and the madeleine and to their revelation to him of the significance of Time. Thus, the plot does achieve a resolution, the theme is ultimately expressed, and the sequence is thereby, in my sense of the term, "closed."

⁷⁴Emile Zola (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1953), p. 38.

⁷⁵Quoted in Hemmings, op. cit., p. 235.

⁷⁶"Preface" to Les Rougon-Macquart, 3 vols. ("Bibliothèque de la Pleiade"; Paris: Gallimard, 1960), I, pp. iv-lvi.

⁷⁷Art of the Novel, ed. R. P. Blackmur (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1962), p. 5.

⁷⁸Strains of Discord, p. 15.

⁷⁹However, for an interesting, though erroneous, view that Swan Song should be added to make a four-volume "saga," see Robert Hamilton, "The Forsyte Saga," Quarterly Review, CCCIV (Winter, 1966), 431-441.

⁸⁰Form in Literature, p. 205.

⁸¹"Theme, Content, and the 'New Novel'," New York Times Book Review, March 26, 1967, Section 7, p. 2.

⁸²Quoted in Marrot, op. cit., p. 308.

⁸³For important comments on all of these elements of fiction, see Henry James' prefaces in The Art of the Novel; for influential remarks on the "dramatized" incident, see Percy Lubbock, The Craft of Fiction, pp. 188-219.

⁸⁴For pertinent comments on this point, see Crane, "The Concept of Plot and the Plot of Tom Jones"; Kellogg and Scholes, The Nature of Narrative; and Weston, Form in Literature.

⁸⁵Both Schlegel (op. cit., p. 340) and Coleridge make essentially the same distinction between mechanical and organic form. Coleridge, however, is more succinct: "The form is mechanic, when on any given material we impress a predetermined form, not necessarily arising out of the properties of the material. . . . The organic form on the other hand, is innate; it shapes, as it develops itself from within, and the fulness of its development is one and the same with the perfection of its outward form." Quoted in Gordon McKenzie, Organic Unity in Coleridge ("University of California Publications in English," Vol. VII, No. 1; Berkeley: University of California Press, 1939), p. 45.

⁸⁶See E. M. Forster, Aspects of the Novel, pp. 43-82, and W. J. Harvey, Character and the Novel (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1965).

CHAPTER II

THE PATTERNS IDENTIFIED

A narrative is the process of telling about people and what they do. But, first, in order to "tell," there must be a "teller." And, second, people's actions and the act of telling itself occupy spans of time. Thus, point of view and the treatment of time are perhaps the two most important techniques in fiction.

The following familiar narrative reveals a great deal about the elements of time and point of view in fiction:

Humpty Dumpty sat on the wall.
Humpty Dumpty had a great fall.
All the King's horses and all the King's men
Couldn't put Humpty Dumpty together again.

Within this simple nursery rhyme, one can see several important characteristics of all fiction. First, the tale consists of several incidents; although here compressed to mere statements, the sitting on the wall, the fall, and the efforts at restoration are all events in embryo. Second, the events occur in a particular sequence which occupies a span of time; even though no explicit time scheme is given, from the moment of Humpty Dumpty's sitting on the wall, through his falling, to the King's men's admission of failure, time passes. Third, the passage of time is irreversible. Although the narration itself may be inverted or disordered, the events may not be: the sitting must precede the fall, which must

precede the failure at restoration. If the events occur in any other sequence, they form another story. Fourth, the events all occurred in the past, and the narrative uses past tense verbs. Consequently, the action is necessarily viewed from the perspective of the present. Fifth, a "teller" relates the story. Although he is completely unobtrusive, someone necessarily narrates the events; the tale, in other words, is told from a particular "angle," here the objective third-person point of view.

"Humpty Dumpty" can, however, be told in a somewhat different way:

I

He perched unsteadily upon the surprisingly narrow wall. Looking down made him dizzy, but he had to look down if he were ever to return to his friends below. Friends, indeed! They were the cause of his being here now in this dangerous position—mocking, jeering, daring him. "Climb the wall," they said. "Climb the wall, chicken!" So he climbed, his feet feeling leaden, his hands slippery with sweat, his heart thunderously pounding in his ears. But he reached the top. The view! the beautiful, blue and sweeping, heart-soaring view! He hadn't realized. In the distance he could see trees, like those in the park where Mother used to take him. Trees and a far, blue horizon. But below, the distant earth and the white, upturned faces of his now silent friends. He slid both feet into the void and rested one on a slight protrusion in the sheer plunge of the wall. He looked at the trees one last time. He felt the ancient mortar crumble, felt no weight in his body, saw the top racing away above him. A smashing, numbing blow. "But the blue trees," he thought. Then blackness.

II

We interrupt this program to bring you a special news bulletin. An unidentified person has just fallen from the top of the high wall at the corner of Vermont and Mediterranean Avenues. The walls in that vicinity are over fifty feet high. No report of the accident victim's condition has been received. A large crowd has gathered, and Police Chief Little urges all citizens to stay away from the scene of the accident, so as not to create a traffic problem. It has just been reported that the Royal Emergency Squad is on its way to the scene. Stay tuned to this station for further details. We now return you to your regularly scheduled program.

III

We got there as quick as possible, but it was too late. The damned crowds held us up. They swarmed all over the place, vicious thrill seekers. They probably yelled at him to jump. We finally had to go around by way of Boardwalk to get there. Had to really push our way through. He lay there all crumpled up. Real bad case. We did all we could, especially Sergeant Blue. Good man. Tried everything we could do there on the spot, respirator, plasma, morphine. Nothing helped. Too bad. Even had to fight the Goddamned crowd to take it away.

All of the preceding comments about the narrative still hold true: the tale is still a series of incidents which cover a span of time; the passage of time is still irreversible; the action still is narrated in the past tense with a particular point of view.

However, some new truths also appear. First, the incidents cover the same time span as before, but the narration of them takes longer. Whereas the original version took only two or three seconds to read, the new version takes a minute or more. This greater length of reading time is due to the proliferation of the details which make the new version more concrete.

Second, the sequence of time is still irreversible, but the narrative sequence might easily be disordered. For instance, the story would be the same, but its effect would be altered if Section II, the fall, appeared first; an entirely different effect would result if Section III, the failure, appeared first and Section I, the wall, appeared last. In other words, though the passage of time itself can not be changed, the chronology of the narrative may be altered, for special effect.

Third, the events still are occurrences of the past, but within the inclusive chronology of the tale, the separate incidents more clearly occupy distinctly different planes of time. In addition, though clearly

in the past, the action seems to be in the present. That is, the reader subconsciously "adjusts" to the progression of events so that each incident seems to be his "now": when he has read Section I, it is "past," but Section II is the "present" of his reading activity, and Section III is subconsciously—and actually—his future.¹ Moreover, new planes of the past appear. For instance, in Section I, within the "present" of Humpty Dumpty's situation on the wall, three new dimensions of the past are introduced: the very recent past of his reaction upon reaching the top of the wall and seeing the view, the slightly more distant past of the jeering friends who caused him to climb the wall, and an even more distant past of his visits to the park with his mother. Thus, as a narrative expands, the planes of time within it may become more numerous or more complexly intercalated.

Fourth, the new version still has a "teller," but now three separate "angles" are used, in each of which the "teller" seems to disappear. Point of view by and large determines the material that may be admitted into the story and governs the pace of the narration. Section I employs a third-person point of view which is restricted to the consciousness of Humpty Dumpty; although the "teller" does not intrude himself into the narrative, he is nevertheless omniscient in that he can reveal the subjective thoughts and memories as well as the objective actions of the character. Section II uses a first-person point of view, but it is the editorial "we" with an objective statement of only the known facts; strangely, however, the objective "news broadcast" seems more obviously an authorial contrivance than does the subjective omniscience of Section I. Section III is a purely subjective first-person narration. The character witnessed

only part of the total action. Hence, he can report only what he saw or what he knows to be true. The sentiments expressed are ostensibly those of the fictional character, not directly those of the "teller." In addition, point of view is also the operative technique by which the "teller" controls the pace of the action (as in the increased tempo of the fall in Section I), the time-shifts from "present" to "past" (as in the various memories in Section I), the creation of suspense (as in the lack of conclusive but use of anticipatory information in Section II), and the aesthetic distancing of the reader from the action (as in the remoteness of Humpty Dumpty, finally seen as an "it," in Section III).

Fifth, theme and structure become more significant through the "teller's" control of time and point of view. The theme of the original version is not clear: the tale may equally well illustrate the dangers of climbing walls, the folly of relying upon monarchical powers, or the irreversible consequences of any action. However, in the new version, the theme appears in clearer focus; one might easily see it as an embryonic statement about the destructive conflict between the individual and society: Humpty Dumpty's memory of his jeering friends, the newscast announcement of gathering crowds, and the King's man's condemnation of the obstructive mob are all injected into the narrative through control of point of view. Moreover, the structure of both versions remains essentially the same: a beginning on the wall, a middle in the fall, and an end in the failure. But in the new version, the structure is made more dramatically effective: the moment on the wall itself is seen as the result of anterior action and is intensified through an awareness of the character's emotional responses; the fall is given increased significance through the double view of it--an impression of the character's

sensations as he falls and an objective announcement of the fact; the failure--the resolution of the action--is made more significant through the King's man's own sense of frustration and failure. In addition, the units of the structure now have greater coherence: the fall depicted in Section I is repeated as fact in Section II; suspense and anticipatory remarks in Section II prepare for Section III; Section III alludes to facts previously given and concludes the story with the flat finality of "to take it away." Thus, the "teller's" control of point of view and temporal sequence articulates the theme and structures the material.

This brief analysis of "Humpty Dumpty" by no means fully explores the techniques of time and point of view. It does not include any consideration of the psychological or philosophical aspects of time² nor the immense variety of technical devices for handling time in fiction.³ It does not indicate the wide range of types and effects of point of view.⁴ It does, however, show the importance of time and point of view as the cardinal techniques in fiction, whether the fiction be nursery rhyme, short story, novel, or a sequence of novels.

As a genre of prose fiction, the novels within a sequence employ the same techniques of time and point of view as those not in a sequence. For instance, the mnemonic regressions and "chronological loopings" which Ford Madox Ford uses in the separate volumes of his Parade's End sequence are essentially the same techniques, though in different points of view, as those he uses in The Good Soldier. Similarly, the techniques which Arnold Bennett utilizes in the three novels of his Clayhanger sequence differ very little from those in The Old Wives' Tale. Thus, as far as the narrative techniques of time and point of view are concerned, the separate novels within a sequence differ little from ordinary novels.

However, time and point of view are extremely important when the sequence of novels is viewed as a whole: the author's choice of point of view and his handling of temporal sequence determine the formal pattern of the sequence novel's inclusive structure.

Because every piece of fiction is a "temporal synthesis" of the "sequence of human activities,"⁵ every piece of fiction embodies a period of time. From the beginning word to the final period, the author creates a fictive world of character, thought, and action which spans a length of time within which the events of the fictive world occur. This fictive time is measurable by clocks and calendars because the "sequence of human activities" necessarily implies a progression of time which is to the characters "actual." Thus, from the moment Humpty Dumpty "perched unsteadily upon the surprisingly narrow wall" to the moment at which the King's men took "it" away, a span of fictive time elapses. In some fiction, this span of time may be split so that two or more actions are presented simultaneously. Thus, as the announcer broadcasts the news of Humpty Dumpty's fall, the Royal Emergency Squad is on its way to the scene. In much modern fiction, time may seem to regress: the mnemonic time of the character, his memories, runs counter to the flow of time forward into the future. Thus, Humpty Dumpty remembers events which go backward into the past. Nevertheless, the fictive time within a piece of fiction is a sphere which contains the progressive, simultaneous, or regressive movement of time.

This sphere of time may be of any size. It may be a whole life span: Bennett's The Old Wives' Tale, for example, covers nearly seventy years as it traces the lives of two sisters. Or it may be only a day:

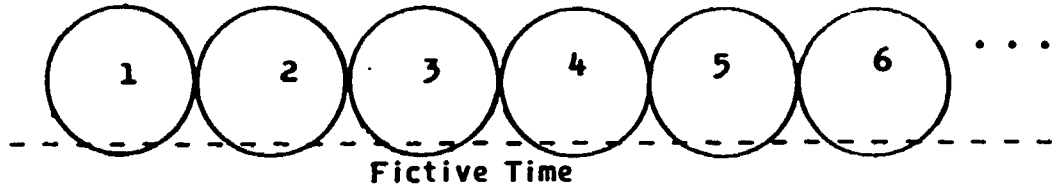
Joyce's Ulysses records the events of June 16, 1904, in the lives of three separate individuals. In each of these works, time is split as the narrative covers simultaneous periods in the characters' lives. In each work, but in markedly different ways, mnemonic time moves from "present" to "past"; for example, as Sophia gazes at the withered body of her husband, she thinks of their youth; as he walks along the beach, Stephen Dedalus remembers his own youth and his mother's death. Yet in each of these novels, the simultaneous episodes and the mnemonic excursions into the past are contained within the progressive present of the fictive time. Thus, each novel is, as is any piece of fiction, a "contained" sphere of time. In this respect, Alice in Wonderland differs little from Nana or Mrs. Dalloway: each is a sphere of time within which the "teller" depicts the characters, thoughts, and actions of his fictive world.

This principle being true, one may conceive of a sequence novel as being either a string or a cluster of separate spheres of time. The artist's handling of these separate spheres determines the formal pattern of the inclusive structure, while making of them a still greater sphere of time. The artist may choose either to string the spheres of time chronologically or to cluster them synchronously.

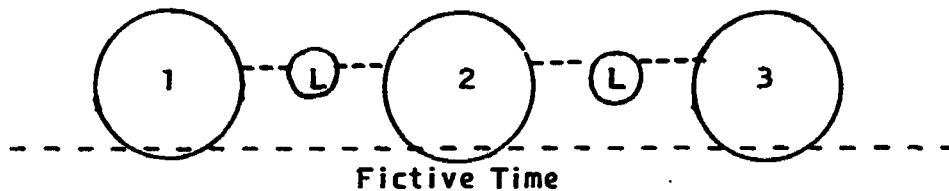
In a chronological sequence novel, the narrative moves in a straight forward progression in time, from novel to novel, through the whole sequence. One sphere of time follows another in the progressive sequence of the fictive time. However, numerous variations of this sequence are possible. Some sequence novels contain a continuous flow, in which the separate spheres of time are contiguous. Such a sequence is Williamson's A Chronicle of Ancient Sunlight. One volume picks up the narrative thread from

the preceding volume with little or no significant lapse of fictive time.

One might envision such a sequence in this manner:

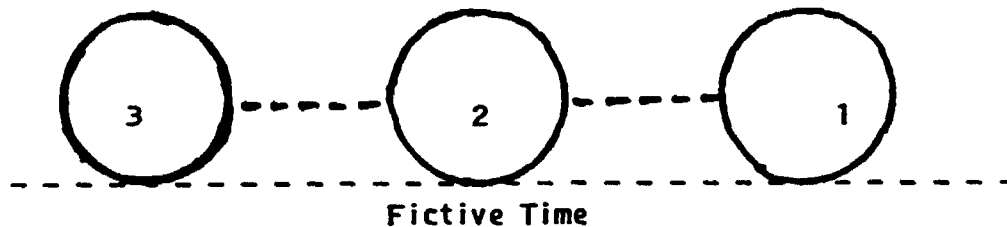


Some sequences, on the other hand, follow an intermittent movement: the separate spheres of time omit unimportant periods in the whole fictive time. The Forsyte Saga, for instance, encloses an entire fictive span of thirty-five years, 1886-1921. However, the first volume covers only one and a half years, from 1886 to 1887; a linking interlude, the summer of 1892; the second volume, two years, from 1899 to 1901; another linking interlude, one day in 1909; the final volume, one year, 1920-1921. This pattern of time spheres might be envisioned thus:



These two basic chronological patterns are almost infinitely variable, depending on the artist's material and intentions. Indeed, one sequence - novel, in the order of the publication of the separate volumes, even moves backward in time. In Uncle Stephen (1931), the first volume of Forrest Reid's sequence, Tom, an orphaned boy of about fourteen, goes to stay with his uncle; there he comes to understand the almost magical relationships possible between two humans and between man and nature. The Retreat (1936), the second volume, carries Tom back a few years, when his parents were still alive; it shows Tom in a period when the world of schoolmates and

strangers—that is, society—seemed mysterious and marvellous. Young Tom (1944), the final volume, takes Tom back to early childhood and his adventures with new pets and people within the family.⁶ The whole work is a prose analogue of Wordsworth's The Prelude,⁷ but in reversed time sequence. Its chronology might be depicted thus:

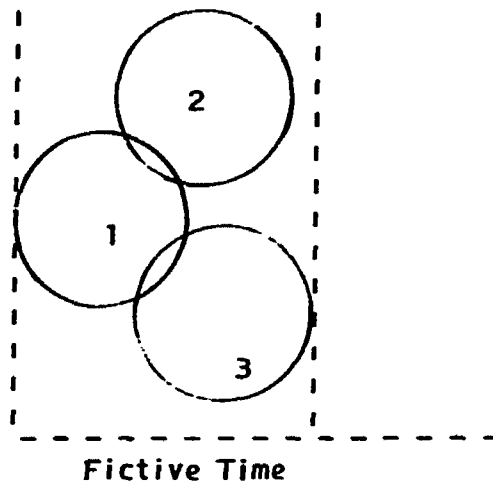


Even though Reid's sequence regresses in time, it, like other chronological sequence novels, follows a single straight line of time.

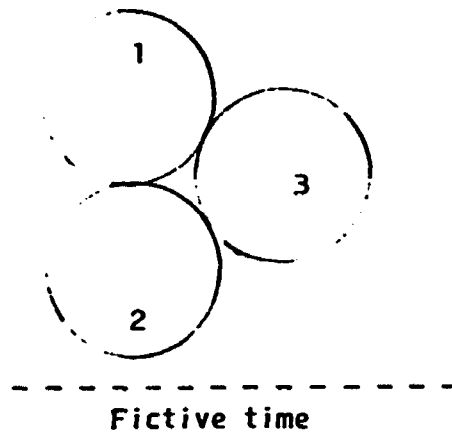
In a synchronous sequence novel, however, the narrative may follow parallel lines of time: though the "actual" fictive time may be the same in each, the spheres of time of the separate volumes are either overlapping or concurrent. This pattern is roughly comparable to the "meanwhile, back at the ranch" fade-outs within a conventional novel or to Virginia Woolf's presentation of synchronously juxtaposed events in Mrs. Dalloway: it is a method to show separate but simultaneous actions of different characters. However, the characters and actions within the separate spheres of time must be somehow related; otherwise, the whole is not a sequence but a synchronous panel-novel. Moreover, within the whole sequence, some chronological progression, though often slight, necessarily occurs: some forward movement in time is necessary to provide the resolution or the ultimate revelation of the theme of the inclusive structure.

As with the chronological pattern, numerous variations are possible.

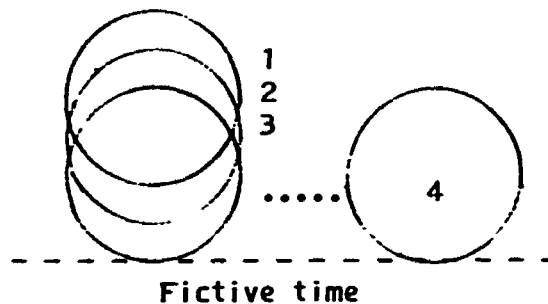
Some sequences focus on the lives of separate characters. Such a sequence is Cary's "Artist Trilogy." Each volume contains most of the life-history of its particular "narrator": the first volume contains Sara Monday's "confession"; the second, Tom Wilcher's diary entries; the third, Gulley Jimson's memoirs. The volumes are related to each other through the relationships of the characters, though less connection exists between Wilcher and Jimson than between Sara and the two men. The sequence as a whole also progresses chronologically. However, in that each volume covers a period of approximately sixty years in the simultaneous existences of the three characters, its pattern is synchronous. It might be envisioned thus:



Another variation of the synchronous pattern is that employed by Bennett in the Clayhanger sequence: volume one concerns the life of Edwin Clayhanger; volume two, the life of Hilda Lessways; volume three, their lives together as man and wife. Thus, the first two volumes are simultaneous spheres of time; the third follows chronologically after their union:



Still another variation is that in Lawrence Durrell's Alexandria Quartet. Whereas in Cary's and Bennett's sequences, only a few important events reappear in the simultaneous spheres of time, in Durrell's sequence many of the same events reoccur. Thus, the first three volumes cover the same span of time and include the same events, characters, and relationships, but narrated from three different perspectives and with three different emphases; after a lapse of fictive time, the fourth volume resumes the chronologically progressive narration. One might envision the pattern thusly:



A novelist may therefore string the time spheres of his sequence chronologically, cluster them synchronously, or use a combination of both methods. However they are arranged, some progression of fictive time is necessary through the whole sequence in order to provide a resolution or

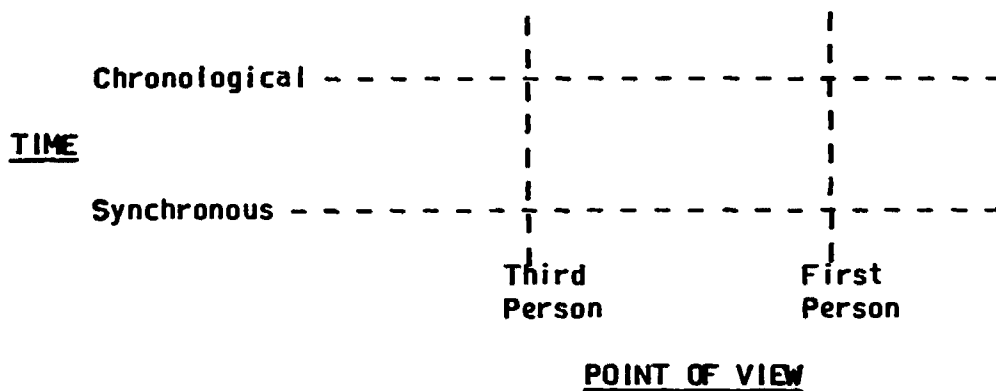
to reveal the ultimate theme. This progression of fictive time perhaps accounts for this fact: although each individual volume is readable as a separate novel, the sequence as a whole becomes intelligible or achieves its desired effect only when the volumes are read in their designated order. To read Cary's Not Honour More, in which Nimmo dies of fear in a servant's toilet and Jim slits Nina's throat, before one reads Prisoner of Grace and Except the Lord is to destroy the cumulative thematic effect of the whole sequence.⁸ Similarly, to read The Last Battle, seventh in C. S. Lewis' "Chronicles of Narnia" sequence, before reading the first six volumes is to weaken the effect of the culmination toward which the entire sequence progresses.⁹ The point, therefore, is simple: a novelist designs his pattern to reach a particular resolution and achieve a particular effect; to this end, his handling of time within the sequence is extremely important.

Equally important is the sequence novelist's handling of point of view. Modern critics recognize a great variety and enormous subtlety in the techniques of point of view. Norman Friedman maintains that the old, simple distinctions of first or third person point of view are inadequate critical tools;¹⁰ Wayne Booth anatomizes concepts and varieties of points of view at length in The Rhetoric of Fiction.¹¹ Certainly the fine distinctions which these and other critics draw are pertinent to the separate volumes within a sequence. Yet, as far as the formal pattern of the whole sequence is concerned, the principal useable distinctions must remain simply first or third person. To say this is not to infer that any possible variations--such as neutral omniscience, "fine central intelligence," or "I" as observer--are eliminated as techniques in a

a sequence. It is to say, however, that certain limitations or freedoms of the narrator's being "outside" the narrative (that is, third person) or "inside" the narrative (first person) necessarily impose certain formal characteristics upon the sequence as a whole. For instance, a first-person narrative, if it is to have any semblance of verisimilitude, must be limited to the knowledge accessible to a person in real life: a first-person narrator cannot know the thoughts of others nor engage in two separate actions simultaneously; he, like the King's man in Section III of the revised "Humpty Dumpty," is limited to reporting what he himself sees, knows, does, or merely conjectures. This limitation forced Samuel Richardson in Pamela to resort to awkward and improbable devices for supplying information necessary to the story but unavailable to the first-person narrator. This limitation posed problems for even Henry James.¹² And it creates problems for the sequence novelist, who must consider the "angle" of narrative not for just one but for a number of volumes, which contain a story many times the length of an ordinary novel. If he wishes to employ the same first-person narrator throughout the separate volumes of his sequence, then he cannot depict simultaneous actions unless he resorts to awkward devices for reporting the information "second-hand"; if he does wish to depict simultaneous action in separate volumes and to use first-person narration, then he must shift from narrator to narrator through his sequence; if he wishes to depict simultaneous action and does not wish to shift narrative point of view, then he must forgo the first-person and adopt a third-person perspective. In other words, certain limitations inherent in first and third person points of view are perhaps more important to the sequence novelist than to the writer of ordinary

novels: no matter what variation or subtlety of craft the sequence novelist may use within the separate volumes, he must consider the simple but basic distinctions between first and third person points of view because they will determine the formal pattern of his entire sequence.

If one considers the two basic points of view in conjunction with the two major arrangements of fictive time, four primary formal patterns become apparent:



The first of these patterns is a third-person chronological narrative. Within this pattern, the narrative of the whole sequence moves forward in a straight line of temporal progression. Within the separate volumes, the author may show simultaneous action, as Trollope does in Barchester Towers when he pauses to show reactions to the same bit of news in several households; or the author may even distort the time sequence for effect, as Ford Madox Ford does in A Man Could Stand Up, in which Parts One and Three occur on Armistice Day but Part Two occurs in the front-line trenches several months prior to that. However, within the entire sequence, the novelist will string the "time spheres" of the separate volumes in a straight-forward chronological order. The point of view which the novelist uses may be any of the varieties of the third-person.

It may be the complete omniscience which Trollope employs in his "Barsetshire" sequence or the severely limited stream-of-consciousness that Dorothy Richardson utilizes in Pilgrimage. Within the separate volumes, the author may shift the focus of his point of view from character to character, as Ford does in Some Do Not... and The Last Post; or even within the entire sequence, the author may shift the focus from individual to individual or group to group, as Trollope does in The Warden, Doctor Thorne, Framley Parsonage and others of the "Barsetshire" sequence. Often, however, the author focuses upon a single individual throughout the whole sequence; this focus is especially important in a sequence in which the consciousness or development of the individual is thematically significant, as in Richardson's Pilgrimage or Williamson's A Chronicle of Ancient Sunlight. The third-person chronological pattern appears to be the most prevalent of the four basic patterns; it comes closest to the traditional novel in regard to plot development and thematic revelation; it also allows the novelist the greatest latitude in his point of view. Indeed, within the third person, the novelist is limited only by his respect for verisimilitude, the degree of his craftsmanship, and the quality of his artistic vision. The variations possible are illustrated by some of the British sequences which follow this pattern: Trollope's "Barsetshire" and "Parliamentary" sequences, Galsworthy's The Forsyte Saga, Richardson's Pilgrimage, Ford's Parade's End, Lewis' "The Chronicles of Narnia," White's The Once and Future King, Williamson's A Chronicle of Ancient Sunlight, and Waugh's Sword of Honor.

The second major pattern is a third-person synchronous narrative. Within this pattern, the novelist clusters the "time spheres" of his

separate volumes so that each depicts a separate action, character, or group; thus, when the whole sequence is viewed, the actions are seen as being simultaneous. Balzac's Human Comedy, for instance, presents a vast swarm of people, places, and events, but the general impression is that the events within his ninety-two novels and stories occur within the same general fictive time. For his purpose of giving a view "horizontally over a social superficies,"¹³ this synchronous presentation is admirably suited. However, in less expansive works--and in works more consciously conceived as sequences--some chronological advancement of the whole is necessary, even though a number of the separate "time spheres" may be synchronous. Zola, for example, in the twenty volumes of the Rougon-Macquart sequence, traces four separate branches of a family until each is extinguished; because the characters exist simultaneously, numerous of his "time spheres" are necessarily synchronous; yet the sequence also progresses through time, reaching a culmination with the last of the family in Doctor Pascal. On a somewhat smaller scale, Bennett presents two synchronous "time spheres" and then proceeds chronologically in the third sphere of the Clayhanger sequence. Achievement of a resolution within the sequence or revelation of the ultimate theme requires some such progression. Point of view may again be any of the varieties possible in the third person. However, complete omniscience seems to be the general practice in this pattern: the author whose omniscience includes simultaneous times is likely to extend his omniscience in numerous other ways. Arnold Bennett is almost alone in the restrictions he places upon his point of view in the Clayhanger sequence; however, as will be seen, these restrictions are necessary for the development of

his theme. Of the four basic patterns, British novelists perhaps use this one least of all.

Somewhat more frequently employed is the third pattern, the first-person chronological narrative. As in the third-person chronological pattern, the "time spheres" of the separate volumes progress consecutively through time. Again, this fact does not imply that the temporal order within the separate volumes must be chronological. For example, Proust weaves a complex pattern of past and present times in each of the seven major parts of Remembrance of Things Past; yet through the whole sequence, time progresses as the narrator remembers his childhood, adolescence, and young manhood, until time finally catches up with him in his middle age. However, because the first-person point of view almost inevitably involves a mixture of mnemonic past and fictive present, time will probably be disordered in the individual volumes. The sequence as a whole, however, progresses chronologically. In this pattern, the narrator is "inside" the narrative and tells the story from this limited perspective: he can report only what he has seen, heard, done, thought, or, perhaps, learned from others in the tale. A sequence conceivably could be narrated by different speakers, with each one telling a segment of the developing story. Ordinarily, however, the first-person speaker remains the same throughout the sequence, thus increasing the coherence and unity of the whole. However, even in such a sequence, the point of view may shift from "I"-as-protagonist to "I"-as-observer. For instance, in C. P. Snow's Strangers and Brothers sequence, Lewis Eliot is the principal character of some of the volumes, such as Time of Hope and Homecomings; in others, such as The Affair and The New Men, he is an

interested observer on the periphery of the conflict.

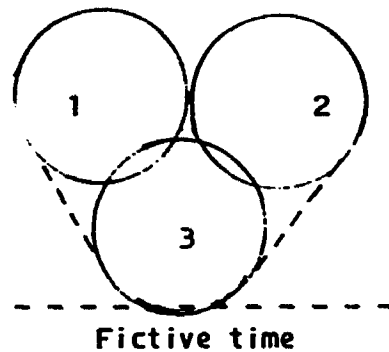
Two observable characteristics of sequence novels in this pattern reveal something of their nature. First, the majority of them are to a great degree autobiographical: Proust, Snow, Anthony Powell, and Sassoon, for instances, are all telling their own life-history, though with varying degrees of fictional disguise. Second, and perhaps as a consequence of the first, sequences in this pattern more often tend to be structurally open than do those in the other patterns. Since these sequences are in the first-person, the narrator-author views the past from the present of the moment in which he is writing. Unless he imposes a contained, thematic structure upon the material, as do Proust and Sassoon, the author is likely to concentrate upon the consciousness or development of the narrator-character and pursue the moving present from year to year and volume to volume. The logical end of such a life-history is death, but almost no autobiographical novels end with the death of the first-person narrator. Hence, sequences of this pattern are likely to be structurally open. Indeed, Sassoon's Memoirs of George Sherston is the only discoverable first-person chronological closed sequence in British fiction.

The fourth pattern is a first-person synchronous narrative. As in the third-person synchronous pattern, the separate "time spheres" of the sequence present simultaneous or overlapping actions. However, because of the point of view, this pattern is less likely to pursue a consecutive plot development. The novelist's depiction of synchronous or overlapping action necessitates several first-person narrators; although the author may sometimes use different narrators within each volume, ordinarily he

uses only one first-person speaker within each "time sphere." For instance, in both Cary's "Artist Trilogy" and his "Political Trilogy," each volume is narrated entirely by a separate person. Such a pattern makes the chronological development of an inclusive structure extremely difficult: because the narrative is divided among several speakers, each of whom may be aware of only part of the whole action or, as in Cary's novels, may be more interested in telling his own life-history, any plot developed within the whole sequence is likely to be disjointed. However, some chronological development is especially necessary in this pattern: as W. J. Harvey remarks, "Consequences can only be analyzed in time."¹⁴ Though the consequences of one life-history may be observable within the "time sphere" of a single volume, the effects of interrelated lives—often the thematic significance of this pattern—are observable through the passage of some fictive time, however slight, within the whole. Thus, the synchronous first-person narratives, while making the theme possible, make the achievement of a resolution very difficult. Of the four major patterns, this one most heavily relies upon gaining unity through theme.

These four patterns are the basic formal organizations of the sequence novel. However, they are not the only possible patterns, nor, as Miss Kerr points out,¹⁵ are they the only patterns that should occur in the sequence novel. Indeed, formal variations are numerous. Oliver Onions, for instance, employs both first and third persons and chronological and synchronous times in his sequence Whom God Hath Sundered.¹⁶ Volume one, In Accordance with the Evidence, recounts how and why Jeffries, the protagonist, committed murder; volume two, The Debit Account,

relates the effects of this undetected murder upon Jeffries; both volumes are presented as Jeffries' journal and are thus first-person narratives; volume two follows volume one sequentially and thus the "time spheres" are chronological. However, volume three, The Story of Louie, covers the same time and events but from a third person point of view limited to a focus upon Louie, the woman who knew of Jeffries' murder but kept his secret because she loved him. This pattern might be envisioned thus:



By this variation, Onions gains not only the chronological progression necessary for plot development, but also the objective evaluation and information not available in the first-person narrative. Another variation is Durrell's Alexandria Quartet. As previously described, Durrell clusters three "time spheres" which recount essentially the same events and characters but from different perspectives; he then continues the story in a fourth volume chronologically subsequent to the first three. However, Durrell also varies the point of view: in volume one, Darley, the first-person narrator, relates the events as he experienced them; in volume two, Darley again narrates the events, but now in the light of what he has learned from Balthazar; in volume three, Durrell shifts to an omniscient third-person for still another account; finally, in volume four, Darley relates his experiences upon his return to Alexandria several

years later. Durrell thereby combines both points of view and both temporal arrangements in his sequence novel.

Thus, to a greater degree than in ordinary novels, the sequence novelist's choice of point of view and temporal order creates the form of his work: his use of first or third-person point of view and chronological or synchronous time determines which of the four major formal patterns, or variation thereon, his sequence will follow.

As is the form of an ordinary novel, these formal patterns are ways of manifesting the theme of the work. This is not to say, of course, that all sequence novels with the same formal pattern have the same theme—that Waugh's Sword of Honor, for instance, has the same theme as White's The Once and Future King, merely because they both are third-person chronological sequences; such a conclusion would be ludicrously misleading. It is to say, however, that these four major formal patterns constitute distinctly different ways of presenting a subject and controlling the material in order to present the theme—"a general law of life."

The next chapter will examine four sequence novels: Galsworthy's The Forsyte Saga, Bennett's The Clayhanger Family, Sassoon's The Memoirs of George Sherston, and Cary's "Artist Trilogy." These sequences represent each of the four formal patterns. Each sequence is a "trilogy": this quantitative form is perhaps the one most frequently written, and it can most economically and efficiently illustrate the different formal patterns. Each sequence is "closed": it seems futile, if not impossible, to deal with "open" sequences, which lack a resolution of plot or an ultimate revelation of theme; indeed, only a "closed" sequence can show the sequence novel's fullest potential as a work of art. In

order to indicate what this potential is and how it is achieved, the following chapter will examine the inclusive structure and the author's handling of time and point of view in each sequence and show the efficacy of the resultant form in expressing the work's major theme.

FOOTNOTES: CHAPTER 11

¹In his important study of the problem in Time and The Novel (New York: Humanities Press, 1965), A. A. Mendilow states this: "There is as a rule one point of time in the story which serves as the point of reference. From this point the fictive present may be considered as beginning. In other words, the reader, if he is engrossed in his reading, translates all that happens from this moment of time onwards into an imaginative present of his own. . . . Verbally, all may be equally past; psychologically, once the point of reference has been established, each event presented in its time-order constitutes a point in the past considered as a now, and whatever is out of sequence in relation to that series of points is considered as relatively past or future. . . . Without attempting a solution of this psychological crux, it may be suggested that the reader feels the past of the novel as present, even if he is familiar with the story or has read it before, because he transfers to himself the absence in the minds of the characters of the sense of familiarity which . . . is one of the elements that give rise to the idea of pastness." Pp. 96-99.

²See Hans Meyerhoff, Time in Literature (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1960).

³See A. A. Mendilow, op. cit., and Dayton Kohler, "Time in the Modern Novel," College English, X (October, 1948), 15-24.

⁴See Percy Lubbock, op. cit.; Norman Friedman, "Point of View in Fiction: The Development of a Critical Concept," Publications of the Modern Language Association, LXX (December, 1955), 1160-1184; and Wayne C. Booth, op. cit.

⁵See Crane, above, p. 37, fn. 26.

⁶Forrest Reid, Tom Barber (New York: Pantheon Books, 1955). This single-volume American edition reverses the publication order so that the sequence runs chronologically. However, in the "Introduction," E. M. Forster says, "I have sometimes thought this unusual sequence of composition, this moving backwards towards origins may have brought extra strength." P. 8.

⁷Robert Liddell, Some Principles of Fiction (London: Jonathan Cape, 1956), pp. 139. Liddell attributes this comparison originally to E. M. Forster.

⁸Elizabeth M. Kerr, "Joyce Cary's Second Trilogy," University of Toronto Quarterly, XXIX (April, 1960), 310-325.

⁹Mary B. Thomas, "The Fairy Stories of C. S. Lewis" (unpublished Master's thesis, Department of English, University of Oklahoma, 1964), pp. 60-61.

¹⁰Norman Friedman, op. cit.

¹¹Booth, op. cit.

¹²Preface to The Ambassadors in The Art of the Novel, pp. 320-322.

¹³Hemmings, op. cit., p. 38.

¹⁴Character and the Novel, p. 119.

¹⁵Elizabeth M. Kerr, private letter to the author, dated May 14, 1967, The University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

¹⁶Whom God Hath Sundered (London: Martin Secher, 1925). This one volume edition violates the pattern of the original sequence by interspersing portions of The Story of Louie throughout the other two volumes. This revision thus gains a smoother chronological progression in the narrative but loses the effect of concentration upon dual protagonists achieved by the separate publication of the volumes.

CHAPTER III

THE FORMS ANALYZED

The nature of form in fiction is difficult to define. Percy Lubbock has said, "A book has a certain form, we all agree; what the form of a particular book may be, whether good or bad, and whether it matters --these are points of debate; but that a book has a form, this is not disputed."¹ Harold Weston has suggested the general nature of form: "With form, we talk in the symbolism of pictures, instead of in ideas; by suggestion instead of by direct statement, by Significance instead of by stated moral."² Mr. Weston has further defined form as the pattern by which the artist builds his work:

The writer must select and use incidents as the architect uses stone and brick. He must see life as orderly arranged incident. A great writer might be conceived as viewing life almost exclusively in terms of pattern, where the eyes of the non-artist saw only a series of chaotic occurrences.³

This formal pattern is conveyed by that element of fiction traditionally called the Plot. But the traditional conception of plot is inadequate as a critical tool, for plot is more than just a sequence of events which answer the question, "Then what happened?" Carl Grabo touched upon the essence of plot when he defined it as "characters and incidents artfully marshalled to an end, which is the expression through a design or pattern of some philosophy, aesthetic, or moral, in which

the author believes. . . .⁴ R. S. Crane has also commented upon the nature of plot in fiction:

The plot, considered formally, of any imitative work is, in relation to the work as a whole, not simply a means—a "frame-work" or "mere mechanism"—but rather the final end which everything in the work, if that is to be felt as a whole, must be made, directly or indirectly, to serve.⁵

Plot, therefore, is the structured pattern of significant scenes and episodes which, in relation to the principal characters, create the theme of the novel.

This structural pattern of the plot usually consists of six major sections or significant episodes:⁶

- I. Introduction, an exposition of characters, setting, and other elements necessary for an imaginative grasp of the initial situation, or stasis.
- II. Definition, a presentation of the problem or conflict in which the protagonist is involved. The Definition may be a generating circumstance which disrupts the stasis shown in the Introduction, or it may be the representation of the protagonist's intention or attitude.⁷
- III. Complication, an intensification of the problem or a barrier to the protagonist's intention. The Complication may involve reversals of previous situations and may force the protagonist to make a choice or series of choices which causally affect subsequent incidents. The complication may also be a series of events, or rising action, leading to the crisis.
- IV. Crisis, a situation in which the problem appears almost solved, the intention almost achieved, or the fate of the protagonist almost determined. The Crisis is thus the "turning point" of the plot structure.
- V. Resolution, a culmination of the action. The Resolution may reverse the Crisis or may pursue the effect of the Crisis. The Resolution may contain the emotional climax of the narrative.
- VI. Denouement, a clarification or untangling of the "threads" of the plot or a depiction of the outcome of the protagonist's intention or problem. The Denouement may include an exposition of the new stasis achieved through the course of the action.

These elements of plot structure constitute the skeleton of almost every narrative. Even the fairy tale of Cinderella, for instance, is so structured:

Introduction: Cinderella is an over-worked char girl and a mistreated step-child.

Definition: Cinderella's desire to attend the Prince's Ball is frustrated.

Complication: The Fairy Godmother's spells permit Cinderella to attend the ball. However, Cinderella must leave by midnight.

Crisis: The clock strikes twelve, the spells are broken, and Cinderella flees from the palace.

Resolution: Cinderella's foot fits the slipper, revealing her identity.

Denouement: Cinderella marries the Prince and "lives happily ever after."

Thus, even a simple fairy tale possesses the major elements of plot structure.

In addition to these six principal structural elements, however, a narrative may contain other episodes as well. In many works, Secondary Incidents "serve not to change the situation but to define it."⁸ That is, secondary incidents do not advance the story; instead, they serve as points of contrast, augment the mood or tone of the narrative, or help focus the theme. Though secondary incidents might be eliminated without affecting the plot, their elimination would decrease the effectiveness of the narrative.

Many works also contain Parallel Stories, or subplots. A parallel story may have its own principal character and plot structure; for instance, in Angus Wilson's Anglo-Saxon Attitudes, Rose Lorimer is the protagonist of a subsidiary story with its own structural pattern.

However, a parallel story must always be related to the main plot; ideally, its characters must act in affective relationships with the main character, its plot must function as a force in the main plot, and its theme must contribute to the development of the main theme. Otherwise, the parallel story is extraneous to the main story and therefore detrimental to the unity of the whole.

The structure of a plot is variable. For instance, the narrative may plunge directly into the definition of the problem, with exposition slowly distributed thereafter; the resolution may follow the crisis so swiftly that they virtually merge into one episode; the denouement may be omitted altogether and the story end with a sudden catastrophe; so many secondary incidents may be included that the main elements of the plot are obscured; the parallel story may emerge at any of the various points in the main plot; or the main plot itself may reach its resolution before the parallel story does and thus seem anti-climactic. In other words, the structural pattern which the artist creates is subject to almost infinite variation.

However, the purpose here is not to explore all of the variations or technics of plot but to outline the basic elements of plot structure, for the form of a work emerges as these elements of the narrative are shaped into a particular pattern. If one alters the plot structure, the form of the work is similarly reshaped. For example, if the Prince had caught Cinderella as she fled down the palace stairs and had proclaimed their engagement then and there, the plot would still have a crisis, resolution, and denouement. But because the resolution now immediately follows the crisis, the form of the narrative would differ. Secondary

incidents and parallel stories also affect the form of a work: the abundance or dearth of secondary incidents may impede or hasten the succession of the main plot elements; the position and relevance of parallel stories may even more significantly help to shape the form of the work.

In brief, all narratives--particularly novels--have a plot. All plots have structure. The particular structure of a plot--the pattern of the major plot elements, parallel stories, and secondary incidents--constitutes the form of the work. Thus, form appears as the observable shape which plot structure assumes.

Since plot is the structured pattern of significant scenes and episodes which, in relation to character, create the theme of a novel, R. S. Crane justly states, "For the critic . . . , the form of the plot is a first principle, which he must grasp as clearly as possible for any work he proposes to examine before he can deal adequately with the questions raised by its parts."⁹

The major critical problem which arises in an analysis of the form of a sequence novel is that it contains a double structure: the separate volumes which constitute the sequence each have structure and form, and the entire sequence has an inclusive structure and form. Logically, an analysis of the parts will lead to an understanding of the whole. In general, this principle holds true in an analysis of sequence novels. However, as previously indicated, the novelist's handling of time and point of view determine the formal pattern of the entire sequence. The significance of this fact is that the structure of the whole sequence may be the product of several separate structures which, in relation to

each other, are neither chronologically sequential nor narratively consistent. For example, the parallel story of one volume may become the main plot of another, and a minor character in that parallel story may become the protagonist; an incident which seems secondary in one volume may, through another narrator's point of view, assume major significance in a subsequent volume; in complexly interwoven structures, the true resolution or denouement of one volume may come as a minor episode in the plot of another; even the nature of the plots may change within a sequence, one volume's being a plot of character and another's being a plot of action.¹⁰ Consequently, the structure of the entire sequence depends upon both the structures of the separate volumes and the artist's control of time and point of view over the whole.

Therefore, the following essays will examine the structure of each novel in a sequence, analyze the inclusive structure which results, discuss the theme which the work expresses, and investigate the use of fictive time and point of view in relation to that inclusive structure and theme.

1. The Forsyte Saga

Galsworthy's The Forsyte Saga represents the most frequently employed sequence novel pattern, the chronological narrative told from the third-person point of view. As such, the events, with few exceptions, flow sequentially; the narrator remains a controlled distance from and outside the action.

Galsworthy's sequence consists of three novels, each of which contains a main plot and at least one important parallel story, or subplot;

the sequence also contains two structurally and thematically important short stories which link the three novels together. The principal action of the sequence focuses upon Soames Forsyte and his relationships with his family and with Irene, his first wife. Through this action, Galsworthy develops the central theme of the sequence: "the disturbance that Beauty effects in the lives of men. . . ," "the impingement of Beauty and the claims of Freedom on a possessive world. . . ." ¹¹

A brief analysis of the plot structures of each of the novels and the linking short stories will show how this theme emerges from the action and characters. The purpose here, of course, is not to account for every detail or event within the entire sequence but to lay bare the patterns of plot structure so that one may better understand the functions of time and point of view in shaping the inclusive structure--the form--of the sequence.

The Man of Property, the first unit in the sequence, contains as its main plot the failure of Soames Forsyte's marriage to Irene; it also presents as its principal subplot the disintegration of Forsyte family unity through the behavior of old Jolyon Forsyte. ¹²

An analysis of the plot structures reveals the pattern of

The Man of Property:

General Introduction: the Forsyte family, gathered at old Jolyon's, is shown "at the summit of its efflorescence." (Chapter 1) ¹³

Subplot Introduction: Old Jolyon, symbol of its solidity, is presented as the head of the Forsyte family.
(Chapter 1)

Subplot Definition: Old Jolyon yearns for his ostracised son. The conflict defined is that between old Jolyon's sense of convention and family pride, on the one hand, and, on the other, the disturbing emotions of loneliness and paternal love.
(Chapter 2)

Main Introduction: Irene and Soames show the barrier of cool behavior between them: "Her eyes were turned on himself; Soames dropped his glance at once. The smile had died off her lips."
(Chapter 3, page 43)

Main Definition: Soames yearns to possess and receive satisfaction from his wife:

Could a man own anything prettier than this dining-table with its deep tints, the starry, soft-petalled roses, the ruby glass, and quaint silver furnishing; could a man own anything prettier than the woman who sat at it? Gratitude was no virtue among Forsytes, who competitive, and full of common-sense, had no occasion for it; and Soames only experienced a sense of exasperation amounting to pain, that he did not own her as it was his right to own her, that he could not, as by stretching out his hand to that rose, pluck her and sniff the very secrets of her heart.

Out of his other property, out of all the things he had collected, his silver, his pictures, his houses, his investments, he got a secret and intimate feeling; out of her he got none.

In this house of his there was writing on every wall. His business-like temperament protested against a mysterious warning that she was not made for him. He had married this woman, conquered her, made her his own, and it seemed to him contrary to the most fundamental of all laws, the law of possession, that he could do no more than own her body-- if indeed he could do that, which he was beginning to doubt. If any one had asked him if he wanted to own her soul, the question would have seemed to him both ridiculous and sentimental. But he did so want, and the writing said he never would. (Chapter 5, page 62)

This scene clearly defines the novel's central thematic conflict, the disturbing effects of "the impingement of Beauty and the claims of Freedom on a possessive world."

Subplot Complication: after growing attached to Jolyon's children, old Jolyon consciously criticizes the Forsyte code of behavior. (Chapter 7)

Main Complication: Irene and Bosinney fall in love.

His [Swithin's] Forsyte spirit watched her balanced on the log, her pretty figure swaying, smiling down at the young man gazing up with such strange, shining eyes; slipping now--a-ah! falling, o-oh! sliding--down his breast; her soft, warm body clutched, her head bent back from his lips; his kiss; her recoil; his cry: "You must know-- I love you!" (Chapter 12, page 123)

Subplot Crisis: old Jolyon breaks social relations with his family. (Chapter 16)

Subplot Resolution: further incensed, old Jolyon, after breaking financial relations with his family, decides to leave his property to his ostracized son. (Chapter 26)

Main Crisis: Soames forcibly asserts his conjugal rights.¹⁴

The morning after a certain night on which Soames at last asserted his rights and acted like a man, he breakfasted alone.

He ate steadily, but at times a sensation as though he could not swallow attacked him. Had he been right to yield to his overmastering hunger of the night before, and break down the resistance which he had suffered now too long from this woman who was his lawful and solemnly constituted helpmate?

He was strangely haunted by the recollection of her face, from before which, to soothe her, he had tried to pull her hands--of her terrible smothered sobbing, the

like of which he had never heard, and still seemed to hear; and he was still haunted by the odd, intolerable feeling of remorse and shame he had felt, as he stood looking at her by the flame of the single candle, before silently slinking away. (Chapter 27, page 258)

Main Resolution: irene flees from Soames' house, and Soames discovers that she has left behind everything, even her jewels.

Nothing that she could have done, nothing that she had done, brought home to him like this the inner significance of her act. For the moment, perhaps, he understood nearly all there was to understand—understood that she loathed him, that she had loathed him for years, that for all intents and purposes they were like people living in different worlds, that there was no hope for him, never had been; even, that she had suffered—that she was to be pitied.

In that moment of emotion he betrayed the Forsyte in him—forgot himself, his interest, his property—was capable of almost anything; was lifted into the pure ether of the selfless and unpractical.

Such moments pass quickly. (Chapter 26, page 287)

Subplot denouement: old Jolyon, publicly reunited with his son, refuses to mend the family cleavage. (Chapter 31)

Main Denouement: after Bosinney's death, Irene returns to Soames' house, and Soames decides to keep her there.

The curtains were drawn for the night, a bright fire of cedar logs burned in the grate, and by its light he saw Irene sitting in her usual corner on the sofa. He shut the door softly, and went towards her. She did not move, and did not seem to see him.

"So you've come back?" he said. . . .

Then he caught sight of her face, so white and motionless that it seemed as though the blood must have stopped flowing in her veins; and her eyes, that looked enormous, like the great, wide, startled brown eyes of an owl.

.

Suddenly she tried to rise, but he prevented her; it was then that he understood.

She had come back like an animal wounded to death, not knowing where to turn, not knowing what she was doing. The sight of her figure, huddled in the fur, was enough. (Chapter 32, pages 306-307)

"Indian Summer of a Forsyte" is the second unit of The Forsyte

Saga. A short story which Galsworthy called an "interlude," its theme

is not the disturbing effect of Beauty but its charming effects.

The structure of the "interlude" is simple and straightforward:

Linking Introduction: the events of the interim are shown: Irene's flight from Soames, old Jolyon's purchase of Robin Hill, and the family's continued division.

Plot Introduction: old Jolyon is left lonely by his family's absence: "Curiously perfect peace was left by their departure; blissful, yet blank, because his son was not there." (314)

Definition: old Jolyon invites Irene to dinner and to return to Robin Hill. This scene defines the conflict between the Forsyte code of social decorum and unforgivingness of scandalous behavior, and the charming appeal which Beauty works upon the emotions.

Complication: old Jolyon longs for Irene's company:

Old Jolyon walked and talked with Holly. At first he felt taller and full of a new vigour; then he felt restless. Almost every afternoon they would enter the coppice, and walk as far as the log. "Well, she's not there!" he would think, "of course not!" And he would feel a little shorter, and drag his feet walking up the hill home, with his hand clapped to his left side. (328)

He continues to see Irene, even to the extent of endangering the harmony of his own immediate family:

"You said June had forgiven me; but she could never forget, Uncle Jolyon."

Forget! She must forget, if he wanted her to! (340)

Crisis: old Jolyon decides to leave Irene a portion of his estate:

He was going to leave her something in his Will; nothing could have so stirred the stillly deeps of thought and memory. . . . No making oneself new again for love or life or anything. Nothing left to do but enjoy beauty from afar off while you could, and leave it something in your will. . . .

"How much?" Well! enough at all events to save her getting old before her time, to keep the lines out of her face as long as possible, and grey from soiling that bright hair. . . . "How much?" She had none of his blood in her! In loyalty to the tenor of his life for forty years and more, ever since he married and founded that mysterious thing, a family, came this warning thought—None of his blood, no right to anything! It was a luxury then, this notion. An extravagance, a petting of an old man's whim, one of those things done in dotage. His real future was vested in those who had his blood, in whom he would live on when he was gone But she was there . . . , giving him pleasure with her beauty and grace. One had no right to inflict an old man's company, no right to ask her down to play to him and let him look at her—for no reward! Pleasure must be paid for in this world. . . . "Well, I'm going to," he thought, "let them think what they will. I'm going to!" (341-342)

This deed is the turning point in the conflict within old Jolyon between the sense of family and property and the charm of beauty: he yields completely to the spell of Beauty and makes his money now not the mere purchaser but the preserver and protector of Beauty.

Resolution: old Jolyon disobeys the doctor's orders and goes to meet Irene; this act represents the ultimate triumph of the charm of Beauty over the extreme of Forsyitism, the ownership of one's own body and life.

Denouement: old Jolyon dies, happy.

The second novel and the third unit of the sequence, In Chancery is by far the most complex structurally, for it weaves together a main plot and three important subplots. The main plot concerns Soames' desire for an heir and his further pursuit of Irene; the first subplot relates

the marital difficulties of Winifred Dartie, Soames' sister; the second narrates the relationship between Irene and young Jolyon; the third presents the romance of Holly Forsyte and Val Dartie, Winifred's son. The structures of these various plots are tightly interwoven:

Main Introduction: Soames desires a wife and an heir:

The subject on which alone he wanted to talk--his own undivorced position--was unspeakable. And yet it occupied his mind to the exclusion of all else. . . . He was worth today well over a hundred thousand pounds, and had no one to leave it to--no real object for going on with what was his religion. . . . There had always been a strongly domestic, philoprogenitive side to Soames; balked and frustrated, it had hidden away, but now had crept out again in this his "prime of life." Concentrated and focussed of late by the attraction of a girl's undoubted beauty, it had become a veritable prepossession. (Chapter 1, page 368)

Subplot (1) Introduction: Winifred's marriage disintegrates, and Dartie flees to South America. (Chapter 2) This development creates a parallel between Winifred's situation and that of Soames.

Subplot (1) Definition: Winifred decides to divorce Dartie. (Chapter 3) The conflict is that between Winifred's wounded pride and possessiveness and her fear of scandal.

Main Definition: Soames decides to seek a divorce and marry Annette:

Take steps! What steps? How? Dirty linen washed in public? Pah! With his reputation for sagacity, for far-sightedness and the clever extrication of others, he, who stood for proprietary interests, to become the plaything of that Law of which he was a pillar! . . . "But I do want her, and I want a son! There's nothing for it but divorce! It seemed ridiculous,

after all these years of utter separation! But it would have to be. (Chapter 4, pages 394-395)

This scene establishes the conflict between the Forsyte principles of avoiding scandal and "never letting go," on the one hand, and Soames' desire for Annette and an heir, on the other.

Subplot (2) Introduction: now settled at Robin Hill, Jolyon has not seen Irene for years. (Chapter 6)

Subplot (3) Introduction: Val and Holly meet at Robin Hill and like each other. (Chapter 7)

Subplot (2) Definition: deciding to help her, Jolyon sees Irene again and then conveys her message to Soames. These two scenes define the new relationship between Irene and Jolyon and reassert the cleavage in the family between James' branch and old Jolyon's. (Chapter 8)

Main Complication: Soames still desires Irene:

That cursed attraction of her was there for him even now, after all these years of estrangement and bitter thoughts. It was there, ready to mount to his head at a sign, a touch. . . . Most men would have hated the sight of her, as she had deserved. She had spoiled his life, wounded his pride to death, defrauded him of a son. And yet the mere sight of her, cold and resisting as ever, had this power to upset him utterly. (Chapter 11, pages 442-443)

Thereafter, Soames intently pursues Irene:

Why should he be put to the shifts and the sordid disgraces and the lurking defeats of the Divorce Court, when there she was like an empty house only waiting to be retaken into use and possession by him who legally owned her? To one so secretive as Soames the thought of re-entry into quiet possession of his own property with nothing given away to the world was intensely alluring. (Chapter 14, page 463)

Subplot (2) Complication: Succumbing to Irene's beauty and helplessness, Jolyon decides to aid her at all costs. (Chapter 13) From being merely a third party, Jolyon now finds himself deeply enmeshed in Irene's affairs.

Subplot (3) Definition: Val and Holly fall in love against Jolly's opposition. (Chapter 15) The conflict between the budding romance of Val and Holly and the antagonism of

Jolly echoes the cleavage within the Forsyte family.

Subplot (1) Complication: Winifred's determination to divorce Dartie wavers. (Chapter 18)

Subplot (3) Complication: After his fight with Val, Jolly orders Holly to avoid Val, but she refuses. (Chapter 19)

Subplot (2) Crisis: though in love with Irene, Jolyon leaves her in Paris and returns to Robin Hill. (Chapter 20)

Subplot (1) Crisis: Winifred wins a decree of restitution of rights. (Chapter 21)

Subplot (3) Crisis: Jolly dares Val to enlist in the Yeomanry, and they join together. (Chapter 22)

Subplot (1) Resolution: Dartie returns to Winifred, and she takes him back. (Chapter 27)

Main Crisis: Soames abandons his pursuit of Irene and reaches an "understanding" with Annette's mother:

"I am a married man," he said, "living apart from my wife for many years. I am seeking to divorce her."

Madame Lamotte put down her cup. Indeed! What tragic things there were. . . .

"I am a rich man," he added "It is useless to say more at present, but I think you understand."

Madame's eyes, so open that the whites showed above them, looked at him very straight.

"Ah! ca—mais nous avons le temps!" was all she said. (Chapter 30, page 570)

Literally the turning point of the main plot, this scene dramatizes Soames' crucial decision to stop pursuing Irene and to gain Annette instead.

Subplot (2) Resolution: Soames' suit brings Irene and Jolyon closer together, and Jolly's death removes the obstacle to their love. (Chapter 35)

Subplot (3) Resolution: Val and Holly marry. (Chapter 37)

Main Resolution: Soames formally proposes marriage with Annette:

"My dear Madame (he said),

"You will see by the enclosed newspaper cutting that I obtained my decree of divorce today. By the English Law I shall not, however, be free

marry again till the decree is confirmed six months hence. In the meanwhile I have the honor to ask to be considered a formal suitor for the hand of your daughter. I shall write again in a few days and beg you both to come and stay at my river house.

"I am, dear Madame,

"Sincerely yours,

"Soames Forsyte." (Chapter 37,
page 606)

Six months later, Soames and Annette are quietly married. Soames' efforts to escape his wifeless status are thereby ended.

Subplot (1) Denouement: Dartie returns to his old ways, and Winifred returns to coping with him. (Chapter 38)

Subplot (3) Denouement: Val and Holly settle in South Africa. (Chapter 39)

Subplot (2) Denouement: Irene and Jolyon marry and have a son. (Chapter 39) They thus achieve happiness by paying the high price of social and familial ostracism.

Main Denouement: Soames gains an heir. (Chapter 40)

Minor Crisis: Soames must decide to save either Annette or the child.

Minor resolution: Soames decides to save the child.

Minor denouement: Both Annette and his daughter live, giving Soames an heir.

The sense of triumph and renewed possession swelled within him.

By God! this—this thing was his!

(Chapter 42, page 639)

"Awakening" is the second short story or "interlude" in The Forsyte Saga. It focuses upon Jon, the eight-year-old son of Irene and Jolyon, and his discovery that Beauty is necessary for happiness. Its theme is again not the disturbing but the charming effects of Beauty; it thus closely parallels the first link, "Indian Summer of the Forsyte."

The plot structure of "Awakening" shows some modification of the usual pattern: the introduction consists of exposition on two time levels; no denouement clearly exists as such.

Introduction:

Present: Jon indecisively stands upon the stairs at Robin Hill.

Past: John was reared as the pampered child of rich, doting parents.

Definition: Jon is lonely and bored.

He was filled to the brim of his soul with restlessness and the want of something—not a tree, not a gun—something soft.

.
His heart felt empty. (651-652)

Complication: Jon is fascinated by his mother's beauty, but he does not fully understand its importance to him.

Crisis: Jon has a nightmare:

He dreamed he was drinking milk out of a pan that was the moon, opposite a great black cat which watched him with a funny smile like his father's. He heard it whisper: "Don't drink too much!" It was the cat's milk, of course, and he put out his hand amicably to stroke the creature; but it was no longer there; the pan had become a bed, in which he was lying, and when he tried to get out he couldn't find the edge; he couldn't find it—he—he couldn't get out! It was dreadful!

. . . . The bed had begun to go round too;
. . . . Faster and faster!--till he and the bed
. . . and the moon and the cat were all one wheel going round and round and up and up--awful--awful--awful! (660-661)

The major elements of the dream--the moon and milk associated with Irene and Beauty, and the bed, representative of the physical and trivial--symbolize the conflict between, on the one hand, Jon's vague awareness that Beauty satisfies his yearnings for "something" and, on the other, his comfortable, pampered but bored existence. Through the horror of the nightmare, the impressionable mind of young Jon is likely to be shaped for or against Beauty.

Resolution: Jon awakens to the soothing presence of Irene: "There was his mother, with her hair like Guinevere's, and, clutching her, he buried his face in it." (661) Then, he falls asleep by her side, happy in her presence.

What slight denouement the story possesses is contained in the dependent clause of the final sentence: "He fell into the dreamless sleep, which rounded off his past." (662) This clause--suggesting that Jon's previous existence, ignorant of the importance of Beauty, is over and that a new life, shaped by an "awakening" to Beauty, now begins--is the barest possible denouement.

To Let, the last unit of The Forsyte Saga, contains three major plot strands: the main plot concerns Soames' efforts to preserve his happiness and that of his daughter, Fleur; the first subplot presents Irene's and Jolyon's struggles to save Jon from unhappiness; the second subplot depicts the romance of Fleur and Jon.

The structures of the three plots in To Let are tightly knit together:

Expository link: Soames recalls the events of the interim. (Chapter 1)

Main Introduction: Soames meets Irene again but keeps Fleur ignorant of the past:

Every breath of the old scandal had been carefully kept from her at home, and Winifred warned many times that he wouldn't have a whisper of it reach her for the world. So far as she ought to know, he had never been married. (Chapter 1, page 681)

Subplot (1) Introduction: the meeting stirs unhappy memories for Irene. (Chapter 1)

Subplot (2) Introduction: Fleur and Jon meet and speak to each other for the first time. (Chapter 1)

Subplot (1) Definition: Irene and Jolyon decide not to tell Jon about the past, but Jon has already fallen in love with Fleur. (Chapter 3) Parallel scenes establish the conflict between two beliefs about Jon's happiness: on the one hand, his parents think Jon will be happier if he knows nothing of the past and does not see Fleur again; on the other, Jon thinks his happiness to be in the future with Fleur.

Subplot (2) Definition: Jon and Fleur fall in love but must conceal their romance. (Chapters 7 & 8). These scenes define the conflict between the family cleavage from the past and the unknowing love of Jon and Fleur who hope to bridge that cleavage.

Subplot (2) Complication: inherent in the definition, the complication is the secrecy with which Jon and Fleur must conduct their romance, a secrecy necessitated by events antecedent to the definition.

Main Definition: Soames realizes that both his pride and his happiness are dependent upon Fleur's happiness and ignorance of the past:

Unless there was absolute necessity the thought that his adored daughter should learn of the old scandal hurt his pride too much.

.
 "Too fond of her!" he thought, "too fond!" He was like a man uninsured, with his ships at sea. Uninsured again--as in that other time, so long ago, when he would wonder dumb and jealous in the wilderness of London, longing for that woman--his first wife--

the mother of this infernal boy.
(Chapter 9, pages 730, 738)

Thus emerges the conflict between Soames' efforts to preserve their happiness and Fleur's activities which will revive the old hurts of the past.

Subplot (1) Complication: rather than tell Jon the truth, Irene and Jolyon attempt to separate him from Fleur. (Chapter 10) Instead of securing Jon's happiness, their lack of frankness only injures their family harmony.

Main Complication: still refusing to tell her of the past, Soames warns Fleur against becoming involved with Jon:

"Don't tell me," he said, "that you're foolish enough to have any feeling beyond caprice. That would be too much!" And he laughed.

Fleur, who had never heard him laugh like that, thought: "Then it is deep! Oh! what is it?" And putting her hand through his arm she said lightly:

"No, of course; caprice. Only I like my caprices and I don't like yours, dear."

"Mine!" said Soames bitterly, and turned away.
(Chapter 12, page 757)

Thus, rather than deter her, Soames manages only to pique her curiosity and intensify the conflict.

Subplot (2) Crisis: Fleur learns the truth and determines to marry Jon, even though she must deceive him. (Chapter 16) Once one of the young lovers learns the truth and still continues the romance, the subsequent events seem assured.

Main Crisis: Soames admits that he himself is the impediment to Fleur's happiness:

"I don't suppose," said Soames, "that if left to myself I should try to prevent you; I must put up with things, I know, to keep your affection. But it's not I who control this matter. That's what I want you to realize before it's too late. If you go on thinking you can get your way and encourage this feeling, the blow will be much heavier when you find you can't."

"Oh!" cried Fleur, "help me, Father; you can help me, you know."

"I?" he said bitterly. "Help? I am the impediment—the just cause and impediment—isn't that the jargon? You have my blood in your veins." (Chapter 21, page 830)

Subplot (1) Crisis: Jolyon's letter informs Jon about the old scandal and begs him to forget Fleur, but Irene urges him not to think of her welfare. (Chapters 25 & 26).

Subplots (1) & (2) Resolution: seeing the loathing on Irene's face, Jon tells Soames that he will not marry Fleur. (Chapter 30) Just as it terminates the romance, Jon's reply coincides with his parents' belief that his happiness lies in his separation from Fleur.

Main Resolution: Soames realizes that he is the cause of Fleur's unhappiness: "She had everything in the world that he could give her, except the one thing that she could not have because of him!" (Chapter 31, page 896) All of Soames' efforts to preserve Fleur's happiness have failed, and along with her happiness, his dies also: "Ah! why could one not put happiness into Local Loans, gild its edges, insure it against going down?" (Page 897)

Subplot (1) Denouement: Though realizing that he made the right decision, Jon leaves England and Irene. (Chapter 32)

Subplot (2) Denouement: Fleur marries Michael Mont. (Chapter 33)

Main Denouement: Soames refuses to acknowledge Irene's farewell gesture:

He went out into the fashionable street quivering from head to foot. He knew what she had meant to say: "Now that I am going for ever out of the reach of you and yours—forgive me; I wish you well." That was the meaning; last sign of that terrible reality—passing morality, duty, common sense—her aversion from him who had owned her body, but had never touched her spirit or her heart. It hurt; yes—more than if she had kept her mask unmoved, her hand unlifted. (Chapter 34, page 917)

In grim parallel to the first scene, the festive family gathering at old Jolyon's, the last scene of The Forsyte Saga reveals Soames unhappily sitting near the family vault where the original Forsytes lie buried.

From these five separate parts of The Forsyte Saga emerges a

coherent structural pattern within the whole. This inclusive structure, as one might logically expect, consists of major events in the main plots of the separate parts.

The basis of this inclusive structure is the conflict between Irene and Soames; each character embodies an element of the thematic conflict which Galsworthy identified as "the impingement of Beauty and the claims of Freedom upon a possessive world." (xiii) Irene is "a concretion of disturbing Beauty" (xii); Soames, "the man of property." The actions stemming from their relationship and from their relationships with others constitute the central subject of the entire sequence.

The inclusive introduction depicts the stasis of Irene and Soames' relationship at the beginning of the sequence, a relationship which Irene later describes to Jon: "Admiration of beauty and longing for possession are not love. If yours were another case like mine, Jon--where the deepest things are stifled; the flesh joined, and the spirit at war!" (883) Soames longs to own Irene and is dissatisfied that he does not:

Out of his other property, out of all the things he had collected, his silver, his pictures, his houses, his investments, he got a secret and intimate feeling; out of her he got none.

In this house of his there was writing on every wall. His business-like temperament protested against a mysterious warning that she was not made for him. He had married this woman, conquered her, made her his own, and it seemed to him contrary to the most fundamental of all laws, the law of possession, that he could do no more than own her body--if indeed he could do that, which he was beginning to doubt. If any one had asked him he wanted to own her soul, the question would have seemed to him both ridiculous and sentimental. But he did so want, and the writing said he never would. (62)

The definition of The Man of Property, this scene reveals Soames' possessive attitude toward Irene. Thematically, it shows his failure

to see beyond the tangible aspects of Beauty into its heart as Spirit; more important, it stresses the inherent antithesis between Beauty and the possessive instinct, between things of Spirit and things of Matter.

The inclusive definition is Soames' attempt to reassert his conjugal rights by force, the crisis of The Man of Property:

The morning after a certain night on which Soames at last asserted his rights and acted like a man, he breakfasted alone. . . .

He ate steadily, but at times a sensation as though he could not swallow attacked him. Had he been right to yield to his overmastering hunger of the night before, and break down the resistance which he had suffered now too long from this woman who was his lawful and solemnly constituted helpmate?

He was strangely haunted by the recollection of her face, from before which, to soothe her, he had tried to pull her hands—of her terrible smothered sobbing, the like of which he had never heard, and still seemed to hear; and he was still haunted by the odd intolerable feeling of remorse and shame he had felt, as he stood looking at her by the flame of a single candle, before silently slinking away. (258)

This event, indicating Soames' ruthless possessiveness, projects the latent conflict between Irene and Soames into the realm of action. Moreover, it generates the tension of subsequent events: it precipitates Irene's flight from Soames and determines her attitude throughout the remainder of the sequence: her fear and loathing of Soames and her refusal to return to him stem directly from this violent act of possession, "the supreme act of property." (264) Knowledge of the event conditions Jolyon's sympathetic guardianship of Irene and later shapes Jon's rejection of Fleur. Soames himself is shaken by his deed, but he refuses to admit his own fault, refuses to recognize that he cannot control Beauty through physical acts of possession. Thematically, the event is an obvious presentation of the idea that Beauty cannot be possessed by force,

that even an attempt to do so entails extraordinary cost--the loss of the Beauty desired.

The inclusive complication is presented in "Indian Summer of a Forsyte." Here we learn that Irene has left Soames and has been living alone. More explicitly, the crisis of the interlude is the inclusive complication: old Jolyon leaves part of his estate to Irene:

He was going to leave her something in his Will; nothing could have so stirred the stilly deeps of thought and memory. . . . No making oneself new again for love or life or anything. Nothing left to do but enjoy beauty from afar off while you could, and leave it something in your will. . . . (341)

As might be expected in a narrative as long and complex as The Forsyte Saga, several complications occur. However, old Jolyon's deed motivates considerable action in subsequent volumes: his decision insures Irene's financial independence and thus her continued freedom from Soames; the will also prepares for young Jolyon's subsequent involvement with Irene as the trustee of her legacy. Moreover, the episode illustrates a significant thematic antithesis: old Jolyon, by not attempting to possess Beauty, finds happiness in its charming effects. Therefore, this episode must be considered the primary complication.

The inclusive crisis is the crisis of In Chancery. His desire for an heir and his continued desire for Irene compel Soames to try to win her back, to re-enter "into quiet possession of his own property." (463) But when Irene persistently refuses to return, Soames reluctantly abandons his efforts and seeks new "property," Annette. He thus reaches an agreement with Madame Lamotte:

"I am a married man," he said, "living apart from my wife for many years. I am seeking to divorce her."

"I am a rich man," he added, fully conscious that the remark was not in good taste. "It is useless to say more at present, but I think you understand."

Madame's eyes, so open that the whites showed above them, looked at him very straight.

"Ah! ca--mais nous avons le temps!" was all she said. (570)

The crisis is thereby literally a turning point, for Soames turns his attentions and desires away from Irene and focuses them upon Annette. Thematically, Soames' desire for Annette is but another manifestation of his desire to possess Beauty. Emotionally disturbed by her physical beauty, Soames adopts an attitude toward her strikingly similar to that toward Irene: "So pretty she was, so self-possessed—she frightened him. Those cornflower blue eyes, the turn of that creamy neck, her delicate curves—she was a standing temptation to indiscretion!" (437) But he is more concerned with possessing her and fathering a child: "What a perfect young thing to hold in one's arms! What a mother for his heir!" (437) Thus, as with Irene, Soames desires to possess and use the body of Beauty, with no true recognition of its spirit.

The inclusive resolution is the crisis of To Let. Soames realizes that he is the impediment to Fleur's and, through her, his own happiness:

"But it's not I who control this matter. That's what I want you to realize before it's too late. If you go on thinking you can get your way and encourage this feeling, the blow will be much heavier when you find you can't."

"Oh!" cried Fleur, "help me, Father; you can help me, you know."

"I?" he said bitterly. "Help? I am the impediment—the just cause and impediment—isn't that the jargon? You have my blood in your veins." (830)

Possession implies control, and Soames now realizes that he can exert no control over Irene or the passions created by his daughter's romance. However, he still does not recognize that the fault is his own. Even

when he goes to Robin Hill to see Irene, he thinks her behavior is no fault of his: "Ah! she had been a bad lot--had loved two men and not himself!" (890) His futile efforts to persuade Irene to shake hands and "let the past die" (891) only emphasize his failure to control the situation and his blindness to its causes. Thematically, the episode is the climax of the disturbing effect Beauty has had upon the possessive instinct, an effect caused and intensified by the blindness of possessiveness to matters of spirit. Thus, Soames now recognizes that Beauty and Passion are not subject to the controls of Property, but he still fails to recognize the true cause of his helplessness--his blindness to spiritual responsibilities: "There he was at sixty-five and no more in command of things than if he had not spent forty years in building up security. . . ." (886)

The inclusive denouement, also the denouement of To Let, is Soames' refusal to forgive Irene. Unable to grasp "that truth-- passing the understanding of a Forsyte pure--that the body of Beauty has a spiritual essence, uncapturable save by a devotion which thinks not of self," (916) Soames refuses to acknowledge Irene's gesture of farewell:

He knew what she had meant to say: "Now that I am going for ever out of the reach of you and yours--forgive me; I wish you well." That was the meaning; last sign of that terrible reality--passing morality, duty, common sense--her aversion from him who had owned her body, but had never touched her spirit or her heart. It hurt; yes--more than if she had kept her mask unmoved, her hand unlifted. (917)

Though Irene is now beyond his control, Soames is still unwilling to forgive her rejection of him, still unwilling to sanction her freedom, still unable to admit his defeat or understand its causes. Thematically, the episode illustrates the tenacity, even in defeat, with which the

possessive instinct clings to something and its pertinacious blindness to "the claims of Freedom upon a possessive world."

Woven throughout this extensive narrative are a number of subplots. Their functions within The Forsyte Saga are two-fold. First, they operate in a causal relationship with the events of the main story line. Occurrences within the subplots often motivate events within the main plot, and vice versa. For example, old Jolyon's social and financial break creates the initial cleavage within the family and intensifies the conflict between Irene and Soames: because old Jolyon is angry with his brother's family, he refuses to speak to Bosinney for Soames, who consequently proceeds on his own, with catastrophic results. Val Dartie and Holly's romance, which echoes the family cleavage and foreshadows the disastrous romance of Fleur and Jon, provokes Jolly into joining the Yeomanry; his subsequent death frees Jolyon in his relationship with Irene, and their love, of course, markedly affects the central relationship between Irene and Soames. Fleur's pleas for help force Soames to admit his lack of control over Irene or the situation; Jon's rejection of Fleur and his departure from England enable Irene herself to forgive Soames, who, however, refuses to forgive her. Therefore, events within the subplots contribute significant motivation for action within the main plot.

Second, the subplots help define and sharpen the theme of the main story line. They achieve this purpose in one of two ways: either they echo the major thematic conflict or else they stand as antithetic foil to it. Of the former, the Winifred-Dartie and the Fleur-Jon subplots are most notable. Winifred's situation parallels that of Soames: both

have been abandoned by their mates and both seek a divorce, but each, motivated by his Forsyte sense of property, is reluctant to "let go," to recognize the "claims of Freedom." Fleur, her sense of property strengthened by innumerable indulgences from Soames, becomes bent upon possessing Jon. She early announces to a friend, "I perceive all sorts of difficulties, but you know when I really want a thing I get it." (724) Even when she learns the truth about the old scandal, she declares, "I mean to have him!" (795) To get him, she resorts to deception, pleas, and threats. But in her attempt to trick Jon into eloping, she perceives only the matter of the affair and is blind to the spirit. Consequently, as does Soames, she loses what she desires.

Of the subplots which function as antithetic foils, the most important are those concerning old Jolyon and Irene and young Jolyon. Old Jolyon, disturbed by his parental passions, is torn between his Forsyte principles and his desire for happiness. Realizing that they are inadequate assurances of happiness, he defies the conventions of Forsytism. Thus, in contrast to Soames, he sees the spirit behind the matter and exercises his own "claims of Freedom." His liberation from Forsytism culminates in his devoting his time, his property, and even his health to the service of Beauty, and he dies happy.

Young Jolyon possesses sufficient insight to understand why the other Forsytes "carry their business principles into their private relations." (194) Speaking to Bosinney, he says,

"What I call a 'Forsyte' is a man who is decidedly more than less a slave of property. He knows a good thing, he knows a safe thing, and his grip on property—it doesn't matter whether it's wives, houses, money, or reputation—is his hall-mark." (196)

Having himself abandoned his first wife and child to elope with a governess and having suffered familial ostracism, Jolyon is able to sympathize with Irene's marital plight:

An unhappy marriage! No ill-treatment—only that indefinable malaise, that terrible blight which killed all sweetness under Heaven; and so from day to day, from night to night, from week to week, from year to year, till death should end it! (198)

When he sees Irene and Bosinney in the Botanical Gardens, he recognizes the intensity and cause of her passionate love: "People think she is concerned about the sin of deceiving her husband! Little they know of women! She's eating, after starvation. . . ." (248) Because of this sympathetic insight, he goes to comfort Irene after Bosinney's death, only to have Soames slam the door in his face. Later, after Soames' grim attempts to regain her have driven Irene and Jolyon together and they have fallen in love, Jolyon broods about their relationship:

Did Nature permit a Forsyte not to make a slave of what he adored? Could beauty be confided to him? ". . . Let her come to me as she will, when she will, not at all if she will not. Let me be just her stand-by, her perching-place; never—never her cage!"

Was the rich stuff of many possessions, the close encircling fabric of the possessive instinct walling in that little black figure of himself, and Soames—was it to be rent so that he could pass through into his vision, find there something not of the senses only? "Let me," he thought, "ah! let me only know how not to grasp and destroy!"

. . . . He looked around at her; and it seemed to his adoring eyes that more than a woman was sitting there. The spirit of universal beauty, deep, mysterious, which the old painters, Titian, Giorgione, Botticelli, had known how to capture and transfer to the faces of their woman—this flying beauty seemed to him imprinted on her brow, her hair, her lips, and in her eyes.

"And this is to be mine!" he thought. "It frightens me."
(591-592)

After their marriage, he gives Irene complete freedom and devotion. When

he dies from his efforts to preserve her happiness, his last thoughts are of her. Having recognized "that the body of Beauty has a spiritual essence, uncapturable save by a devotion which thinks not of self," (916) Jolyon thus stands in marked thematic contrast with Soames, whose selfish sense of property blinds him to this truth.

Since the subplots either operate within the main plot structure in an unusually tight causal relationship or help define and sharpen the theme, The Forsyte Saga as a whole seems remarkably well united. More important, since each subplot reinforces its main plot and since each main plot, though complete in itself, contributes to the inclusive structure from which the principal theme emerges, The Forsyte Saga as a sequence novel is a complex but effective form.

This form is shaped by Galsworthy's handling of fictive time and point of view. Fictive time, as defined in Chapter II, is the length of time within which the events of the fictive world occur. Within the entire sequence and generally within the separate volumes, fictive time moves in a forward chronological progression.

A few exceptions to this chronological presentation do occur within the separate volumes. For instance, in Chapter 17 of The Man of Property, Galsworthy shows June at an evening ball; he then returns to the events of the day to tell why June decided to go to the ball without Bosinney. In Chapter 20 of In Chancery, Galsworthy describes Jolyon's month-long visit to Irene in Paris and its conclusion when Jolyon receives the telegram announcing Jolly's enlistment; in Chapter 22, he recounts Jolly's challenge to Val which results in that enlistment. In Chapter 3 of To Let, Galsworthy narrates Irene and Jolyon's initial decision not to

tell Jon about the old scandal; he also reveals Jon's daydreaming about Fleur at that same moment. Such variations of fictive time are perhaps necessary in a novel with numerous characters and subplots; however, they do not diminish the essentially chronological thrust of the narrative. Indeed, they perhaps help create what Lionel Stevenson calls the "suspense of inevitability" in Galsworthy's novels.¹⁵ Rather than build a suspense of surprise (an emphasis on what will happen), Galsworthy creates an interest in how or why an event will occur. For instance, already knowing that Jolly has enlisted, a reader wonders why he did. Thus, because Galsworthy sometimes introduces minute variations in the chronology of his fictive time, a reader sometimes anticipates not events but their motives.

No such variations occur among the spheres of fictive time which constitute the sequence: the narrative movement is progressively chronological. The events in The Man of Property occur from 1886 to 1887; in "Indian Summer of a Forsyte," during the summer of 1892; in In Chancery, from 1899 to 1901; in "Awakening," on a day in 1909; in To Let, from 1920 to 1921. Thus, the span of fictive time within the sequence covers thirty-five years. However, as one easily notes, the events are not narrated with continuous chronology; much as a short story writer depicts only significant scenes, Galsworthy presents only significant periods from the fictive world of the Forsytes. These, then, are the two most noteworthy features of Galsworthy's handling of fictive time—the expanse or duration of time contained within the sequence and the selectivity with which this time is treated.

His extension of the events of the sequence over such a duration

enables Galsworthy to achieve two major results: first, a background which deepens the significance of the principal theme, and, second, a cause-effect pattern which embodies that theme by tracing a man's entire mature lifetime.

— The background, of course, is the Forsyte family itself. Galsworthy creates an enormous, swarming family of Forsytes—in all, nearly a hundred Forsyte brothers, sisters, aunts, uncles, cousins, and in-laws. Not all are sharply drawn: some exist only through being named; some appear only in short group scenes. Many, however, appear repeatedly and prominently; through these, Galsworthy illustrates the point that the sense of property is characteristic of the entire family and permeates their thinking upon every subject. For instance, the Forsytes take care of themselves: "Of all forms of property their respective healths naturally concerned them most." (12) Winifred takes Dartie back with a sense of having "retained her property." (554) Aunt Juley likes the text, "In my Father's house are many mansions" because it "always comforted her, with its suggestion of house property, which had made the fortune of dear Roger." (621) On virtually all matters—love, marriage, art, religion, politics, war—the Forsyte family is governed by the sense of property.

To stress this point further, Galsworthy creates generational groupings within the family: ten of the older generation, such as old Jolyon, James, and Timothy; twenty-one in the second generation, such as Soames, Winifred, and young Jolyon; seventeen in the early third generation, such as June, Jolly, Holly, and Val; and two in the late third generation, Jon and Fleur. As Wilbur Cross points out, Galsworthy

contrasts generation with generation in order to show the gradual changes in manners, morals, and religion.¹⁶ However, despite these changes, one basic trait remains unchanged throughout all of the generations of Forsytes--the sense of property. Thus, Fleur in 1921 is still as keenly possessive as had been her father and grandfather in 1886. Galsworthy thereby shows that the sense of property is not an eccentricity of person or period but a trait of man traceable through time.

Galsworthy employs the Forsytes in yet another way to present his theme: he establishes the family as representative of an entire class and national characteristic. In the first paragraph of The Man of Property, he designates the Forsytes as "an upper middle class family" and "a reproduction of society in miniature." (3) Later, he has young Jolyon describe the Forsytes to Bosinney in this manner:

"A Forsyte . . . is not an uncommon animal. There are hundreds among the members of this Club. Hundreds out there in the streets; you meet them wherever you go!"

.
 "You talk of them," said Bosinney, "as if they were half of England."

"They are," repeated young Jolyon, "half England, and the better half, too, the safe half, the three per cent, the half that counts. It's their wealth and security that makes everything possible; makes your art possible, makes literature, science, even religion possible. Without Forsytes, who believe in none of these things, but turn them all to use, where should we be?" (195-196)

Still later, young Jolyon reacts to Soames' threats by reflecting upon the sense of property:

It was as if he were boxed up with hundreds of thousands of his countrymen, boxed up with that something in the national character which had always been to him revolting, something which he knew to be extremely natural and yet which seemed to him inexplicable--their intense belief in contracts and vested rights, their complacent sense of virtue in the exaction of those rights. Here beside him in the cab was the very embodiment,

the corporeal sum as it were, of the possessive instinct--his own kinsman, too. (459)

Numerous such references clearly reveal that Galsworthy intends the Forsyte family to represent a large segment of English society.

It is within this context that the changes within the family assume their deeper thematic significance. At the beginning of the sequence, Galsworthy shows the Forsyte family "at the summit of its efflorescence." But the narrative depicts the gradual disintegration of the family. Old Jolyon shatters the family unity with his rejection of its conventions; despite their greatest precautions, the older Forsytes do die; the younger ones produce fewer and fewer offspring; the Boer War shakes the family faith in profitable Imperialism; and World War I makes it nervous about the laboring class and creeping Socialism. At the end of the sequence, Soames sits near the family vault in crowded Highgate Cemetery and broods about the changes:

The waters of change were foaming in, carrying the promise of new forms only when their destructive flood should have passed its full. . . . Athwart the Victorian dykes the waters were rolling on property, manners, and morals, on melody and the old forms of art--waters . . . lapping to the foot of this Highgate hill where Victorianism lay buried. (920)

Thus, the Forsyte family represents a pervasive cultural phenomenon--the possessive instinct--of which Soames is an archetypal embodiment, and their decay closely parallels the failure of Soames' quest for happiness:

"To Let"--the Forsyte age and way of life, when a man owned his soul, his investments, and his woman, without check or question. And now the State had, or would have, his investments, his woman had herself, and God knew who had his soul.

"To Let"—that sane and simple creed! (920)

But Galsworthy's primary intention is not to examine the social phenomena of a whole era. Though he admits that the Victorian upper-middle class lies "embalmed" in his pages, he explicitly refutes the idea that that was his purpose:

If these chronicles had been a really scientific study of transition one would have dwelt probably on such factors as the invention of bicycle, motor-car, and flying-machine; the arrival of a cheap Press; the decline of country life and increase of the towns; the birth of the Cinema. . . .

But this long tale is no scientific study of a period; it is rather an intimate incarnation of the disturbance that Beauty effects in the lives of men. (xii)

Rather than being the primary concern in the sequence, the Forsyte family serves as a richly suggestive background against which Galsworthy can study his principal theme.

This theme is embodied in Soames and his relationships with Irene and others. Thus appears the second result which Galsworthy achieved through the duration of The Forsyte Saga—the cause-effect pattern which spans a man's entire mature lifetime. A major premise which Galsworthy presents is that the sense of property is not a temporary notion but a permanent disposition which governs a man's whole life. A second premise is that Beauty and the claims of Freedom—both matters of Spirit—disturb the possessive man by calling upon him to give of himself and to seek nothing in return. The conclusion to which Galsworthy comes is that the "man of property" who selfishly attempts to possess Beauty must endure a life of frustration and unhappiness. This conclusion he illustrates in the life of Soames.

Soames' initial dissatisfaction with his marriage to Irene stems from his belief that property should give happiness; Soames thereby reveals

his selfishness and the spiritual blindness of the sense of property. His further efforts to isolate and possess Irene having failed, Soames asserts what he thinks of as property rights and forcibly possesses Irene's body; here Soames commits not only the "supreme act of Property" but also the supreme act of selfishness: he gratifies his own desires at the expense of another's sensibilities. The result of this deed is that Irene flees; thus, Soames loses what he most wishes to own. His further attempts to regain Irene indicate the misery of his frustrated desires. Eventually, still desiring Irene, yet more greatly desiring an heir, he seeks new property, Annette. Yet here, too, he fails to find happiness: Annette is cold and unfaithful; his daughter, self-centered and willful. Soames' confession to Fleur that he is helpless signals the defeat caused by his own selfishness and blindness. Defeated but, being a Forsyte, still unwilling to "let go," Soames finally sits in the Highgate Cemetery, yearning for what he can never have—"the beauty and the loving in the world." (921)

Within this sequence of events, Galsworthy constructs a tight causal pattern illustrating his theme. Stemming from Soames' deep sense of property, the events progress from Soames' dissatisfaction with his marriage, to his extreme act of selfish possessiveness, to his intense unhappiness, to his admission of helplessness, to his complete defeat. Thus, by tracing the life time of a man governed by the sense of property, Galsworthy illustrates the utter inadequacy of Forsytism as a way of life.

The second noteworthy aspect of his handling of time is the selectivity with which Galsworthy covers the thirty-five year duration in The Forsyte Saga. His intention to depict Forsytism as a way of life

manifestly calls for covering such a duration. But, as A. A. Mendilow points out, all fiction necessitates some selection:

Use whatever method he will, the novelist must, if he but gives his mind to it, become aware that at every step there confronts him the necessity to employ some kind of selection. No technique can escape it, no device of language or structure dispense with it. It is the fundamental condition of the art of fiction.¹⁷

Thus, rather than attempting to cover all of the time span, Galsworthy selects two minor and three major periods of his fictive time to cover thoroughly. His choice is apparently governed by the significance of historical events and the logic of his narrative. The first major period is set in 1886, at the "highest efflorescence of the Forsytes." As Stevenson remarks, the complacent solidarity of the Forsytes had not yet been shaken by the Fabian Society, the growth of the Labor Party, or the fin de siècle flouting of Victorian dogma concerning morality, marriage, and family loyalty.¹⁸ The second major period falls during the Boer War, an event which rattled the British Empire and Forsytean faith in Imperialism. The third major period occurs after World War I, a time when Forsytism was menaced by higher taxes, the policies of the Labor Party, and the restiveness of the working class. Thus, Galsworthy selects historically significant periods which mark the decline of Forsytism.

More importantly, he selects periods logically consistent with his theme and narrative. In order to trace his theme through three or four generations of a family and the entire mature life of an individual, Galsworthy must necessarily allow time for significant events to develop. Therefore, the five years between The Man of Property and "Indian Summer"

allow time for Irene to leave Soames and for old Jolyon to settle at Robin Hill and to develop an appreciative desire for Beauty. The following seven years interim up to In Chancery allows time for Soames to grow concerned about his childlessness, to realize his dreadful yearning for an heir; this desire, of course, motivates his action throughout the novel. The eight year interim until "Awakening" permits Jon to grow old enough to appreciate Beauty; this interlude thereby prepares for Jon's fidelity to Irene and his decision in To Let. The eleven years until the last period allow time for Jon and Fleur to grow old enough to be lovers and time enough for Soames at sixty-five to realize the bitter emptiness of his entire life. Therefore, from the compulsion of his chronological development, Galsworthy selects periods logically consistent with his narrative.

However, Galsworthy does not completely ignore these interims. Within the first chapter or section of each successive part, he presents an exposition of the significant events of the interval. For instance, in the first few pages of "Indian Summer" we learn that Irene had left Soames the morning after her return and that old Jolyon has never attempted a reconciliation with his brothers. Similarly, at the beginning to To Let we learn of the deaths of various Forsytes, the reaction of the family to World War I, the status of Soames' marriage to Annette, and his adoration of Fleur. Through his use of such linking expository passages, Galsworthy overcomes one of the inherent liabilities of the sequence novel—its apparent discontinuity.

By selecting brief periods rather than attempting to cover the whole duration, Galsworthy achieves yet another important effect—a greater density in the texture of his narrative. Mendilow indicates the relationship

between selectivity and texture:

The degree of discrepancy between chronological and fictional time has an obvious connection with the thinness or closeness of texture of a novel. A short novel spreading evenly over a whole generation would clearly be more selective in the choice of the mental or physical events presented than a long novel covering only one hour of fictional time.¹⁹

Therefore, Galsworthy is able to achieve an effect of fullness and continuity by focussing upon and thoroughly developing relatively brief periods within the whole duration of the sequence.

Thus, through the chronological progression over a lengthy duration of fictive time and through the selectivity with which this time is treated, Galsworthy's handling of time helps shape the form of The Forsyte Saga.

Equally important in shaping the form of the sequence is the author's point of view. Galsworthy employs a third-person, omniscient-author narrative technique stemming from the tradition of the nineteenth century. However, he makes important modifications in this traditional point of view.

These modifications are governed by Galsworthy's conception of the artist and his art. Galsworthy believed that the moralist, "by negating individual pleasure, secondarily secures the pleasure of the greater number," but that the artist works "with the primary object of stirring the emotional nerves of his audience, and thereby directly, actively giving pleasure."²⁰ Hence, Galsworthy thought that the artist must never "preach" to his readers; he doubted that it was possible "to force goodness on the consciousness of the reader or spectator except by negative methods."²¹ Instead of direct didacticism, he believed that

"human life and incident treated by a temperament that has some feeling, intelligence, and philosophy will inevitably suggest much, and have some final meaning. . . ."22 That is, "the temperament of the writer will supply all the moral or meaning that is needed."²³ If an artist chooses to deal with a "spiritual idea," then, Galsworthy believed, the writer "mustn't force it by machinery from without, but must let it germinate, until it forces the fulfilment from within."²⁴ From this technique, he thought, comes the power of the novel:

The novel is the most pliant and far-reaching medium of communication between minds—that is, it can be—just because it does not preach, but supplies pictures and evidence from which each reader may take that food which best suits his growth. It is the great fertiliser, the quiet fertiliser of people's imaginations. . . . To alter a line of action is nothing like so important as to alter a point of view over life, a mood of living. Such enlargement is only attained by those temperamental expressions which we know as works of art and not as treatises in fiction-form. The purpose of all art is revelation and delight, and that particular form of art, the novel, supplies revelation in, I think the most secret, thorough, and subtle form—revelation browsed upon, brooded over, soaked up into the fibre of the mind and conscience. I believe the novel to be a more powerful dissolvent and re-former than even the play, because it is so much more slowly, secretly, and thoroughly digested; it has changed the currents of judgment in a man's mind before he even suspects there is any change going on; the more unaware he is, the more surely he is undermined, for he has no means of mobilizing his defences.²⁵

In The Forsyte Saga, Galsworthy is indeed presenting a "spiritual idea"—"the soul-destroying effects of property."²⁶ Consequently, he presents the idea in such a way that it will "germinate, until it forces the fulfilment from within," so that it will "change the currents of judgment in a man's mind before he even suspects that there is any change going on." In Professor Booth's terms,²⁷ Galsworthy presents the idea through a reliable narrator who conveys the norms of the novel and whose

commentary reliably guides the reader toward understanding the idea, without didactic comments or destruction of the reader's credible receptivity to that idea.

To achieve this goal, Galsworthy uses an impersonally omniscient implied author. That is, he creates not a "person" but a "presence" which narrates the story. Again in Professor Booth's terms, he provides an undramatized narrator—a selective and filtering consciousness which is nevertheless unobtrusive. This is not to say that the narration is through the "objective narrator" which Booth discusses,²⁸ nor that the narrator makes no comments upon the characters or events, for he does indeed; it is to say, however, that the narrator's "personality" is designedly inconspicuous.

Galsworthy gains this impersonal quality in several ways. First, he completely eliminates direct authorial address to the reader. Trollope and Thackeray, for instance, customarily sprinkle "Gentle reader" and "Dear reader" remarks through their novels; George Eliot sometimes injects a "you and me" appeal to her reader; even H. G. Wells and Arnold Bennett, Galsworthy's contemporaries, occasionally address asides directly to their readers. In The Forsyte Saga no such addresses occur. The effect of this elimination is to increase the responsive distance between the reader and the implied author.²⁹

Second, although the narrator is omniscient, the totality of information is presented in a matter-of-fact manner. This portrait of Swithin Forsyte illustrates the point:

Since his retirement from land agency, a profession deplorable in his estimation, especially as to its auctioneering department, he had abandoned himself to naturally aristocratic tastes.

The perfect luxury of his latter days had embedded him like a fly in sugar; and his mind, where very little took place from morning till night, was the junction of two curiously opposite emotions, a lingering and sturdy satisfaction that he had made his own way and his own fortune, and a sense that a man of his distinction should never have been allowed to soil his mind with work.

He stood at the sideboard in a white waistcoat with large gold and onyx buttons, watching his valet screw the necks of three champagne bottles deeper into ice-pails.

Totally omniscient, the passage crisply ticks off Swithin's past, his mental processes, and his appearance; it thus has something of the assured manner of a historian, and as such, it partakes of the authenticity of history. This directness of statement is maintained even when the narrator presents ironic impossibilities:

When a Forsyte was engaged, married, or born, the Forsytes were present; when a Forsyte died—but no Forsyte had as yet died; they did not die; death being contrary to their principles, they took precautions against it, the instinctive precautions of highly vitalized persons who resent encroachments on their property. (4)

Third, Galsworthy usually employs a tone of civil detachment when remarking upon the Forsytes. This impersonal quality is illustrated in these passages:

To anyone interested psychologically in Forsytes, this great saddle-of-mutton trait is of prime importance; not only does it illustrate their tenacity, both collectively and as individuals, but it marks them as belonging in fibre and instincts to that great class which believes in nourishment and flavour, and yields to no sentimental craving for beauty. (42)

If some one had asked him in those days, "In confidence—are you in love with this girl?" he would have replied: "In love? What is love?" . . . And if the enquirer had pursued his query, "And do you think it was fair to have tempted this girl to give herself to you for life unless you have really touched her heart?" he would have answered: "The French see these things differently from us. . . ."

And if, insatiate, the enquirer had gone on, "You do not look, then, for spiritual union in this marriage?" Soames

would have lifted his sideways smile, and rejoined: "That's as it may be. If I get satisfaction from my senses, perpetuation of myself, good taste and good humour in the house, it is all I can expect at my age. . . ." Whereon, the enquirer must in good taste have ceased enquiry. (608-609)

Though they obviously come from a narrator, the obliqueness of the passages implies an impersonal, civil detachment from the subject offered to the reader's attention.

Through these three methods, Galsworthy achieves the effect of an impersonally omniscient author. The result of this point of view is a more intense focus upon the story: not being in a narrative but being only an unobtrusive presence, the narrator can comment upon all matters from his position of unobserved observer.

However, Galsworthy retains one characteristic of the traditional point of view--the breadth of the narrator's omniscience. Thus, the narrator constantly shifts the focus of attention from character to character, from a view of physical appearance to a view of mental processes, from scene to summary and back to scene again. For instance, in "Dinner at Swithin's," Chapter 3 of The Man of Property, the major shifts of attention follow this sequence:

Swithin's dining room/ Swithin's character, appearance/
Swithin's thoughts on his brother, nephew, Irene, champagne,
the dinner/ Aunt Juley's appearance, character, habits, and
appearance again/ Nicholas Forsyte's business acumen/ Swithin's
reaction to Irene/ Soames' thoughts on Irene/ Swithin's
praise of Irene's necklace/ Forsyte dinner traditions/
desultory dinner conversation/ Forsyte taste in food/ Soames'
reflections on architecture/ Soames' watching Irene, watching
Bosinney/ James' conversation with June and worry over money/
June's reaction to James' remarks/ June's concern over Bosinney's
lack of money/ James' concern over money/ the Forsyte 'Change
gossip about Irene/ James' worries about Soames' childlessness/
a marble statue/ general conversation about the value of the
statue/ Bosinney's appraisal.

Within this thirteen page chapter, the narrator markedly shifts the focus

of attention twenty-two times. However, in many scenes the narrator does maintain a steady focus upon a single character. For instance, in the chapter immediately preceding "Dinner at Swithin's," the narrator focuses upon old Jolyon—his loneliness, his evening at the opera and memories of other operas, his yearning for his son, his calling upon young Jolyon, and his reactions upon seeing his son again after many years. Similarly, immediately following "Dinner at Swithin's," the narrator concentrates on Soames—his worry about Irene, his walk through London, his decision to build a country house, his conversation with Bosinney, and his selection of a building site at Robin Hill. Here again, however, even though the narrator focuses whole chapters upon individual characters, no single character is the constant center of attention: the narrator repeatedly shifts the focus of attention from character to character, from the main plot line to the subplots and back again.

However, Galsworthy does impose one major limitation upon the narrator's omniscience: the thoughts of three important characters— Irene, Bosinney, and Annette—are never directly revealed. As Galsworthy remarks in the "Author's Preface," "The figure of Irene [*i*s] never . . . present except through the senses of other characters. . . ." (xii) Generally, the same treatment is accorded to Bosinney and Annette. Galsworthy achieves this effect in two ways. First, in scenes in which they are directly involved, he limits the narrative to only their words and deeds, never reporting their thoughts or emotions. The scene in which Irene asks Soames for her freedom illustrates this method:

"Before we were married you promised to let me go if our marriage was not a success. Is it a success?"

Soames frowned.

"Success," he stammered—"it would be a success if you behaved yourself properly!"

"I have tried," said Irene. "Will you let me go?"

Soames turned away. . . .

"Then you won't let me go?"

He felt her eyes resting on him with a strange, touching look.

"Let you go!" he said; "and what on earth would you do with yourself if I did? You've got no money!"

"I could manage somehow."

He took a swift turn up and down the room; then came and stood before her.

"Understand," he said, "once and for all, I won't have you say this sort of thing. Go and get your hat on." . . .

Irene got up slowly and left the room. She came down with her hat on. (202)

Similarly, when Soames is pursuing Annette, the narrator reports only her words and deeds:

Soames took advantage of the moment. Very gently touching Annette's arm, he said:

"How do you like my place, Annette?"

She did not shrink, did not respond; she looked at him full, looked down, and murmured:

"Who would not like it? It is so beautiful!" (436)

Second, he reflects some scenes involving these characters through the consciousness of other characters. Euphemia Forsyte's encounter with Irene and Bosinney illustrates this second method:

A young man coming from the Drugs had snatched off his hat and was accosting the lady with the unknown back.

It was then that she saw with whom she [Euphemia] had to deal; the lady was undoubtedly Mrs. Soames, the young man Mr. Bosinney. Concealing herself rapidly over the purchase of a box of Tunisian dates, for she was impatient of awkwardly meeting people with parcels in her hands, and at the busy time of the morning, she was quite unintentionally an interested observer of their little interview.

Mrs. Soames, usually somewhat pale, had a delightful colour in her cheeks; and Mr. Bosinney's manner was strange, though attractive. . . . He seemed to be pleading. Indeed, they talked so earnestly—or, rather, he talked so earnestly, for Mrs. Soames did not say much—that they caused, inconsiderately, an eddy in the traffic. One nice

old General, going towards Cigars, was obliged to step quite out of the way, and chancing to look up and see Mrs. Soames's face, he actually took off his hat, the old fool. So like a man!

But it was Mrs. Soames's eyes that worried Euphemia. She never once looked at Mr. Bosinney¹ until he moved on, and then she looked after him. And, oh, that look!

On that look Euphemia had spent much anxious thought. It is not too much to say that it had hurt her with its dark, lingering softness, for all the world as though the woman wanted to drag him back, and unsay something she had been saying. (140)

Similarly, Bosinney's wrath at Soames's violation of Irene is observed by George Forsyte:

And now he followed Bosinney more closely than ever--up the stairs, past the ticket collector into the street. In that progress, however, his feelings underwent a change; no longer merely curious and amused, he felt sorry for the poor fellow he was shadowing. 'The Buccaneer' was not drunk, but seemed to be acting under the stress of violent emotion; he was talking to himself, and all that George could catch were the words "Oh God!" Nor did he appear to know what he was doing, or where going; but stared, hesitated, moved like a man out of his mind; and from being merely a joker in search of amusement, George felt that he must see the poor chap through. (263-264)

Through these two methods, Galsworthy, while informing the reader of the characters' actions, creates a distance from which the reader may gain a more objective perspective of them.

Galsworthy's handling of point of view in The Forsyte Saga has three significant effects upon the theme and form of the sequence. First, Galsworthy does provide through his point of view that "reliable commentary" by which the norms of the work become apparent. Beyond the characters and actions which embody the thematic conflict, Galsworthy presents his theme and shapes the reader's response to it in three other ways. The first is the evaluative comments which the narrator makes about events or characters:

She was sombrely magnificent this evening in black bombazine, with a mauve front cut in a shy triangle, and

crowned with a black velvet ribbon round the base of her thin throat; black and mauve for evening wear was esteemed very chaste by nearly every Forsyte. (39)

Bosinney's uncle by marriage, Baynes, of Baynes and Bildeboy, a Forsyte in instincts if not in name, had but little that was worthy to relate of his brother-in-law.
(85)

These are but two of many such passages in which the narrator deftly evaluates what he is describing. The supposed chasteness of black and mauve and the Forsyteness of Baynes are essentially extraneous to the facts of what the woman wore or who the man was; yet the narrator inserts them, for by these details he implies an evaluation of motive or character, a significance beyond the mere detail of color or name itself.

The second of these ways is stylistic coloration. Through his choice of words and images, the artist shapes the reader's response to a character or event. For instance, in the first of the preceding passages, the words sombrely, shy, and crowned are more than merely necessary description: they convey the narrator's and create the reader's attitude toward the subject. Perhaps a more significant example of how Galsworthy provides reliable commentary through stylistic coloration is his depiction of the rape scene; two sentences will suffice to show the point:

He was still haunted by the odd, intolerable feeling of remorse and shame he had felt, as he stood looking at her by the flame of the single candle, before silently slinking away.

.....
Without the incentive of Mrs. MacAnder's words he might never have done what he had done. Without their incentive and the accident of finding his wife's door for once unlocked, which had enabled him to steal upon her asleep. (258-259)

Here, even though the scene is reported through the consciousness of Soames, the phrases silently slinking away and to steal upon her help

create the reader's repulsion toward Soames' deed.

The third method by which Galsworthy shapes the reader's response is irony. Though he effectively uses irony of situation--such as Soames' being mistaken for Irene's lover in Paris--Galsworthy more frequently employs ironic statements. Examples abound:

When a Forsyte was engaged, married, or born, the Forsytes were present; when a Forsyte died--but no Forsyte had as yet died; they did not die; death being contrary to their principles, they took precautions against it.
 . . . (4)

She believed, as she often said, in putting things on a commercial basis; the proper function of the Church, of charity, indeed, of everything, was to strengthen the fabric of 'Society.' Individual action, therefore, she considered immoral. . . . The enterprises to which she lent her name were organized so admirably that by the time the takings were handed over, they were indeed skim milk divested of all cream of human kindness. But as she often justly remarked, sentiment was to be deprecated. (210)

Soames belonged to two clubs, 'The Connoisseurs,' which he put on his cards and seldom visited, and 'The Remove,' which he did not put on his cards and frequented. (444)

Still, . . . they did feel that heaven could not be quite so cosy as the rooms in which they and Timothy had been waiting so long. Aunt Hester, especially, could not bear the thought of the exertion. Any change, or rather the thought of a change--for there never was any--always upset her very much. Aunt Juley, who had more spirit, sometimes thought it would be quite exciting; she had so enjoyed that visit to Brighton the year dear Susan died. But then Brighton one knew was nice, and it was so difficult to tell what heaven would be like, so on the whole she was more than content to wait. (621-622)

They . . . reached London somewhat attenuated, having been away six weeks and two days, without a single allusion to the subject which had hardly ever ceased to occupy their minds. (765)

At "Lord's": What reserve power in the British realm--enough pigeons, lobsters, lamb, salmon mayonnaise, strawberries, and bottles of champagne to feed the lot! No miracle in prospect--no case of seven loaves and a few fishes--faith

rested on surer foundations. Six thousand top hats, four thousand parasols would be doffed and furled, ten thousand mouths all speaking the same English would be filled. There was life in the old dog yet! Tradition! And again Tradition! How strong and how elastic! Wars might rage, taxation prey, Trades Unions take toil, and Europe perish of starvation; but the ten thousand would be fed; and, within their ring fence, stroll upon green turf, wear top hats, and meet--themselves.
(836)

In these passages an ironic discrepancy exists between what the narrator reports and what the reader presumably believes to be right or knows to be true. Thus, through evaluative comments, stylistic coloration, irony, or a combination of the three techniques, Galsworthy's handling of point of view guides the reader toward a proper comprehension of the theme.

Second, the limitations which Galsworthy imposes upon his point of view also affect his theme and form. The thoughts of Irene, Bosinney, and Annette are never directly revealed by the narrator; their actions and words are always either simply stated or else reflected through the consciousness of another character. Because of this fact, some critics have described them, particularly Irene, as "mysterious," "shadowy," or symbolically unsubstantial.³⁰ These characters are indeed less fully depicted than other comparably important characters. However, this fact in itself is of thematic significance. Through the "reliable commentary" of his narrator, Galsworthy establishes that Irene, Bosinney, and, to a lesser degree, Annette represent spiritual qualities; he creates a distance between them and the reader but also a disposition in the reader to view them favorably. However, Galsworthy's interest in The Forsyte Saga is not Beauty but the effects of Beauty upon a possessive world--that is, not Irene, Bosinney, and Annette but their effects upon the Forsytes. Consequently, he presents these characters "through the senses of other

characters," the Forsytes. But the Forsytes, interested only in material things, are blind to the spiritual truths beneath the surface of words and deeds. Thus, the scenes which reflect these characters through a Forsytean consciousness reveal only surface details and the misconceptions of the reflector; thematically, these scenes illustrate the inability of the Forsytes to perceive deeply or spiritually. Only old Jolyon, who forsakes the Forsyte conventions, young Jolyon, who describes himself as only "half Forsyte", and Jon can perceive the spiritual essence of Beauty in Irene; Soames, the "pure" Forsyte, never can do so; consequently, he can never understand why Irene loathes him and wishes her freedom nor why Annette feels contempt for him. Thus, by reflecting these characters through the consciousness of the Forsytes, Galsworthy reveals a discrepancy between the conception of them which the reliable commentary creates for the reader and the way the Forsytes react to them; he thereby intensifies his idea that the Forsytes are blind to matters of the spirit.

This limitation of point of view affects the narrative in yet another way. Because he limits his depiction of these characters, Galsworthy is in a way hampered in revealing their actions. However, these actions are necessary in developing the plot. For instance, the reader must clearly understand the nature and intensity of Irene and Bosinney's love for each other before he can understand either Soames' behavior or the intense loathing which makes Irene flee from Soames and thirty-four years later urge Jon not to marry Fleur. In order to reveal such material and yet maintain the pattern of his point of view, Galsworthy employs some unusual devices. For example, he first reveals the growing love of Irene and Bosinney by reflecting it through the "spirit" of the sleeping Swithin:

From him, thus slumbering, his jealous Forsyte spirit travelled far, into God-knows-what jungle of fancies; with those two young people, to see what they were doing down there in the copse . . . ; to see what they were doing, walking along there so close together on the path that was too narrow; walking along there so close that they were always touching. . . . And a great unseen chaperon, his spirit was there (122)

He reveals the ardor of their love by telling what Montague Dartie did not witness:

Fortunately, he could not hear Bosinney's passionate pleading . . . ; he could not see Irene shivering, as though some garment had been torn from her, nor her eyes, black and mournful, like the eyes of a beaten child. He could not hear Bosinney entreating, entreating, always entreating; could not hear her sudden, soft weeping, nor see that poor hungry-looking devil, awed and trembling, humbly touching her hand. (190)

These devices, however, are eccentricities; his usual method is simply to reflect the necessary scenes through the impressions of another character. Thus, George Forsyte follows the distraught Bosinney through the fog, and by George's reactions, the reader acquires the necessary information.

This technique inevitably affects the narrative and its resultant form: events instrumental in the plot are occasionally not dramatically depicted; instead, they are only reflected through another character. The most important instance is the scene in which Soames asserts his conjugal rights. This scene signals a major change in Soames' behavior; it constitutes the breaking point in Soames and Irene's marriage; it motivates Irene's attitude throughout the remainder of the sequence, and through her attitude, it influences the actions of others such as young Jolyon and Jon; structurally, it is the crisis of The Man of Property and the definition scene of the entire sequence. And yet the scene is

not fully dramatized. Galsworthy undoubtedly faced a dilemma here: if the scene were dramatized, he must show Irene's responses—her intense horror, her futile resistance, her smothered sobbing; yet if he showed these responses, he must logically either reveal her thoughts or else risk writing a destructively ineffective scene; moreover, if he showed her thoughts, he would violate the consistency of the thematic pattern of his point of view. Therefore, he chose to adhere to his pattern and to reflect the scene through Soames' remembrance of it. By so choosing, he reveals much about Soames but he diminishes the intensity of the scene; and to the extent that the effectiveness of a structure increases with the greater intensity of its important scenes, he thereby weakens the formal structure of the entire sequence.

Third, despite these specific limitations, Galsworthy's point of view affects the form of the sequence through the scope of its omniscience. As previously indicated, the narrator repeatedly shifts the focus of attention from physical action to mental processes, from character to character, from scene to scene. The effects of this scope of omniscience are twofold. First, it permits Galsworthy to range widely over his Forsytean world; indeed, it permits him to create this world. As the sequence progresses, Galsworthy introduces an incredible array of minor characters and secondary incidents—Timothy, the rarely seen but frequently mentioned older Forsyte who stirs into view only during the Boer War and whose will is a monument to Forsyte tenacity; Mrs. McAnder, whose idle gossip provokes Soames' jealous response; Madame LaMotte, whose greed surrenders Annette to Soames; Prosper Profond, the disenchanting European who "amuses" Annette and reveals the secret to Fleur; Michael Mont, who

pursues Fleur and marries her on the rebound; the clerks, maids, butlers, nurses, and cooks whose loyalties to the Forsytes are but poorly rewarded, and the innumerable other characters who swarm throughout the sequence and for a moment receive the focus of the narrator's attention. The result of this multiplicity of minor characters and secondary incidents is an extraordinarily dense narrative texture which gives the work a sense of solidity and reality but which also swells the form far beyond the space needed solely for the main plot.

Second, the scope of the omniscient point of view permits a greater complexity of interwoven plot structures. It would seem axiomatic that a narrowly restricted point of view limits the possibility of narrating action outside of that focus; conversely, an omniscient point of view makes narrating many threads of action possible. That is, the greater the breadth of point of view, the more plots a structure may encompass. Therefore, his point of view allows Galsworthy to give characters a separate existence and to establish them in separate subplot lines. For instance, it permits him to focus upon old Jolyon's growing dissatisfaction and eventual rejection of Forsyitism; to focus upon Winifred's problems with Dartie and also upon Jolyon's growing attachment to Irene; and to focus upon Jon and Fleur's pledging their love and planning their deception. More important, it permits him to build the tight causal pattern which interweaves these subplots and brings them to bear upon the main plot. In brief, Galsworthy's omniscient point of view makes more densely textured and more numerous subplots possible. It therefore permits a more complex structural development and a more complex sequence form.

In summary, then, The Forsyte Saga consists of five separate works, each an artistic entity with its own formal structure; when viewed together these separate works constitute a sequence of events manifesting an inclusive

structure. From the significant events within this structure, the theme of the whole emerges. However, both theme and structure are shaped by fictive time and point of view: the chronological presentation of the events permits a tight causal pattern to be pursued through a man's lifetime; the generally omniscient point of view permits a "reliable" narrator and a densely textured plot complicated with numerous subplots. Thus, Galsworthy's handling of time and point of view determines the form of his sequence novel.

II. The Memoirs of George Sherston

The Memoirs of George Sherston by Siegfried Sassoon represents a second major form of the sequence novel: the events progress chronologically throughout the sequence and are narrated by a single individual within the narrative.

The sequence focuses upon events in the youth and military career of George Sherston. More significant than the events themselves, however, are Sherston's attitudes and emotions which result from or cause the events, for The Memoirs of George Sherston is a Bildungsroman tracing Sherston's progress toward "mental maturity" and self-esteem. Through the sequence, Sassoon develops the theme that man's social institutions--such as his class structures, politics, and even his pastimes--blind man to his own unique individuality and involve him in unspeakable horrors such as modern war. Thus, in the last paragraph of the sequence, Sherston states, "It is only from the inmost silences of the heart that we know the world for what it is, and ourselves for what the world has made us."³¹

An examination of the plot structure of each novel in the sequence

will indicate how this theme emerges. Memoirs of a Fox-Hunting Man, the first volume, covers George Sherston's introduction to the society of sporting gentry and to the horrors of war.³²

Memoirs of a Fox-Hunting Man might well be sub-titled "Illusions," for it records George's youthful illusions about himself and society. The narrative reveals the social pressures which shaped George and his responses to these pressures. The plot, therefore, is primarily not one of action but of thought; it traces George's attitudes and actions in relation to the social code which he believes he must follow.

The Introduction presents the forces which shaped the social awareness of George as a child, as well as George's reactions to these forces. The first of these is Aunt Evelyn:

Now and again she took me to a children's party given by one of the local gentry: at such functions I was awkward and uncomfortable, and something usually happened which increased my sense of inferiority to the other children, who were better at everything than I was and made no attempt to assist me out of my shyness. I had no friends of my own age. I was strictly forbidden to 'associate' with the village boys. And even the sons of the neighbouring farmers were considered 'unsuitable'—though I was too shy and nervous to speak to them.

I do not blame my aunt for this. She was merely conforming to her social code which divided the world into people whom one could 'call on' and people who were socially 'impossible.' (1, 2-3)

The second major force is Dixon:

It was Dixon who taught me to ride, and my admiration for

him was unqualified. And since he was what I afterwards learnt to call 'a perfect gentleman's servant,' he never allowed me to forget my position as 'a little gentleman': he always knew exactly when to become discreetly respectful. In fact he 'knew his place.' (1, 2)

Under his tutelage, George develops an enthusiasm for fox-hunting and looks to Dixon for guidance in the proper mode of behavior. The third major force is society itself, represented by Denis Milden, who epitomizes what George would like to become:

I noticed for the first time another boy of about my own age. Dixon was watching him approvingly. Evidently this was a boy to be imitated, and my own unsophisticated eyes already told me that.

.
All his movements were controlled and modest, but there was a suggestion of arrogance in the steady, unrecognizing stare which he gave me when he became conscious that I was looking at him so intently. Our eyes met, and his calm scrutiny reminded me of my own deficiencies in dress. . . . When I had scrambled up on to Sheila again—a feat which I could only just accomplish without assistance—I felt what a poor figure I must be cutting in Dixon's eyes while he compared me with that other boy, who had himself turned away with a slight smile. . . . (1, 32-33)

These three forces—his aunt, Dixon, and the society represented by Milden—create a code of class distinctions and "correct" behavior which George accepts unhesitatingly: "My attitude was an acquiescent one. I have always been inclined to accept life in the form in which it has imposed itself upon me. . . ." (1, 35)

The Definition scene is George's great faux pas while hunting:

Something rustled the dead leaves; not more than ten yards from where we stood, a small russet animal stole out on to the path It was the first time I had ever seen a fox, though I have seen a great many since—both alive and dead. By the time it had slipped out of sight again I had just begun to realize what it was that had looked at me with such human alertness. Why I should have behaved as I did I will not attempt to explain, but when Denis stood up in his stirrups and emitted a shrill "Huick-holler," I felt spontaneously alarmed for the future of the fox.

"Don't do that; they'll catch him!" I exclaimed.

The words were no sooner out of my mouth than I knew I had made another fool of myself. Denis gave me one blank look and galloped off to meet the huntsman

.

Dixon then made his only reference to my recent misconception of the relationship between foxes and hounds. "Young Mr. Milden won't think much of you if you talk like that. He must have thought you a regular booby!" Flushed and mortified, I promised to be more careful in future. But I knew only too well what a mollycoddle I had made of myself in the estimation of the proper little sportsman on whom I had hoped to model myself.... "Don't do that; they'll catch him!" It was too awful to dwell on. Lord Dumborough would be certain to hear about it, and would think worse of me than ever he did of a keeper who left the earths unstopped. . . . And even now some very sporting-looking people were glancing at me and laughing to one another about something. What else could they be laughing about except my mollycoddle remark? Denis must have told them, of course. My heart was full of misery. (1, 49, 51. Sassoon's unspaced ellipses)

Herein is defined the basic conflict within the remainder of the volume: George's instinctive, individual responses clash with the mode of social behavior expected of him. Failing to adhere to this code of "correct" behavior and feeling guilty because of this failure, George strives ever more fervently to conform.

The Complication, or Rising Action, is a series of events in which George attempts, with varying degrees of success, to behave "correctly." When Dixon arranges for him to play in the Flower Match Show, George is extremely anxious that he do well in the opinion of Dixon and the towns people. By the time he is twenty-one, George's awareness of class distinction and decorum is acute. For instance, he is intensely embarrassed when Aunt Evelyn brews her own tea in a first-class train carriage:

I was conscious that our fellow travellers were exchanging scandalized glances, and their haughtiness intensified itself with every phase of the capricious conduct of the lamp

As for me, I considered that Aunt Evelyn was making a regular exhibition of herself, and when her persistence had been rewarded by a cloud of steam and she held out a cup of moderately hot China tea, I felt so annoyed that I could have chucked it out of the window. (III, 92)

Similarly, he condescends to their kind-hearted servant:

In those days I used to look upon her as a bit of a joke, and I took for granted the innumerable little jobs she did for me. She was no more than an odd-looking factotum, whose homely methods and manners occasionally incurred my disapproval, for I had a well-developed bump of snobbishness as regards flunkeydom and carriage-and-pair ostentation as a whole. (III, 97)

His desire to conform to the social code is manifest in his concern for wearing the proper clothing. During his first encounter with Mildens, George is conscious of his own "deficiencies in dress." Years later he grows dissatisfied with his first pair of real hunting boots because they are "palpably provincial in origin." Determined to equip himself with the very best boots and habit, George purchases them from the best London shops:

When I had made my inaugural visits the individuals who patrolled the interiors of those eminent establishments had received me with such lofty condescension that I had begun by feeling an intruder. My clothes, I feared, had not quite the cut and style that was expected of them by firms which had the names of reigning sovereigns on their books, and I was abashed by my ignorance of the specialized articles which I was ordering.

.
My boots . . . were close-fitting and high in the leg and altogether calculated to make me feel that there were very few fences I would not cram my horse at. In outward appearance, at least, I was now a very presentable fox-hunter. (IV, 131-132, 135)

He is particularly impressed by the fact that Colonel Hesmon owns twenty-seven pairs of boots. Similarly, George views horses as an adjunct of "correct" behavior. For instance, he buys a fine new mount, Cockbird,

even though he cannot afford him. His desire to perform as expected of him intensifies when Milden reappears as Master of the Ringwell Hunt; George earnestly courts Milden's approval. When Milden invites George to stay with him, George is delighted. Thereafter, he adroitly patterns himself after Milden:

My regular visits to the Kennels, and the facility with which I echoed the Master's ideas and opinions, bolstered up my self-complacence and gave me a certain reflected importance among the members of the Hunt, which I should otherwise have lacked. I now wore the Hunt button and was regarded as being "in the know"
 (VII, 255)

When Milden becomes Master of the superior Packlestone Hunt, George arranges to go along also, despite certain shortcomings:

I was putting myself in a false position in more ways than one: financially, because I should be spending my whole year's income in less than six months; and socially, because the people in the Packlestone Hunt quite naturally assumed that I was much better off than I really was. (VIII, 264)

Though he is civilly received, George feels somewhat uncomfortable among the wealthy and socially superior Hunt members. Nevertheless, when the season is over, he returns reluctantly to Butley, deeply in debt. All of these events, constituting the Rising Action of the narrative, illustrate George's unthinking adherence to the code of social behavior and his efforts to do well in the opinions of others. Throughout these events, George's emotional states are anxiety, joy when he performs well, and guilt when he fails to meet the standards expected of him.

The Crisis is George's enlistment in the Army. Literally, the deed is a turning point from civilian to military life, and from provincial amusements to serious national concerns. Two days before the declaration of war, George impulsively responds to the menace to his country by

enlisting in the ranks of the Yeomanry:

Never before had I known how much I had to lose. Never before had I looked at the living world with any degree of intensity. It seemed almost as if I had been waiting for this thing to happen, although my own part in it was so obscure and submissive.

.
I had left Butley without telling anyone that I had made up my mind to enlist. On that ominous July 31st I said long and secret goodbyes to everything and everyone. . . . So I looked my last and rode away to the War on my bicycle. Somehow I knew that it was inevitable, and my one idea was to be first in the field. In fact, I made quite an impressive inward emotional experience out of it. It did not occur to me that everyone else would be rushing off to enlist next week. My gesture was, so to speak, an individual one, and I gloried in it. (IX, 291, 303)

His enlistment is thus a turning point in the conflict, for George, by responding to his instinctive impulse toward individual action, rejects the code of "correct" behavior, which would expect him to serve as a commissioned officer:

The idea of my being any sort of officer in the Army seemed absurd. I had already been offered a commission in my own Yeomanry, but how could I have accepted it when everybody was saying that the Germans might land at Dover any day?

.
But several of the officers had known me out hunting with the Ringwell, and my presence in the ranks was regarded as a bit of a joke, although in my own mind my duties were no laughing matter and I had serious aspirations to heroism in the field. (IX, 290-291)

The Resolution is George's request for a commission in a regular battalion. His expectations of instant heroism are frustrated, and military routine palls: "Raking up horse-dung before breakfast had ceased to be a new experience." (IX, 299) More important, George becomes acutely conscious of the social distinctions between enlisted men and officers:

As I was leading Cockbird back from watering I passed Nigel Croplady, who was one of the troop leaders. He stopped to to speak to me for a moment, and asked whether I had heard from Denis Milden lately; this caused me to feel slightly less déclassé. Calling the officers 'sir' and saluting them still made me feel silly.

.
 Dixon had said . . . that if I had to be in the ranks I ought to have done it somewhere where I wasn't so well known. I found afterwards that there was a great deal of truth in his remark. The Yeomanry would have been more comfortable for me if none of the officers had known me before I joined. I now felt strongly in favour of getting right away from my old associations. (IX, 293, 308)

Consequently, he asks Captain Huxtable for aid in getting a commission in the Flintshire Fusiliers. Thus, for reasons based upon his life-long conformity to a code of "correct" behavior, George regrets his individual action and seeks to "correct" it; in so doing, he merely extends his social and sporting code toward another one:

Everything connected with Captain Huxtable's regimental career had suddenly become significant and stimulating. The Flintshire Fusiliers, which I had so often heard him speak about (and had taken so little interest in), had become something to be lived up to. I would be a credit to him, I resolved, as I went home across the dark fields. (IX, 307)

Again this desire to perform as others expect of him is reflected in George's attitude toward clothing: "Ordering my uniform from Craven and Sons was quite enjoyable--almost like getting hunting clothes." (IX, 309) Thus, his individual action proving unsatisfactory, George reverts to a code of "correct" and socially acceptable behavior.

The Denouement is George's desire to die. George no longer wants to be a hero: "Learning how to be a second lieutenant was a relief to my mind. It made the war seem farther away." (IX, 319) Later, in the trenches, the suffering of the men and the squalid trench life depress him. More important, the past, which had given him stability and a sense of identity, begins to slip away. Stephen Colwood is killed while George is still in training. George hopes to get Dixon transferred to his company:

Everything I had known before the War seemed to be withering away and falling to pieces. Denis seldom wrote to me, and he was trying to get a job on the Staff; but with Dixon to talk to I should still feel that the past was holding its own with the War; and I wanted the past to survive and to begin again; the idea was like daylight on the other side of this bad weather in which life and death had come so close to one another. (X, 353)

But before the transfer is arranged, Dixon dies of pneumonia. When George spends a brief leave in Butley, he senses his loss:

Looking round the room at the enlarged photographs of my hunters, I began to realize that my past was wearing a bit thin. The War seemed to have made up its mind to obliterate all those early adventures of mine. Point-to-point cups shone, but without conviction. And Dixon was dead.... (X, 359. Sassoon's ellipses.)

Then Dick Tiltwood is killed. Bitterly, George seeks revenge: "I went up to the trenches with the intention of trying to kill someone. It was my idea of getting a bit of my own back." (X, 367) Failing to gain satisfaction in this way, George considers death the preferable alternative:

As for me, I had more or less made up my mind to die; the idea made things easier. In the circumstances, there didn't seem to be anything else to be done.

.
I stared at the tangles of wire and the leaning posts, and there seemed no sort of comfort in life. My steel hat was heavy on my head while I thought how I'd been on leave last month. I remembered how I'd leant my elbows on Aunt Evelyn's front gate John Homeward had come past with his van, plodding beside his weary horse. . . . He pulled up for a few minutes, and we'd talked about Dixon, who had been such an old friend of his. . . . He had said good-bye and good-night and set his horse going again. As he turned the corner the past seemed to go with him.... (X, 373, 376. Sassoon's unspaced ellipses.)

Thus, with his individualism repressed, his desire for heroism or revenge thwarted, and his beloved friends and his past equally dead, George believes that his only alternative is also death. His habitual practice

of doing what others expect of him--his code of "correct" behavior--proves inadequate to cope with the horrible reality which he faces. The Denouement is thematically logical: it reveals that the person who is shaped by social pressures and governed by external codes is hopelessly adrift if these are destroyed.

Memoirs of An Infantry Officer, the second volume in the sequence, narrates George's loss of belief in the war and his futile efforts to shorten it.

A fitting sub-title for Memoirs of An Infantry Officer might well be "Disillusionment," for this volume reveals the steady erosion of George's uncritical belief in the war and the society which produced it, and his individual efforts to shorten it.

The Introduction presents George's unthinking acceptance of the war. Though George has decided to die "because in the circumstances there didn't seem anything else to be done," (1, 9) he does not question the war itself. When ordered to an Army school, he finds the training to be irrelevant to the actualities of trench warfare. Yet he strives to do well: "The admirable sergeant-instructor was polite and formidable, and as I didn't want him to think me a dud officer, I did my best to become proficient." (1, 16) More important, he is eager to fight in order to prove himself:

Six years before I had been ambitious of winning races because that had seemed a significant way of demonstrating my

equality with my contemporaries. And now I wanted to make the World War serve a similar purpose, for if only I could get a Military Cross I should feel comparatively safe and confident. (II, 24)

Later, George rescues a wounded man under fire and does indeed win a Military Cross. Thus, the Introduction presents George's attitudes: an uncritical acceptance of the war and a willingness, almost an eagerness, to risk his life.

The Definition consists of George's initial realizations of the inhumanities, injustices, and hypocrisy of war. At the Army school, George grows aware of the dehumanizing nature of war:

Children in a village street surprised me: I saw a little one fall, to be gathered up, dusted, cuffed and cherished by its mother. Up in the line one somehow lost touch with such humanities. (I, 10)

The Sergeant, a tall sinewy machine, had been trained to such a pitch of frightfulness that at a moment's warning he could divest himself of all semblance of humanity. (I, 15).

Later he becomes conscious of the injustice of social and rank distinctions in the Army:

If an officer crumpled up Kinjack sent him home as useless, with a confidential report. Several such officers were usually drifting about at the Depot, and most of them ended up with safe jobs in England. But if a man became a dud in the ranks, he just remained where he was until he was killed or wounded. Delicate discrimination about private soldiers wasn't possible. (III, 44)

While on leave he recognizes the disparity between the brutal realities

of war and the civilian attitude toward it:

I found [Captain Huxtable] chubby-cheeked as ever, and keeping up what might be called a Justice of the Peace attitude towards the War. Any able-bodied man not serving in H.M. Forces should be required to show a thundering good reason for it, and the sooner conscription came in the better. That was his opinion I gave him to understand that it was a jolly fine life out at the Front, and, for the moment, I probably believed what I was saying. I wasn't going to wreck my leave with facing facts, and I'd succeeded in convincing myself that I really wanted to go back. (III, 49)

In truth, he yearns for release from the discomforts, squalor, and constant dangers of trench life. Nevertheless, George still feels dedicated to the cause for which he originally enlisted:

Death would be lying in wait for the troops next week, and now the flavor of life was doubly strong. . . . I wasn't sorry to be back; I was sure of that; we'd all got to go through it, and I was trying to convert the idea of death in battle into an emotional experience. Courage, I argued, is a beautiful thing, and next week's attack is what I have been waiting for since I first joined the army. (III, 56-57)

I was meditating about England, visualizing a gray day down in Sussex; dark green woodlands with pigeons circling above the tree-tops; dogs barking, cocks crowing, and all the casual tappings and twinklings of the country side. I thought of the huntsman walking out in his long white coat with the hounds; of Parson Colwood pulling up weeds in his garden till tea-time; of Captain Huxtable helping his men get in the last load of hay while a shower of rain moved along the blurred Weald below his meadows. It was for all that, I supposed, that I was in the front-line with soaked feet, trench-mouth, and feeling short of sleep (IV, 64-65)

Thus emerges a conflict in George's attitudes toward the war: disquietening doubts trouble his previous unquestioning acceptance of it.

The Complication, or Rising Action, reveals George's loss of belief in the war. When deficient wire cutters, muddled orders, and faulty staff intelligence lead to the deaths of men, George begins to resent the waste of life. Shaken by Kendle's death, George watches new

replacements arrive:

They were mostly undersized men, and as I watched them arriving at the first stage of their battle experience I had a sense of their victimization. . . . Visualizing that forlorn crowd of khaki figures under the twilight of the trees, I can believe that I saw then, for the first time, how blindly War destroys its victims. . . . Two days later the Welsh Division, of which they were a unit, was involved in massacre and confusion. (IV, 94-95)

George tries to shut out the agony of others; yet everywhere he sees the futile waste of effort and lives. He decides that even if he cannot save his men from destruction, he can at least share their dangers and discomforts, but even this individual effort seems futile:

I could stare at the War as I stared at the sultry sky, longing for life and freedom and vaguely altruistic about my fellow-victims. But a second-lieutenant could attempt nothing--except to satisfy his superior officers; and altogether, I concluded, Armageddon was too immense for my solitary understanding. (IV, 112)

An exhausted division returning from the Front appears to him as "an army of ghosts." (IV, 115)

When he contracts enteritis, he is ambivalent about his illness:

The door to safety was half open, and though an impartial New Zealand doctor decided one's destiny, there was a not unnatural impulse to fight for one's own life instead of against the Germans. Less than two weeks ago I'd been sitting in a tent thinking noble thoughts about sharing the adversities of my fellow Fusiliers. But that emotional defense wouldn't work now, and the unutterable words "wangle my way home" forced their way obstinately to the foreground, supported by a crowd of smug-faced excuses. (V, 118-119)

Back in England, he senses a difference in the people:

Emerging from my retrospective reverie, I felt that this war had made the past seem very peculiar. People weren't the same as they used to be, or else I had changed. Was it because I had experienced something that they couldn't share or imagine? (V, 126)

When he learns of the decimation of his battalion, George tries not to

think about it. He also suppresses his gloomy thoughts while riding with the Ringwell:

We'd had a good woodland hunt with one quite nice bit in the open, and I'd jumped a lot of timber and thoroughly enjoyed my day. Staring at the dim brown landscape I decided that the War was worth while if it was being carried on to safeguard this sort of thing. Was it? I wondered; and if a doubt arose it was dismissed before it had been formulated. (V, 139)

But back at Clitherland, he notices another change:

The raw material to be trained was growing steadily worse. Most of those who came in now had joined the Army unwillingly, and there was no reason why they should find military service tolerable. The War had become undisguisedly mechanical and inhuman. What in earlier days had been drafts of volunteers were now droves of victims. I was just beginning to be aware of this. (VI, 143)

He also notices the war-profiteers in a Liverpool hotel: "In the dining-room I began to observe that some non-combatants were doing themselves pretty well out of the war. They were people whose faces lacked nobility, as they ordered lobsters and selected colossal cigars." (VI, 150)

He learns that his battalion had been destroyed in a hopeless decoying action. He reflects upon the progress of the war thus far:

The autumn attacks had been a sprawling muddle of attrition and inconclusiveness. In the early summer the Fourth Army had been ready to advance with a new impetus. Now it was stuck in the frozen mud in front of Bapaume, like a derelict tank. And the story was the same all the way up to Ypres. Bellicose politicians and journalists were fond of using the word "crusade." But the "chivalry" . . . had been mown down and blown up in July, August, and September, and its remnants had finished the year's "crusade" in a morass of torment and frustration. (VI, 159-160)

Back in France, he senses a new attitude of cynicism among his fellow officers; moreover, his own attitude, he discovers, has also changed:

I thought of the lengthening spring twilights and the lovely wakening of the year, forgetful of the "Spring Offensive." But it was only for a short while, and the bitter reality returned to me I was losing my belief in the War, and

I longed for mental acquiescence-- to be like young Patterson, who had come out to fight for his country undoubting, who could still kneel by his bed and say his simple prayers, steadfastly believing that he was in the Field Artillery to make the world a better place. I had believed like that, once upon a time, but now the only prayer which seemed worth uttering was Omar Khayyam's:

For all the Sin wherewith the Face of Man Is blackened--
Man's forgiveness give--and take. (VII, 169)

He is repelled by the Army's brutal treatment of conscientious objectors, by the Church's attempts to yoke religious fervor to the war effort, and by the disdainful attitude of the clubbish Base officers toward the men assigned to the Front line companies.

When he returns to the trenches, he attempts to regenerate his enthusiasm for the war:

My thoughts assured me that I wouldn't go back to England tomorrow if I were offered an improbable choice between that and battle. . . . Here was I, working myself up into a . . . mental condition, as though going over the top were a species of religious experience. Was it some suicidal self-deceiving escape from the limitless malevolence of the Front Line? Well, what ever it was, it was some compensation for the loss of last year's day-dreams about England (which I could no longer indulge in, owing to an indefinite hostility to "people at home who couldn't understand.") I was beginning to feel rather arrogant toward "people at home." But my mind was in a muddle; the War was too big an event for one man to stand alone in. All I knew was that I'd lost my faith in it, and there was nothing left to believe in except "the Battalion spirit." The Battalion spirit meant living oneself into comfortable companionship with the officers and N.C.O.'s around one; it meant winning the respect, or even the affection, of platoon and company. But while exploring my way into the War I had discovered the impermanence of its humanities. . . . I knew that a soldier signed away his independence; we were at the front to fight, not to think. But it became a bit awkward when one couldn't look even a week ahead. . . .

That was the bleak truth, and there was only one method of evading it; to make a little drama out of my own experience-- that was the way out. I must play at being a hero in shining armor, as I'd done last year; if I didn't, I might crumple up altogether. (VIII, 194-196)

Though appalled by the horrors of the war, he is nevertheless able to take some pride in doing his duties well; yet, he is still plagued with doubts about his adequacy: "It seemed to me, in my confused and exhausted condition, that I was at a crisis in my military career; and, as usual, my main fear was that I should make a fool of myself." (VIII, 217)

While bravely leading an attack, George is wounded. Sent toward the rear lines and thus freed from the "Battalion Spirit" and from the fear of making a fool of himself, he is able to look at the war with "liberated eyes." What he sees is only waste and futility: "The activities of the attack had subsided, and we seemed to be walking in a waste land where dead men had been left out in the rain after being killed for no apparent reason." (VIII, 231)

Returned to England again, George grows bitter. He begins to read The Unconservative Weekly, a pacifist publication, and becomes increasingly critical of the war. He is antagonized by the civilian attitudes and propaganda about the war:

I wondered why it was necessary for the Western Front to be "attractively advertised" by such intolerable twaddle. What was this camouflage War which was manufactured by the press to aid the imaginations of people who had never seen the real thing? Many of them probably said that the papers gave them a sane and vigorous view of the overwhelming tragedy. . . . Such people needed to have their noses rubbed in a few rank physical facts, such as what a company of men smelt like after they'd been in action for a week. (IX, 254)

While convalescing at Nutwood Manor, the estate of Lord and Lady Asterisk, he discusses the war with his hostess:

Outwardly emotionless, she symbolized the patrician privileges for whose preservation I had chucked bombs at Germans and carelessly offered myself as a target for a sniper. When I blurted out my opinion that life was preferable to the Roll of Honor she put aside her reticence like a rich cloak. "But death is

nothing," she said. "Life, after all, is only the beginning. And those who are killed in the War—they help us from up there. . . . It isn't as though you were heir to a great name. No; I can't see any definite reason for your keeping out of danger. But, of course, you can only decide a thing like that for yourself." (IX, 256-257)

The conversation leaves him feeling "estranged and cynical," and George leaves Nutwood Manor almost gladly.

Through this long series of events—the greater portion of the narrative—George's attitude toward the war slowly changes: after an unquestioning acceptance, George begins vaguely to sense the war's inhumanities and injustices; he grows more acutely aware of the victimization of the men and of the futility of their deaths; he attempts to suppress his doubts and to immerse himself in the "war machine," but he soon realizes that he has lost his belief in the war; he tries to regenerate his enthusiasm, but he is unable to shut out a recognition of the waste, futility, and horror of the war; when confronted with civilian ignorance and complacency toward the war, he becomes bitterly critical. Thus, the *Rising Action* records a reversal in George's attitude.

The Crisis is George's decision to make a public protest in an effort to shorten the war. While still at Nutwood Manor, George writes Markington, the editor of The Unconservative Weekly, saying, "I'm fed up with all the hanky-panky in the daily papers," (X, 264) and offers to provide truthful information about the war. Lunching with the editor, he explains his attitude: "What I feel now is that if it's got to go on there ought to be a jolly sound reason for it, and I can't help thinking that the troops are being done in the eye by the people in control." (X, 267) Stimulated by his discussion with Markington, George goes to

Markington's office the following week and offers to make a public protest:

"I say, I've been thinking it all over, and I've made up my mind that I ought to do something about it. . . . I can't just sit still and do nothing. You said the other day that you couldn't print anything really outspoken, but I don't see why I shouldn't make some sort of statement--about how we ought to publish our War Aims, and all that, and the troops not knowing what they're fighting about. It might do quite a lot of good, mightn't it?" My heart was beating violently. I knew that I couldn't turn back now. (X, 270)

The editor sends him to Thornton Tyrrell, who urges George to think independently and to act fearlessly on his moral convictions. Encouraged, George composes a statement of protest. Though he knows that he may be subject to arrest and court-martial, he nevertheless worries about what "people" will say of him; however, Tyrrell disposes of this uncertainty: "What people say doesn't matter. Your own belief in what you are doing is the only thing that counts." Knowing that he was right, I felt abashed." (X, 282) At Butley, amidst the traditions and the society which had shaped him, he suffers a "purgatory" of anxiety, but he remains determined to protest:

I knew that no right-minded Butley man could take it upon himself to affirm that a European war was being needlessly prolonged by those who had the power to end it. They would tap their foreheads and sympathetically assume that I'd seen more of the fighting than was good for me. But I felt the desire to suffer, and once again I had a glimpse of something beyond and above my present troubles--as though I could, by cutting myself off from my previous existence, gain some new spiritual freedom and live as I had never lived before. (X, 295)

Thus, when he is due to report back to Clitherland, he sends his statement instead:

"I am making this statement as an act of wilful defiance of military authority, because I believe that this War is being deliberately prolonged by those who have the power to end it. I am a soldier, convinced that I am acting on behalf of soldiers. I believe that this War, upon which I entered as a war of defense

and liberation, has now become a war of aggression and conquest. I believe that the purposes for which I and my fellow soldiers entered upon this War should have been so clearly stated as to have made it impossible to change them, and that, had this been done, the objects which actuated us would now be attainable by negotiations. I have seen and endured the sufferings of the troops, and I can no longer be a party to prolong these sufferings for ends which I believe to be evil and unjust. I am not protesting against the conduct of the War, but against the political errors and insincerities for which the fighting men are being sacrificed. On behalf of those who are suffering now I make this protest against the deception which is being practiced on them; also I believe that I may help to destroy the callous complacency with which the majority of those at home regard the continuance of agonies which they do not share, and which they have not sufficient imagination to realize." (X, 297-298)

With his protest irrevocably made, George senses the rightness of his action and prepares to accept the consequences. Thus, the Crisis marks the turning point in George's attitude toward the war: from passive acceptance followed by almost reluctant criticism, George turns to active hostility. More important thematically, George consciously rejects the pressures to accept and conform and turns to individual, solitary action.

The Resolution is George's realization of the futility of his protest and his agreement to go before a Medical Board. Going back to Clitherland, expecting arrest and court-martial, George suddenly has qualms about his protest: "Alone in that first-class compartment, I shut my eyes and asked myself out loud what this thing was which I was doing; and my mutinous act suddenly seemed outrageous and incredible." (X, 306) However, he soon regains his determination. At Clitherland, he is met not with arrest but with embarrassed pleas that he "forget" his protest. But George remains firm, and on the Adjutant's suggestion, goes to a Liverpool hotel; he is relieved at not being thought mad. Three days later, when he is ordered to attend a Special Medical Board, he sees the

order as a chance to relent:

Here was chance of turning aside from the road to Court-Martialdom, and it would be inaccurate were I to say that I never gave the question two thoughts. Roughly speaking, two thoughts were exactly what I did give it. One thought urged that I might just as well chuck the whole business and admit that my gesture had been futile. The other one reminded me that this was an inevitable conjuncture in my progress, and that such temptations must be resisted inflexibly. Not that I ever admitted the possibility of my accepting the invitation . . . ; but I did become conscious that acceptance would be much pleasanter than refusal. (X, 311)

After refusing to meet the Board and then waiting several days for the Army to react, George grows nervous and distraught. One afternoon, while walking along the seashore, he rips off his Military Cross ribbon and flings it in the water. But he suddenly realizes that his protest, like this gesture, is futile: "Watching a big boat which was steaming along the horizon, I realized that protesting against the prolongation of the War was about as much use as shouting at the people on board that ship." (X, 315) The next morning, Cromlech arrives and attempts to dissuade him from continuing his protest, but George persists in his plan:

"The main point is that by backing out of my statement I shall be betraying my real convictions and the people who are supporting me. Isn't that worse cowardice than being thought cold-footed by officers who refuse to think about anything except the gentlemanly traditions of the Regiment? I'm not doing it for fun, am I? Can't you understand that this is the most difficult thing I've ever done in my life? (X, 319)

When Cromlech tells George that the Army plans to committ him to an insane asylum if he refuses to meet the Board, George yields:

"I wouldn't believe this from anyone but you. Will you swear on the Bible that you're telling me the truth?" He swore on an imaginary Bible that nothing would induce them to court-martial me and that I should be treated as insane. "All right then, I'll give way." (X, 319-320)

With this decision, George's anxiety vanishes: "Already I was aware that

an enormous load had been lifted from my mind. . . . As soon as I was alone, I sat back and closed my eyes with a sense of exquisite relief." (X, 320) He is unaware that Cromlech has lied to him.

The Denouement is George's meeting with the Medical Board and its outcome. Waiting for his interview with the Board, George feels carefree: "I felt several years younger than I'd done two days before. I was now an irresponsible person again, absolved from any obligation to intervene in world affairs. In fact the present performance seemed rather ludicrous. . . ." (X, 320-321) Talking with the Army doctors, he answers their questions evasively but politely. They decide that he is shell-shocked and order him to Slateford War Hospital. After the meeting, George is cheerful because it seems as though he has finished with the war. The next day he travels to Edinburgh and enters Slateford.

Thus, through the narrative of the second volume, George grows disillusioned about the war and attempts futilely to end it. More important thematically, he grows disillusioned about his own worth and the value of individual efforts.

Sherston's Progress, the final volume in the sequence, narrates George's return to the war and his search for self-respect.

If volume one might be sub-titled "Illusions" and volume two

"Disillusionment," then Sherston's Progress might well be sub-titled "Reality and Recovery": in it George realizes that individual efforts, even under impossible circumstances, give meaning to life, and he regains confidence in himself.

The Introduction is George's ambivalent attitude at Slateford. Still bitter about the war, George tells Rivers that the attitude expressed in his statement is unchanged: "Just because they refused to court-martial me, it doesn't make any difference to my still being on strike, does it?" (I, 4) Nevertheless, his bitterness diminishes: "The intensity of my individual effort to influence the Allied Governments had abated." (I, 7) He feels safe and contented at Slateford:

For me, the War felt as if it were a long way off while the summer of 1917 was coming to an end. Except for keeping an eye on the casualty lists, I did my best to turn my back on the entire business. Once, when I saw that one of my best friends had been killed, I lapsed into angry self-pity, and told myself that the War was "a sham and a stinking lie," and succeeded in feeling bitter against the unspecific crowd of noncombatants who believed that to go through with it to the end was the only way out. But on the whole I was psychologically passive—content to mark time on the golf links and do some steady reading after dinner. The fact remained that, when I awoke in the morning, my first conscious thought was no longer an unretrieved awareness that the War would go on indefinitely and that sooner or later I should be killed or mutilated. The prospect of being imprisoned as a war resister had also evaporated. To wake up knowing that I was going to bicycle off to play two rounds of golf was not a penance. It was a reward. (I, 9)

George also comes to understand the basis of his protest:

Of course the weak point about my "protest" had been that it was evoked by personal feeling. It was an emotional idea based on my war experiences and stimulated by the acquisition of points of view which I accepted uncritically. (I, 10-11)

However, George grows uncomfortable about the safety he enjoys: "There was I, a healthy young officer, dumped down among nurses and nervous wrecks.

During my second month at the hydro, I think I began to feel a sense of humiliation." (1, 13) His attitude becomes defensive:

Sometimes I had an uncomfortable notion that none of them respected one another; it was as though there were a tacit understanding that we were all failures, and this made me want to reassure myself that I wasn't the same as the others. "After all, I haven't broken down; I've only broken out, . . ." (1, 14)

One night during a storm, he lies awake brooding:

The longer I lay awake the more I was reminded of the troops in the Line. There they were, stoically enduring their roofless discomfort while I was safe and warm. . . . I thought of the Ypres salient, that morass of misery and doom. I'd never been there, but I almost wished I was there now. (1, 20)

Thus, the Introduction presents George's ambivalence toward his protest and his safety at Slateford.

The Definition accounts for George's decision to return to active duty. During his stay at Slateford, George becomes deeply attached to Rivers: "I can only suggest that my definite approach to mental maturity began with my contact with the mind of Rivers." (1, 32) When a civilian pacifist urges him to leave Slateford, George refuses; one reason is his attitude toward Rivers: "I suppose I ought to have waxed indignant, but all I thought was, 'Good Lord, he's trying to persuade me to do the dirty on Rivers!'" (1, 30) Though Rivers puts no pressure on him to do so, George becomes increasingly concerned with what he must do about his "disillusioned self." (1, 37) One evening he debates with himself on this subject:

While I continued to clean my clubs, some inward monitor became uncomfortably candid and remarked, "This heroic gesture of yours--'making a separate peace'--is extremely convenient for you, isn't it? Doesn't it begin to look rather like dodging the Kaiser's well-aimed projectiles?" Proper pride also weighed in with a few well-chosen words. "Twelve weeks ago you may have

been a man with a message. Anyhow you genuinely believed yourself to be one. But unless you can prove to yourself that your protest is still effective, you are here under false pretenses, merely skrimshanking snugly along on what you did in the belief that you would be given a bad time for doing it." (I, 37-38)

He looks at a good-luck charm which he had carried in combat:

It . . . set up a mood of reverie about the old Front Line, which really did feel as if it had been a better place than this where I now sat in bitter safety surrounded by the wreckage and defeat of those who had once been brave. (I, 40)

He remembers the discomfort and squalor of trench life, but he also remembers the noble conduct of the men:

Cheerfulness under bad conditions was by no means the least heroic element of the War. Wonderful indeed had been that whimsical fortitude of the men who accepted intense bombardment as all in the day's work and then grumbled because their cigarette ration was one packet short. (I, 41-42)

Yet he is still appalled by the horrors of war: "The idea of going back there was indeed like death." (I, 43) He also considers his present situation:

Humanity asserted itself in the form of a sulky little lapse into exasperation against the people who pitied my "wrongheadedness" and regarded me as "not quite normal." In their opinion it was quite right that I should be safely out of it and "being looked after." How else could I get my own back on them but by returning to the trenches? (I, 43)

Finally he reaches his decision:

When the windows were dark and I could see the stars, I still sat there . . . , alone with what now seemed an irrefutable assurance that going back to the War as soon as possible was my only chance of peace. (I, 44)

Consequently, he tells Rivers, "I was getting things into focus a bit while you were away and I see now that the only thing for me to do is to get back to the Front as quick as I can." (I, 46)

The Definition therefore establishes the conflict which exists in

George: on the one hand, a sense of humiliation and isolation and a loss of self-esteem, and, on the other, a desire for self-respect and the identity of responsible individualism. He bitterly remembers the horrors of war: "The idea of going back there was indeed like death." Yet he willingly submits himself to these horrors in order to gain his self-respect. He now seeks not peace with the enemy but peace with himself.

The Complication consists of events which delay George's finding peace. After making his decision, George still has moments of doubt, but he keeps in mind what he has learned from Rivers:

There had been times since I came to Slateford when I had, rather guardedly, given myself a glimpse of an apres de guerre existence, but I hadn't done any cosy daydreaming about it. My talks with Rivers had increased my awareness of the limitations of my prewar life. He had shown that he believed me to be capable of achieving something useful. He had set me on the right road and made me feel that if the War were to end to-morrow I should be starting a new life's journey in which point-to-point races and cricket matches would no longer be supremely important and a strenuous effort must be made to take some small share in the real work of the world. (I, 57)

Therefore, he perseveres in his decision:

Realizing how much I wanted not to lose that chance of a "new life," I experienced a sort of ordeal of self-immolation. Immolation for what? I asked myself. I should be returning to the war with no belief in what I was doing; I should go through with it in a spirit of loneliness and detachment because there was no alternative. Going back was the only way out of an impossible situation. At the Front I should at least find forgetfulness. And I would rather be killed than survive as one who had "wangled" his way through by saying that the War ought to stop. Better to be in the trenches with those whose experience I had shared and understood It's got to be done, I thought. That was about all I'd got to keep me up to the scratch, and I went through some fairly murky moments in that little room of mine. It was, in fact, not at all unlike a renunciation of life and all that it had to offer me. (I, 58-59)

After George is approved for General Service, he bids Rivers farewell and leaves Slateford. On leave at Butley he finds no comfort among its

serenity and civilian concerns. Reporting for duty in Limerick, he begins his readjustment to military life. His duties being light, he often goes hunting, but, though he still enjoys the chase and sometimes feels "heedlessly happy," he now sees the proceedings of the Hunt as "a sort of extravaganza of good-humoured absurdity." (II, 97) Enroute to his new battalion in Palestine, he experiences a familiar "feeling of detachment from all worldly business which comes when one is 'back at the War.'" (III, 124) Taking up his duties as second-in-command of a company, he feels a new sympathy and responsibility for his men:

They are only a part of the huge dun-coloured mass of victims which passes through the shambles of war into the gloom of death. . . . But in the patience and simplicity of their outward showing they seem like one soul. They are the tradition of human suffering and endurance, stripped of all the silly self-glorifications and embellishments by which human society seeks to justify its conventions. (III, 159)

He also gains a new personal perspective: "I too am tortured, but I begin to see that the War has remade me and done away with a lot of my ideas that were no good. So I am really better for it, in spite of scowling bitterly at it." (III, 160) When he is back in France, George determines to perform well:

I now feel rather "on my toes" about being in France, and am resolved to make a good job of it this time. . . . I tell myself that I simply must become an efficient Company Commander. It is the only way I can do the men any good, and they are such a decent well-behaved lot that it is a pleasure to work with them and do what one can for their comfort. (III, 168)

He gains intense satisfaction from his efforts:

There were five of my men who had come too late to get any tea. Disconsolately they stood at the empty dixie--tired out by the long march and herded into a dirty van to be carried a bit nearer to Hell. But I managed to get some hot tea for them. Alone I did it. Without me they would have got none. And for the moment the War seemed worth while. (III, 178-179)

He still seeks to gain his self-respect at the Front:

Letters from England seem to come from another world. Aunt Evelyn wants to know when I shall be coming home on leave. Damn leave; I don't want it. And I don't want to be wounded and wangle a job at home. I want the next six weeks, and success. (III, 180-181)

However, when his men move toward the Front, George again doubts his ability: "I assumed that everything would go wrong with the 'relief' if I made the slightest mistake, and I felt no certainty that I could achieve what I had been told to do." (IV, 207) But, seven months after leaving Slatford, when George finally stands in the trenches of France again, he seems almost to have achieved his goal: "That was one of my untroubled moments, when I could believe that I'd got a firm grip on what I was doing and could be oblivious to the why's and wherefore's of the War." (IV, 216) His mind seeks "to be detached from clogging discomfort and to achieve, in its individual isolation, some sort of mastery over the experience which it shared with those dead and sleeping multitudes. . . ." (IV, 218) Thus George almost attains understanding and self-esteem.

The Crisis is George's being wounded and returned to England. George impulsively makes a solitary daylight patrol into the German trenches; this brief foray exhilarates him: "It had been great fun, I felt. And I regarded myself as having scored a point against the people who had asserted that I was suffering from shell-shock." (IV, 224) The following night, while returning from a bombing party, he is wounded in the head and believes that he is dying: "My whole body and being were possessed by a dreadful sense of unhappiness. Body and spirit were one, and both must perish. The world had been mine, and the fulness of life, and in a

moment all had changed and I was to lose it." (IV, 233) However, he is able to walk to a field hospital; he assures his men that he will be back in a week or two. But, a few days later in the Base hospital, he records his divided attitude:

"Time drifts between me and last week. Everything gets blurred. I know that I feel amputated from the Battalion. I seemed all wrong to be leaving the Company behind and going away into safety. . . . Even now I hang on to my obsession about not going to Blighty. I write to people at home saying that I'm staying in France till I can go up to the Line again. . . .

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 "It seems as if there's nothing to go back to in England as long as the War goes on. Up in the Line I was at least doing something real, and I had lived myself into a feeling of responsibility—inefficient and impulsive though I was when in close contact with the Germans. All that was decent in me disliked leaving Velmore and Howitt and the troops. But now I begin to tell myself that perhaps half of them will be casualties by the time I get back, and I ask how many officers there are in the Battalion who would refuse to go to England if it were made easy for them.

"Not one, I believe; so why should I be the only one? They'd only think me a fool, if they knew I'd gone back on purpose to be with them.

"Yet it is the supreme thing that is asked of me, and already I am shying at it. . . . In a final effort to quell those cravings for safety I try to see on the dark the far-off vision of the Line, with flares going up and the whine and crash of shells scattered along the level dusk. . . . All this I remember, while the desirable things of life, like living phantoms, steal quietly into my brain, look wistfully at me, and steal away again--beckoning, pointing--'to England in a few days.' . . . And though it's wrong, I know I shall go there, because it is made so easy for me." (IV, 236-240)

Thus George returns to England. This event is the turning point of the structure, both in that George literally returns from the Front, and more important, in that by doing so he abandons his quest for self-respect and understanding.

The Resolution is George's finding peace at last. In a London hospital, George becomes extremely depressed:

Outwardly I was being suavely compensated for whatever

exactions the war machine had inflicted on me. . . . But inwardly I was restless and over-wrought. My war had stopped, but its aftereffects were still with me. . . . My thoughts couldn't escape from themselves into that completed peace which was the only thing I wanted. I saw myself as one who had achieved nothing except an idiotic anticlimax, and my mind worked itself into a tantrum of self-disparagement. Why hadn't I stayed in France where I could at least escape from the War by being in it? Out there I had never despised my existence as I did now.

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I was still worried by feeling so inglorious. I was nearly thirty-two and nothing that I'd done seemed to have been any good. . . . When I tried to think about the future I found that I couldn't see it. There was no future except "the rest of the War," and I didn't want that. My knight-errantry about the War had fizzled out in more ways than one, and I couldn't go back to begin the same as I was before it started. The "good old days" had been pleasant enough in their way, but what could a repetition of them possibly lead to?

How could I begin my life all over again when I had no conviction about anything except that the War was a dirty trick played on me and my generation? (IV, 242-244)

Thus the basic conflict still exists in George: on the one hand, he feels humiliated, isolated, and worthless; on the other, he desires self-respect and a new life of responsible individualism. This conflict is resolved with the arrival of Rivers:

My futile demons fled me--for his presence was a refutation of wrongheadedness. I knew then that I had been very lonely while I was at the War; I knew that I had a lot to learn, and that he was the only man who could help me.

Without a word he sat down by the bed; and his smile was benediction enough for all I'd been through. "Oh, Rivers, I've had such a funny time since I saw you last!" I exclaimed. And I understood that this was what I'd been waiting for.

He did not tell me that I had done my best to justify his belief in me. He merely made me feel that he took all that for granted, and now we must go on to something better still. And this was the beginning of the new life toward which he had shown me the way. . . . (IV, 245. Sassoon's ellipses)

Thus the conflict is resolved: Rivers' concern assures George of his own value as an individual and, with Rivers' aid, he can now look forward to a future.

The Denouement, though minimal, is an extraordinary one, for it is implied in the fact of George Sherston's having recorded his memoirs: "It has been a long journey from that moment to this, when I write the last words of my book." (IV, 245) Thus, the whole memoir is presented as the successful result of the new life--the "long journey"--which George looks forward to after Rivers' visit. And the understanding he has gained during that "journey" concludes the volume: "And my last words shall be these--that it is only from the inmost silences of the heart that we know the world for what it is, and ourselves for what the world has made us." (IV, 245)

From the three separate structures in The Memoirs of George Sherston emerges the structural pattern of the whole sequence. The basis of this inclusive structure is a plot not of action but of thought; that is, the plot depicts "a completed process of change in the thought of the protagonist and consequently in his feelings, conditioned and directed by character and action."³³ Traced through the sequence is the change from George's uncritical acceptance of society as the criterion of behavior and belief to his acceptance of his own conscience, or Self, as the criterion, based upon self-knowledge and a rational appraisal of reality. Thus, the conflict upon which this change is based is that between, on the one hand, George's plasticity under the formative pressures of his milieu and the society of the world at large and, on the other, his impulses toward individualism. In terms of this conflict, therefore, the inclusive structure consists not only of single determinative events but also of numerous minor events which slowly create or reveal George's attitudes.

The inclusive introduction consists of the first 288 pages of

Memoirs of a Fox-Hunting Man: its introduction, which depicts the formative pressures (Aunt Evelyn, Dixon, and the society represented by Milden) that mold George's attitudes; its definition (the hunting faux pas), which illustrates George's anxiety to conform to these pressures; and its complication, or rising action, which, through a lengthy series of episodes, reveals George's constantly plastic responses to the socially accepted beliefs and modes of behavior. Thus, the inclusive introduction shows the world that "made" George--the milieu that governs his thoughts and actions. More important, it shows what George is as a product of this world: his acute awareness of social distinctions, his snobbish insensitivity to the feelings of his inferiors, and his slavish imitativeness of his superiors. Thematically, it shows how a veil of social illusion interposes between self and self-knowledge. The inclusive introduction, therefore, presents the stasis of George's world and his attitudes.

The inclusive definition, which is the crisis of Memoirs of A Fox-Hunting Man, breaks this stasis. The war which threatens his country presents George with a situation outside the normal governance of his milieu and its code of "correct" behavior. Hence, George responds in an individual manner by enlisting in the ranks of the Yeomanry. He anticipates instant heroism, but he does not gain it. Instead of the martial glory which would justify his "incorrect" behavior, he finds himself in a situation still governed, to a large degree, by the familiar social code: Dixon, his groom, is also an enlisted man, but Stephen, Milden, and even Nigel Croplady are officers and his military superiors. Consequently, George regrets his impulsive action. His act of individualism

proves unsatisfactory because his attitudes are still those based upon his customary social codes: class distinctions and imitativensness of others. Herein clearly lies the conflict which governs the progression of the sequence: George's plastic responsiveness to social pressures opposed to his impulses toward individualism, or, in slightly different terms, the belief that self-respect is gained through the respect of others versus the belief that self-respect is gained primarily through satisfying one's own criteria.

The inclusive complication is necessarily a lengthy rising action which shows the evolution of George's thought: it consists of the last seventy pages of Memoirs of a Fox-Hunting Man (its resolution and denouement) and the first 263 pages of Memoirs of an Infantry Officer (its introduction, definition, and complication). Thematically, the inclusive complication shows the shattering of two of George's illusions. First, George's seeking a commission reverses his individualistic act of enlisting; finding his deviation from "correct" behavior unsatisfactory, he returns to the code of his youthful milieu. But, in the terrible butchery of war, when the people and circumstances which created this milieu die, then George can find no reason for living. The code of "correct" behavior upon which George had long based his self-esteem supplies no stability or support under new and greater circumstances; it proves inadequate to cope with the life-or-death horrors of war, and thus George's illusion of its supreme sufficiency as a guide to behavior is shattered. Yet simultaneously, on a second level, George has also unconsciously adopted an attitude toward the war composed of an assumption that the political aims of the war are just, a conviction that he fights

for the salvation of a beneficent and noble society, and a belief that the code of conduct inherent in military life will assure that the war will be conducted efficiently, justly, and humanely. He uncritically forms this attitude, just as he had earlier accepted the code of his milieu of sportsmen and gentry uncritically. More important, with this attitude motivating his actions, he thinks his behavior deficient; thus his illusions about what both he and the war should be are another reason that he can find no reason for living. The inclusive complication shows George's growing disillusionment with this attitude. He witnesses the inefficient, unjust, and dehumanizing elements of the war machine; he slowly realizes that society either exploits or ignores the suffering of the men at war; he gradually recognizes the hypocrisy of the political pronouncements on the war. Thus, as he comes to view the war as an enormous process of victimization, he grows disillusioned with society and its structures. The attitude toward the war which he had adopted proves incompatible with the horrible realities he experiences.

The inclusive crisis is the crisis of Memoirs of an Infantry Officer--George's protest against the war. The discrepancy between George's illusions about the war and his experiences of its realities shatters his illusions. Because he no longer believes in the war as a just cause, he is no longer able to serve complacently. He has only two alternatives: either to conform to society's expectations, accept the war as it is, and continue to fight until he dies, or to attempt individually to shorten the war. George is conditioned by his entire previous life to conform to societal pressures, but with his belief in these social mechanisms destroyed, he rejects them and chooses the latter alternative.

Thematically, his effort is the turning point away from external formative pressures toward individual action. However, it is not the completion of the thematic conflict, for, as he later realizes, his action is an emotional, not a rational response, based upon inadequate knowledge of the war and of himself. Thus, George achieves only partial liberation.

A reversal of this crisis occurs when George yields and goes before the Special Medical Board. Thematically, this reversal involves more than just his failure to stop the war, for with his failure, George becomes disillusioned about the efficacy of individualism. Now dissatisfied with both society and himself he enters Slateford in a kind of spiritual vacuum. He now has nothing upon which to base self-respect: his racing victories and superior social milieu belong to a dead past; his dutiful performance in an ignoble war seems itself ignoble; his yielding his protest (though a great relief) seems a wretched betrayal of those for whom he saw himself an advocate. Hence, George despairs of finding any value in himself or in society and is content to vegetate at Slateford, reading, playing golf, and chatting with Rivers.

The inclusive resolution, which is the definition of Sherston's Progress, is George's decision to return to the war. After several months at Slateford, George cannot endure the vacuum of his existence: he finds no comfort in memories of his dead past; he no longer believes in the nobility of society; he cannot relate to the other officers in the hospital; he can no longer agree with civilian pacifists such as Macamble; he finds the comfort and safety of Slateford intolerable; and he feels as if he were without identity or value. He slowly realizes that only by himself and within himself can he find peace of mind, only by

succeeding in terms of his own evaluation can he gain self-respect. Hence, he decides to return to the war. Thematically, George chooses the conscience of individualism rather than the formative pressures of society as the true criterion of behavior and belief. George's first abortive assertion of individualism--his enlistment--was motivated by an egoistic desire for heroic glory and by a belief in the war based upon an illusion about society; it was an emotional response to extraordinary circumstance, partly caused by his ignorance of the nature of war, of society, and of himself. But in this final assertion of individualism, George has no illusions: he commits himself now to preserving not society but his own dignity and self-respect as a human being, for he believes that he can never accept himself again--never have peace of mind--unless he tests himself against the circumstances of reality.

The inclusive denouement is the resolution of Sherston's Progress. The thematic conflict is resolved when George chooses the individual conscience as the true criterion, by deciding to return to the war. But the validity of this choice--the completed process of change--is not confirmed until George proves himself--until a new stasis is established. This process includes the complication and the crisis of Sherston's Progress. George finds immediate peace after his decision, but a long series of delays (his leave, the weeks in Ireland, the journey to Palestine and his duties there) prevent a meaningful confirmation of his choice. However, back in the trenches of France where his disillusionment began, George gains both satisfaction from his compassionate care of his men and a sense of responsible identity from his efficient fulfillment of his duties. But when he is wounded and returned to England, he momentarily despairs,

for he thinks he has again failed; he sees himself as "one who has achieved nothing except an idiotic anticlimax. . . ." (SP, 243) But this mood is dispelled when Rivers arrives. Rivers has never exerted any overt pressures upon George; he has merely indicated a belief in George's capabilities as an individual. Consequently, when Rivers visits him, George suddenly understands that he merits self-respect not for achieving great feats but for having done his best to do so. Hence, through his conscientious efforts as an individual, George finds peace of mind. The validity of his choice is confirmed, and a new stasis of thought is established.

In brief, the inclusive structure of the sequence is based upon a change in the thoughts and feelings of the protagonist. This process of change might be summarized thus:

- (1) an uncritical acceptance of social codes as the criteria of behavior, with the belief that self-respect is achieved through the respect of others,
- (2) an emotional assertion of individualism under extraordinary circumstances,
- (3) a dissatisfaction with this assertion, leading to renewed adherence to the social codes,
- (4) disillusionment with war, society, and its codes of behavior,
- (5) an individual effort, but again an emotional one, which consciously rejects societal pressures,
- (6) a recognition of failure and a consequent despair and disillusionment with self,
- (7) a decision to gain self-respect and peace of mind through individual efforts,
- (8) a bitter belief in another failure,

- (9) a true understanding and acceptance of what merits self-respect--a conscientious effort to do one's best according to one's own estimation.

This change of thought thus illustrates Sassoon's general theme: "It is only from the inmost silences of the heart that we know the world for what it is, and ourselves for what the world has made us."

To present this theme through a completed process of change of thought, Sassoon necessarily had to achieve four goals: (1) to depict the initial attitude and its basis, (2) to show the change and its basis, (3) to establish the validity of the change, and (4) to relate the intangible of thought or feeling to the concrete particulars of character and action. In order best to achieve these goals and thus convey his theme in a meaningful plot structure, Sassoon chose to employ a first-person, chronological pattern.³⁴

The progressive change in George's thought is traced chronologically from 1895 to 1918. Within this span, the spheres of fictive time constituting the separate volumes of the sequence are contiguous: Volume I records George's life from 1895, when he was nine years old, until the spring of 1916; Volume II, from the spring of 1916 until the summer of 1917; Volume III, from the summer of 1917 until the summer of 1918. This chronological continuity is reinforced by the linking devices which Sassoon uses. For instance, Volume II begins with a reiteration of statements made in the conclusion of Volume I:

I have said that spring arrived late in 1916, and that up in the trenches opposite Mametz it seemed as though winter would last forever. I also stated that as for me, I had more or less made up my mind to die because in the circumstances there didn't seem anything else to be done. Well, we came back to Morlancourt after Easter. . . . (MIQ, 9)

Similarly, Volume II concludes in this way: "Next morning I went to Edinburgh. . . . And with my arrival at Slatford War Hospital this volume can conveniently be concluded." (MIQ, 322) Volume III begins in this manner: "To be arriving at a shell-shock hospital in a state of unmilitant defiance of military authority was an experience peculiar enough to stimulate my speculations about the immediate future." (SP, 3) Thus, developed chronologically and linked contiguously from volume to volume, the narrative encompasses the whole of the thematically significant change of thought: from initial stasis through the change to the new stasis.

This progression, one might note, is reflected in the titles of the several volumes: Memoirs of A Fox-Hunting Man, Memoirs of an Infantry Officer, and Sherston's Progress. The first two volumes show George's plasticity to social pressures, and their titles focus upon societal types; only the title of the volume in which George accepts individualism as his criterion focuses upon him as an individual.

Within each volume, the narrative also progresses chronologically. That is, Sassoon uses no loopings, dramatized flashbacks, or synchronous scenes. His closest approach to such a device is the scene in which George has dinner in a luxurious Liverpool hotel with Durley, a fellow officer (MIQ, 150-155). Durley tells George how their battalion had been virtually destroyed in a pointless decoying attack. The purpose of this scene is to juxtapose the horrors of Durley's narrative with George's immediate view of war-profiteers gluttonously dining on oysters and ice-cream. Through Durley's narrative, the reader's attention momentarily is focused upon action which occurred earlier, while George was in the

hospital in London; the time, therefore, seems to shift from the present of George and Durley in Liverpool to the past of Durley in combat. However, the time-shift is only apparent, not technically real: though the action itself occurred in the past, Durley's narration of it occurs in the fictive present. Thus, Sassoon's presentation of George's memoirs remains consistently chronological.

A notable aspect of this chronological presentation is its varying density of texture. This varying density is the result of two separate techniques. First, though its progress is chronological, the action narrated is intermittent. That is, Sassoon omits the events of varying periods of time. He handles these omitted events in one of two ways. First, he simply skips from one event to the next selected one without significant reference to events in the interim. For instance, though Sassoon concludes Chapter I of Memoirs of A Fox-Hunting Man with George's great faux pas when George is twelve, he begins Chapter II with George's arrival in Butley on the day before the Flower Match Show, when George is sixteen. The four intervening years are accounted for by only a single sentence indicating that George has just finished his first year at Ballboro'. After a detailed exposition of George's actions and feelings during the cricket match, Chapter II ends. Chapter III begins five years later when George is twenty-one; the only indicated events of the interim are that George has "taken up golf" and has spent two years at Cambridge. Sassoon thus simply omits certain periods of time from the narrative. However, he sometimes handles the interim events in a second way: instead of ignoring the events completely, he advances the action and then reflects the interim events through George's memory. These reflections

are never dramatized flashbacks nor even extensive mnemonic scenes; they usually are merely summarized statements, often in the past perfect tense, of what has happened. For instance, Chapter VIII of Memoirs of a Fox-Hunting Man concludes with George's selling his Packlestone horses: "I went to see the Hunt horses sold at Tattersalls, at the end of May. . . ." (288) Chapter IX begins three months later: "Sitting in the sunshine one morning early in September, I ruminated on my five weeks' service as a trooper in the Yeomanry." (289) After this statement follows a lengthy presentation of George's present state of mind and such summarized events as these:

I thought of that last cricket match, on August Bank Holiday, when I was at Hoadley Rectory playing for the Rector's eleven against the village, and how old Colonel Hesmon had patted me on the back because I'd enlisted on the Saturday before. Outwardly the match had been normally conducted, but there was something in the sunshine which none of us had ever known before that calamitous Monday. Parson Colwood had two sons in the service, and his face showed it. I thought of how I'd said good-bye to Stephen the next day. He had gone to his Artillery and I had gone to stay at the hotel in Downfield, where I waited till the Wednesday morning and then put on my ill-fitting khaki and went bashfully down to the Drill Hall to join the Downfield troop. I had felt a hero when I was lying awake on the floor of the Town Hall on the first night of the War.

But the uncertainty and excitement had dwindled. (298)

The difference between these two methods of treating interim events is one largely of the degree of particularization: in some instances, Sassoon omits all references to interim events; in others he summarizes selected significant events. The result of this intermittent stream of events and of the degree of reference to interim events is a greatly varied density of texture.

Yet Sassoon's handling of time achieves density of texture in still another manner. Perhaps as a corollary of omitting insignificant

periods of time, the events of certain other periods are presented in extensively particularized detail. For instance, the single day of the Flower Match Show is presented in twenty-seven pages (MFHM, 54-81); George's thirty-minute foray into the German trenches, in nine pages (MIO, 85-94); an afternoon and evening with Mister Blarnett, in fifteen pages (SP, 103-118). These passages relate not only the action involved but, more important, George's attitudes as well. An excellent example is this brief passage showing George's response to the horrors of the war:

We were among the debris of the intense bombardment of ten days before, for we were passing along and across the Hindenburg Outpost Trench, with its belt of wire (fifty yards deep in places); here and there these rusty jungles had been flattened by tanks. The Outpost Trench was about 200 yards from the Main Trench, which was now our front line. It had been solidly made, ten feet deep, with timbered firesteps, splayed sides, and timbered steps at intervals to front and rear and to machine-gun emplacements. Now it was wrecked as though by earthquake and eruption. Concrete strong-posts were smashed and tilted sideways; everywhere the chalky soil was pocked and pitted with huge shell-holes; and wherever we looked the mangled effigies of the dead were our momento mori. Shell twisted and dismembered, the Germans maintained the violent attitudes in which they had died. The British had mostly been killed by bullets or bombs, so they looked more resigned. But I can remember a pair of hands (nationality unknown) which protruded from the soaked ashen soil like the roots of a tree turned upside down; one hand seemed to be pointing at the sky with an accusing gesture. Each time I passed that place the protest of those fingers became more expressive of an appeal to God in defiance of those who made the War. Who made the War? I laughed hysterically as the thought passed through my mud-stained mind. But I only laughed mentally, for my box of Stokes-gun ammunition left me no breath to spare for an angry guffaw. And the dead were the dead; this was no time to be pitying them or asking silly questions about their outraged lives. Such sights must be taken for granted, I thought, as I gasped and slithered and stumbled with my disconsolate crew. Floating on the surface of the flooded trench was the mask of a human face which had detached itself from the skull. (MIO, 214-215)

The passage is extensively particularized: a broad picture of the scene,

indicating distances, appearances, and so forth; two specific vignettes-- the protruding hands and the floating face-- which epitomize the human significance of the scene; and the action involved--George and his men transporting ammunition through the mud. More important, the passage shows George's feelings about the scene, details, and action. In such manner, Sassoon relates the intangibles of thought to particularized scene and event.

This density of texture may be seen on a larger scale. The sequence, covering a fictive span of twenty-three years, contains 930 pages. Of these, the first 288 deal with the first nineteen years (1895-1914)--the original stasis of George's thought. The remaining 642 pages deal with only four years (1914-1918)--George's disillusionment, change of attitude, and affirmation of individualism. Consequently, those events most thematically important receive the preponderance of particularized narration.

In addition to his effective handling of time, Sassoon also achieves his four necessary goals through his handling of point of view. With one variation (to be noted later), he employs what Professor Booth calls a "self-conscious narrator," one who is aware of himself as author.³⁵ That is, the mature George Sherston not only narrates his own story but also remarks upon the narrative process itself. However, Sassoon, unlike Sterne in Tristram Shandy, does not allow a full view of his narrator's present life: there is no indication of the mature George's other interests, friends, residence, or mode of life. Instead, he exposes only three important aspects: the time differential inherent in retrospect, the process of writing, and the mature George's attitudes. This example

illustrates the nature of the self-conscious narrator:

While composing these apparently interminable memoirs there have been moments when my main problem was what to select from the "long littleness"--or large untidiness--of life. Although a shell-shock hospital might be described as an epitome of the aftereffects of the "battle of life" in its most unmitigated form, nevertheless while writing about Slatford I suffer from a shortage of anything to say. The most memorable events must have occurred in my cranium. (SP, 22)

Such commentary on the narrative process is perhaps inherent in the "memoirs" form. However, it serves a useful function: through this type of narrator, Sassoon is able to direct the reader's attention to the scope and purpose of the narrative:

Remembering that I had a bath may not be of much interest to anyone, but it was a good bath, and it is my story that I am trying to tell, and as such it must be received; those who expect a universalization of the Great War must look for it elsewhere. Here they will only find an attempt to show its effect on a somewhat solitary-minded young man. (MIO, 17)

I am beginning to feel that a man can write too much about his own feelings, even when "what he felt like" is the nucleus of his narrative. (MIO, 305).

Don't assume . . . that I am about to describe something which never happened at all. Were I to do that I should be extending the art of reminiscence beyond its prescribed purpose, which is, in my case, to show myself as I am now in relation to what I was during the War. (SP, 47)

In this way, Sassoon emphasizes the importance of George's thought and the changes in it, thereby emphasizing its thematic significance.

By using this point of view, Sassoon restricts the content of the sequence and therefore affects its form. For instance, in contrast to the six well-developed subplots in Galsworthy's sequence, there are none in Sassoon's. Severely limiting the content to what George does, sees, and thinks necessarily prevents the development of subplots in which other

characters' deeds and thoughts predominate. For instance, Milden, whose importance in the narrative might warrant a subplot, is revealed to the reader only through George's awareness of him: he appears at the Dumborough Hunt when George is eleven, but after the great hunting faux pas, the reader is not reminded of him until he reappears, fifteen years later, as Master of the Ringwell Hunt; the reader is then informed only that during the interim he had lived in Ireland. When the war begins, Milden again disappears from the action; the last the reader learns of him is that he attempts to get on the General Staff; whether he succeeds or whether he survives the war is never learned, for he is not mentioned again. Only as he exists in the stream of George's life and consciousness does Milden exist in the narrative. In this respect, then, the severely restricted point of view prevents the development of independent subplots.

However, the narrative does contain an abundance of secondary incidents. Innumerable scenes and events, which in themselves do not advance the narrative, reveal or confirm George's attitudes. As instances, George's snobbish reaction to Aunt Evelyn's making tea on the train, his purchase of expensive riding gear, his observation of the clubbish officers at Rouen, his rebuff of Macamble, his readings in Rousseau and Hardy, and his luncheon with Rivers and the royal astronomer—all have relevance to the basic narrative only in that they indicate the subtle and sometimes confused processes of George's thinking. But such an abundance of secondary incidents is indeed necessary in order to show the bases of the gradual change of thought and to give it the validity of particularization.

Sassoon's point of view creates his form and conveys his theme in

other ways as well. Sassoon could have depicted George's mental processes either by an omniscient third-person narrator or even by a self-conscious narrator separate from the protagonist, such as that Fielding uses in Tom Jones. However, Sassoon achieves certain singularly appropriate rhetorical effects by using the mature George Sherston as the self-conscious narrator.

This point of view possesses three important characteristics from which these effects stem. First, it provides an interior view of George's emotions and motives. One can readily see the advantage of this privilege in a sequence based upon a change of thought. Second, it allows a double focus upon the protagonist--as he was then while living the story and as he is now while writing it. Third, as a possible but not inevitable corollary of the second, it enhances the reliability of the interior view of the protagonist, for the mature George as narrator can supply the necessary "correction" to the immature George's views.

From these three characteristics stem certain rhetorical effects by which Sassoon validates his theme. The first effect is an assumption of the narrator's infallibility. Because the mature George now knows what young George did not know then, he is able to provide information about the protagonist's "future." This feat, primarily concerning matters of fact and event, gives the narrator some of the powerful authority of omniscience. These two examples illustrate this trait:

It would be hypocrisy to say that I was fundamentally distressed about my badly broken arm. . . . But if I had been able to look into the future I should have learned one very sad fact. I had seen the last of my faithful friend Cockbird. (MFHM, 300)

"Then I'll tell the Orderly Room they can fix up a Board for you to-morrow, he remarked, unable to conceal his elation.

"You can tell them anything you bloody well please!" I answered ungratefully. But as soon as I was alone I sat back and closed my eyes with a sense of exquisite relief. I was unaware that David had, probably, saved me from being sent to prison by telling me a very successful lie. (MIO, 320)

To the degree that he shows young George as ignorant or misled, the narrator seems infallibly knowledgeable. In this way, Sassoon subtly establishes the reliability or "rightness" of the mature George.

This reliability extends further to matters of attitude which establish the evaluative norms of the narrative, the criteria by which the action and attitudes are judged. Thus, the ideas of young George are re-evaluated or "corrected" in light of the mature George's opinions. Two citations sufficiently illustrate this effect:

Those words from my diary do seem worth commenting on--symbolic as they are of the equestrian equilibrium on which my unseasoned character was trying to pattern itself. I wrote myself down that evening as I wanted myself to be--a hard-bitten hunting man, self-possessed in his localized knowingness and stag-hunting jargon. . . . "Took a toss over a stile" is the only human touch. But taking tosses was incidental to the glory of being a hard rider. What I ought to have written was--that I couldn't make up my mind whether to go at it or not, and the man behind me shouted "go on if you're going," so I felt flustered and let Harkaway rush at it anyhow and then jerked his mouth just as he was taking off, and he didn't really fall, but only pecked badly and chucked me over his head. . . . (MFHM, 191)

Such was the impermanent fabric as it unfolded: memory enchants even the dilatory little train journey which carried my expectant simplicity into the freshness of a country seen for the first time. All the sanguine guesswork of youth is there, and the silliness; all the novelty of being alive and impressed by the urgency of tremendous trivialities. (MFHM, 194)

Thus, in accepting the infallibility of the narrator's information, the reader also unconsciously accepts the "rightness" of his attitudes as well. In this way, the norms of the narrative become those of the mature George. By juxtaposing these mature attitudes with George's immature ones,

Sassoon helps the reader see the folly of George's early values. Thus, the point of view makes the change in George's thought seem not only credible but desirable.

Supporting this effect are the various distances in the narrative. The mature George is morally as well as temporally removed from his younger self. The difference, of course, is the self-knowledge and spiritual maturity gained through his change of thought. This distance is reflected in the narrator's commentary:

Except for the letters written to me by Mr. Pernet I have no documentary evidence concerning the young man who was existing under my name in the summer after I left Cambridge. . . . In these days they would be typewritten; but in those days they were fair-copied by a clerk, and the slanting calligraphy helps me to recapture my faded self as I was when I apprehensively extracted them from their envelopes. (MFHM, 82)

It was difficult to believe that the misty autumn mornings, which made me free of those well-known woods and farms and downs, were simultaneously shedding an irrelevant brightness on the Ypres Salient and on Joe Dottrell riding wearily back with the ration-party somewhere near Plug Stree Wood. I don't think I could see it quite like that at the time. What I am writing now is the result of a bird's-eye view of the past, and the cub-hunting subaltern I see there is part of the "selfish world" to which his attention had been drawn. (MIO, 137)

I would talk about some well-known person as if I knew him quite well instead of having only met him once. Since then I have entirely altered my procedure, and when in doubt I pretend to know less than I really do. (SP, 34)

Thus the mature George consciously creates a distance between himself and his younger self. Moreover, the self-conscious narrator creates a distance between young George and the reader. The narrator's comments shape and guide the reader's attitude toward George; as the reader increasingly accepts the narrator's reliability and senses the previously described distance, his own distance from George increases. However, as the story

progresses and the change in thought occurs, both George and the reader move toward the narrator's position: George, in that he is becoming what the narrator is; the reader, in that he adopts more and more of the narrator's attitude. Thus, as young George and the reader both move toward the narrator's position, the reader's distance from young George thereby decreases. The rhetorical effects of this manipulation of distance are subtle but important in Sassoon's validation of his theme: having accepted the mature George's norms, the reader more readily approves the change in young George's thought, as the distance between the protagonist and himself decreases.

With these rhetorical effects operative, the point of view itself is a major means of emphasizing the change of thought and validating the theme. Throughout the sequence, the narrator describes George's action and attitudes; however, lest the reader mistake their import, he also evaluates them through his commentaries. In this way, the narrator shows George's character and, more important, reveals that the original stasis of George's thought is based upon false values. He shows that George is immature and thoughtless:

If I ever thought of myself as a man of thirty-five it was a visualization of dreary decrepitude. The word maturity had no meaning for me. I did not anticipate that I should become different; I should only become older. I cannot pretend that I aspired to growing wiser. I merely lived. And in that condition I drifted from day to day. Ignorantly unqualified to regulate the human mechanism which I was in charge of, my self-protective instincts were continually being contradicted by my spontaneously capricious behaviour. (MFHM, 87-88)

His aspirations are trivial:

The mental condition of an active young man who asks nothing more of life than twelve hundred a year and four days a week with the Pucklestone is perhaps not easy to defend.

It looks rather paltry on paper. That, however, was my own mental position, and I saw nothing strange in it. . . .
(MFHM, 265)

His knowledge of political realities is superficial:

Socialists, for me, began and ended in Hyde Park, which was quite a harmless place for them to function in. And I assured Denis that whatever the newspapers might say, the Germans would never be allowed to attack us. Officers at the barracks were only an ornament; war had become an impossibility. I had sometimes thought with horror of countries where they had conscription and young men like myself were forced to serve two years in the army whether they liked it or not. Two years in the army! I should have been astonished if I'd been told that socialists opposed conscription as violently as many fox-hunting men supported the convention of soldiering. (MFHM, 269-270)

His pursuit of social superiority is foolish:

As for the Pucklestone people and their London season--well, it is just possible that they weren't quite as brilliant as I imagined. Ascot, 'Lord's,' a few dances and theatres, dull dinner-parties, one or two visits to the Opera--that was about all. Since I have grown older I have heard the hollow echoes in that social apparatus; but at the time I was only aware that it was an appropriate sequel to the smoothly moving scene in which I was involved. (MFHM, 286)

Thus the narrator's comments make clear that George's beliefs and his plasticity to social pressures are of no true merit.

The narrative commentary also traces George's disillusionment. The narrator makes clear that the causes of George's loss of belief are just. The mature George still believes that the war victimized men:

Visualizing that forlorn crowd of khaki figures under the twilight of the trees, I can believe that I saw then, for the first time, how blindly War destroys its victims. The sun had gone down on my own reckless brandishings, and I understood the doomed condition of these half-trained civilians who had been sent up to attack the Wood. (MIO, 94)

The horrors still affect him:

At the risk of being thought squeamish or even unsoldierly, I still maintain that an ordinary human being has a right to

be momentarily horrified by a mangled body seen on an afternoon walk, although people with sound common sense can always refute me by saying that life is full of gruesome sights and violent catastrophes. But I am no believer in wild denunciations of the War; I am merely describing my own experiences of it; and in 1917 I was only beginning to learn that life, for the majority of the population, is an unlovely struggle against unfair odds, culminating in a cheap funeral. (MIO, 201)

And the war-time profiteering and civilian hypocrisy still anger him:

Evidences of civilian callousness and complacency were plentiful, for the thriftless license of war-time behavior was an unavoidable spectacle . . . Watching the guzzlers in the Savoy . . . I nourished my righteous hatred of them, anathematizing their appetites with the intolerance of youth which made me unable to realize that comfort-loving people are obliged to avoid self-knowledge--especially when there is a war on. But I still believe that in 1917 the idle, empty-headed, and frivolous ingredients of Society were having a tolerably good time, while the officious were being made self-important by nicely graded degrees of uniformed war-emergency authority. For middle-aged persons who faced the War bleakly, life had become unbearable unless they persuaded themselves that the slaughter was worth while. (MIO, 280-281)

Nevertheless, while still supporting the causes, the narrator undercuts the immature George's reasons for making his protest. He shows that the young George acted without full knowledge or wisdom:

Although I have stated that after my first few days in hospital I "began to think," I cannot claim that my thoughts were clear or consistent. I did, however, become definitely critical and inquiring about the War. While feeling that my infantry experience justified this, it did not occur to me that I was by no means fully informed on the subject. In fact I generalized intuitively, and was not unlike a young man who suddenly loses his belief in religion and stands up to tell the Universal Being that He doesn't exist, adding that if He does, He treats the world very unjustly. (MIO, 241)

At the moment when George decides to make his protest, the narrator deflates his enthusiasm with ironic humor:

Butley was too buzzing and leisurely a background for my mercurial state of mind; so I stayed in London for another

fortnight, and during that period my mental inquietude achieved some sort of climax. In fact I can safely say that my aggregated exasperations came to a head; and, naturally enough, the head was my own. (MIO, 269)

Then, when George defends his protest to Cromlech, the narrator reveals his true ignorance of the war:

Neither of us had the haziest idea of what the politicians were really up to (though it is possible that the politicians were only feeling their way and trusting in providence and the output of munitions to solve their problems). Nevertheless we argued as though the secret confabulations of Cabinet Ministers in various countries were as clear as daylight to us, and our assumption was that they were all wrong, while we, who had been in the trenches, were far-seeing and infallible. (MIO, 312-318)

Thus the mature George shows that with valid cause but insufficient understanding of life or self-knowledge, his irrational protest is doomed to failure. Consequently, the young George becomes disillusioned with everything, including himself.

However, the narrator shows a valid change occurring at Slateford. In retrospect, the mature George sees that the major cause of his change of thought was the influence of Rivers:

What the politicians said no longer matters, as far as these memoirs of mine are concerned, though I would give a lot for a few gramophone records of my talks with Rivers. All that matters is my remembrance of the great and good man who gave me his friendship and guidance. (SP, 10)

In later years, while muddling on toward maturity, I have made it my business to find out all I can about the mechanism of my spontaneous behaviour; but I cannot be sure how far I had advanced in that art—or science—in 1917. I can only suggest that my definite approach to mental maturity began with my contact with the mind of Rivers. (SP, 32)

My talks with Rivers had increased my awareness of the limitations of my prewar life. He had shown that he believed me to be capable of achieving something useful. He had set me on the right road and made me feel that if the War were to end to-morrow, I should be starting on a new life's journey

in which point-to-point races and cricket matches would no longer be supremely important and a strenuous effort must be made to take some small share in the real work of the world. (SP, 57)

I had said good-bye to Rivers. Shutting the door of his room for the last time, I left behind me someone who had helped and understood me more than anyone I had ever known. Much as he disliked speeding me back to the trenches, he realized that it was my only way out. And the longer I live the more right I know him to have been. (SP, 67)

Thus the mature George realizes that, though Rivers exerted no overt pressure upon him, he had led him to value himself as an individual.

At this point in the sequence, Sassoon employs a variation of the self-conscious narrator: George's diary entries of his duties in Paléستine and his return to France. Though these entries do not shift the narrator's person, they do shift to the present tense. This shift gives an immediacy to the crucial period while George is testing his choice and finding it valid. Through his efforts to become an efficient company commander, George regains his self-confidence: "The feeling that they [his men] like and trust me 'gives me new inside.'" (SP, 176)

Yet he still resents the war and struggles to gain self-knowledge:

I have never been healthier in body than I am now. But under that mask of physical fitness the mind struggles and rebels against being denied its rights. The mechanical stupidity of infantry soldiering is the antithesis of intelligent thinking. (SP, 194)

Such comments, cast in diary form, almost have the intimacy and immediacy of direct thought revelation. Through this variation of point of view, Sassoon intensifies the impact of George's struggle to prove his choice correct.

In the final section, however, Sassoon returns to the mature George as narrator in order to regain the rhetorical effect of his reliability. After he is wounded, young George temporarily despairs and rails

against his past and society in general:

Yes; my mind was in a muddle; and it seemed that I had learned but one thing from being a soldier--that if we continue to accept war as a social institution we must also recognize that the Prussian system is the best, and Prussian militarism must be taught to children in schools. They must be taught to offer their finest instincts for exploitation by the un pitying machinery of scientific warfare. And they must not be allowed to ask why they are doing it. (SP, 244)

But with Rivers' arrival, George gains clarity of thought and affirms his choice:

He did not tell me that I had done my best to justify his belief in me. He merely made me feel that he took all that for granted, and now we must go on to something better still. And this was the beginning of the new life toward which he had shown me the way.... (SP, 245. Sassoon's unspaced ellipses.)

Thus, through his comments the mature George reveals the foolish values held in the original stasis of his thought, supports the causes but rejects the irrationality of his protest, shows the turmoil in his mind as his attitudes change, and then reveals the nature of the new stasis of his thought. In this way, Sassoon's point of view emphasizes both the sequential development and the significance of the narrated change of thought.

The point of view stresses the sequential development in still another way. Throughout the sequence, the narrator consistently uses a metaphor to describe his life--that of its being a journey:

The April morning, as I see it now, symbolized a stage which I had then reached in my earthly pilgrimage. (MFHM, 211)

He had set me on the right road and made me feel that if the war were to end to-morrow I should be starting on a new life's journey. . . . (SP, 57)

It has been a long journey from that moment to this, when I write the last words of my book. (SP, 245)

Though a conventional trope, the metaphor nevertheless suggests a progressive movement. It therefore reinforces the chronological structure of the

sequence; more important, it emphasizes the significance of the movement whereby the immature George of then becomes the mature George speaking now. This movement is doubly stressed in the title of the last volume of the sequence: Sherston's Progress, with its echoes of Pilgrim's Progress, shows George seeking and gaining a morally better and happier life.

In yet one further way does the point of view function: having emphasized and evaluated the change of thought, the mature George himself exists as proof of its validity. He has gained the self-respect he so eagerly sought, gained it not by satisfying others but by meeting his own goals. Now, from his mature perspective, he can look back and see the folly of his youth:

It will have been observed that, in the course of my career as a sportsman, I was never able to believe that I could do a thing until I had done it. . . . As I remember and write, I grin, but not unkindly, at my distant and callow self and the absurdities which constitute his chronicle. To my mind the only thing that matters is the resolve to do something. (MFHM, 199)

Having chosen self-direction and his choice having proven satisfactory and "right," the mature George can now reveal his human weaknesses and hard-won strengths. It is toward this goal that he states the purpose of his book: "to show myself as I am now in relation to what I was during the War." (SP, 47) From George's perspective, the memoirs as a whole become the final validation of his choice: they exist as tangible evidence of the satisfactoriness and durability of his change of thought.

Thus, through the sequence, Sassoon uses his point of view as a major means of achieving his four necessary goals: through the self-conscious narrator technique, he juxtaposes the mature George's present attitudes with those of the immature George; in this way, he guides the

reader's responses to the protagonist and action, evaluates George's character and attitudes, emphasizes the various steps in the thematically important change of thought, and affirms the validity of the change.

In summary, The Memoirs of George Sherston contains three separate volumes which constitute a single whole structure, from which a single principal theme emerges. Both theme and structure take shape from Sassoon's handling of fictive time and point of view: the chronological presentation of contiguous time spheres most logically demonstrates the process of an evolution of thought from original stasis through change to a new stasis and it allows a massive particularization of events to validate the change; the self-conscious narrator point of view restricts the development of independent subplots but it permits certain rhetorical effects whereby the narrator's comments further emphasize and validate the thematically significant change of thought. Thus, Sassoon's handling of fictive time and point of view determines the form of his sequence novel.

The Clayhanger Trilogy

Arnold Bennett's Clayhanger trilogy represents a third pattern found among sequence novels: the time spheres within the separate volumes are presented synchronously from an omniscient third-person point of view.

The sequence consists of three volumes.³⁶ Clayhanger,³⁷ the

first volume, focuses upon Edwin Clayhanger, his aspirations, his struggles with his domineering father, and his search for independence and happiness. Hilda Lessways,³⁸ covering essentially the same time span as the first, focuses upon Hilda, her romantic illusions, her shocking disillusionment, and her struggles to retain her human dignity. These Twain,³⁹ resuming a chronological progression, traces Edwin's and Hilda's efforts to make their marriage a success. From these volumes emerges Bennett's general theme: the circumstances of life sometimes shape a person contrary to his wishes; consequently, such a person can achieve happiness only through a compromise between his wishes and circumstances.

Clayhanger is by far the longest and most complexly structured of the sequence. A brief analysis, however, will reveal its basic formal pattern.

Clayhanger traces Edwin's quest for independence and happiness; more important thematically, it depicts how Edwin's character is shaped by and responds to the circumstances of a domineering father and a frustrated love affair. Structurally, the volume knits together two distinct plot lines: the first concerns Edwin's career and his relationship with Darius; the second, Edwin's relationship with Hilda. These two plot-lines are almost completely independent of each other: the only major connections between them are the central character of Edwin and their similar thematic significance. In the following analysis, the first

plot 1s designated Plot D; the second, Plot H.

General Introduction: though ignorant of the world and though his character is unformed, Edwin fervently desires to perfect himself.

He desired--and there was real passion in his desire--to do his best, to exhaust himself in doing his best, in living according to his conscience. He did not know of what he was capable, nor what he could achieve. Achievement was not the matter of his desire; but endeavour, honest and terrific endeavour.

. . .

He was honouring the world; he was paying the finest homage to it. In that head of his a flame burnt that was like an altar-fire, a miraculous and beautiful phenomenon, that which nothing is more miraculous nor more beautiful over the whole earth. . . .

It was surprising that no one saw it passing along the mean, black, smoke-palled streets that huddle about St. Luke's Church. . . . Some knew that it was 'Clayhanger's lad,' a nice-behaved young gentleman, and the spitten image of his poor mother. . . . But they could not see the mysterious and holy flame of the desire for self-perfecting blazing within that tousled head. (17-19)

D Introduction: Edwin wants an independent, creative career and a life of his own.

He did not wish to be any help at all to his father in the business. He had other plans for himself. He had never mentioned them before, because his father had never talked to him about his future career, apparently assuming that he would go into the business. He had been waiting for his father to begin. . . . But his father never had begun; and by timidity, negligence, and perhaps ill-luck, Edwin had thus arrived at his last day at school with the supreme question not merely unsolved but unattacked. (63)

D Definition: Edwin tells Darius of his desire to be an architect:

He looked at his father and saw an old man, a man who for him had always been old, generally harsh, often truculent, and seldom indulgent. He saw an ugly, undistinguished, and somewhat vulgar man . . . , a man who had his way by force

and scarcely ever by argument; a man whose arguments for or against a given course were simply pitiable, if not despicable; he sometimes indeed thought that there must be a peculiar twist in his father's brain which prevented him from appreciating an adverse point in a debate; he had ceased to expect that his father would listen to reason. (105-106)

He said, fastening his gaze intently on the table: "You know father, what I should really like to ~~be~~—I should like to be an architect."

It was out. He had said it.

"Should ye!" said his father, who attached no importance of any kind to this avowal of a preference. (109)

Herein lies the basic conflict of this plot line: Edwin's desire for independence and freedom—for a life of his own--clashes with Darius' strong-willed, tyrannic domination of his life.

D Complication: Edwin abandons his hopes of becoming an architect. Because Darius thinks of printing as a sacred business, he is determined to crush Edwin's ambition.

It was this sacred business (perpetually adored at the secret altar in Darius' heart), this miraculous business, and not another, that Edwin wanted to abandon, with scarcely a word; just casually! . . .

And here was the boy lightly, cheekily, talking at breakfast about 'going in for architecture'! . . . He meant to save his business, to put his business before anything. And he would have his own way. He would impose his will. And he would have treated argument as a final insult. All the heavy, obstinate, relentless force of his individuality was now channelled in one tremendous instinct. (171-173)

Consequently, Darius coldly and brutally rejects Edwin's pleas to study architecture. Edwin, unable to resist his father, therefore resigns himself to becoming a printer.

He saw how fantastic was the whole structure of his hopes. He wondered that he had ever conceived it even wildly possible that his father would consent to architecture as a career! To ask it was to ask

absurdly too much of fate. He demolished, with violent and resentful impulse, the structure of his hopes; stamped on it angrily. He was beaten. What could he do? He could do nothing against his father. He could no more change his father than the course of a river. He was beaten. (174)

H Introduction: Seven years later, Edwin is now resigned to being a printer, but he is still unhappy.

He honestly thought he had recovered from the catastrophe undisfigured, even unmarked. He knew not that he would never be the same man again, and that his lightest gesture, and his lightest glance were touched with the wistfulness of his resignation. He had frankly accepted the fate of a printer. . . .

It was the emptiness of the record of his private life that he condemned. What had he done for himself? Nothing large! Nothing heroic and imposing! He had meant to pursue certain definite courses of study, to become the possessor of certain definite groups of books, to continue his drawing and painting, to practise this, that, and the other, to map out all his spare time, to make rules and keep them,--all to the great end of self-perfecting. He had said: "What does it matter whether I am an architect or a printer,--so long as I improve myself to the best of my powers?" . . .

And yet he had accomplished nothing. His system of reading never worked for more than a month at a time. And for several months at a time he simply squandered his spare hours, the hours that were his very own, in a sort of coma of crass stupidity, in which he seemed to be thinking of nothing whatever. He had not made any friends whom he could esteem. He had not won any sort of notice. He was remarkable for nothing. He was not happy. He was not content. (217-218)

Consequently, when he meets Hilda, he is intrigued by the air of mystery and romance which surrounds her.

The transformation in her amazed Edwin, who could see the tears in her eyes. The tableau of the little, silly old man looking up, and Hilda looking down at him, with her lips parted in a heavenly invitation, and one gloved hand caressing his greenish-black shoulder and the other

mechanically holding the parasol aloft,—this tableau was imprinted forever on Edwin's mind. It was a vision blended in an instant and in an instant dissolved, but for Edwin it remained one of the epochal things of his experience. (303)

Hilda listened and looked with an extraordinary air of sympathetic interest. And she was so serious, so adult. But it was the quality of sympathy, he thought, that was her finest, her most attractive. It was either that, or her proud independence, as of a person not accustomed to bend to the will of others or to go to others for advice. He could not be sure No! Her finest quality was her mystery. Even now, as he gazed at her comfortably, she baffled him; all her exquisite little movements and intonations baffled him. Of one thing, however, he was convinced; that she was fundamentally different from other women. There was the rest of her sex. (350-351. Bennett's unspaced ellipses.)

H Definition: Edwin falls in love with Hilda.

He was in love. Love had caught him, and had affected his vision so that he no longer saw any phenomenon as it actually was; neither himself, nor Hilda, nor the circumstances which were uniting them. . . . He had no notion that he was in love. He did not know what love was; he had not had sufficient opportunity of learning. Nevertheless the processes of love were at work within him. Silently and magically, by the force of desire and of pride, the refracting glass was being specially ground which would enable him, which would compel him, to see an ideal Hilda when he gazed at the real Hilda. (344-345)

The sole condition precedent to a tolerable existence was now to have sight and speech of Hilda Lessways. He was intensely unhappy in the long stretches of time which separated one contact with her from the next. (355)

This situation defines the basic conflict of Plot H: Edwin's happiness is now dependent upon Hilda. To lose her will perpetuate his bleak existence; to win her will bring him happiness and fulfillment, he believes.

H Complication: Edwin learns that Hilda has married another man:

And this too he had always felt and known would come to pass; that Hilda would not be his. All that romance was unreal; it was not true; it was too good to be true; it had never happened. Such a thing could not happen to such as he was.... He could not reflect. When he tried to reflect the top of his head seemed as though it would fly off.... Cannon! She was with Cannon somewhere at that very instant. . . . She might at that very instant be in Cannon's arms!

It could be said of Edwin that he fully lived that night. Fate had at any rate roused him from the coma which most men called existence. . . . (388-389. Bennett's unspaced ellipses.)

D Crisis: Edwin gains control over both the business and Darius.

Slowly Darius drew forth a heavy, glittering bunch of keys, one of the chief insignia of his dominion, and began to fumble at it.

"You needn't take any of them off. I expect I know which is which," said Edwin, holding out his hand.

Darius hesitated, and then yielded up the bunch. (446)

The old man was beaten. The old man had surrendered, unconditionally. Edwin's heart lightened as he perceived more and more clearly what this surprising victory meant. It meant that always in the future he would have the upper hand. He knew now, and Darius knew, that his father had no strength to fight, and that any semblance of fighting could be treated as bluster. Probably nobody realized as profoundly as Darius himself his real and yet mysterious inability to assert his will against the will of another. The force of his individuality was gone. He who had meant to govern tyrannically to his final hour, to die with a powerful and grim gesture of command, had to accept the ignominy of submission. Edwin had not even insisted, had used no kind of threat. He had merely announced his will, and when the first fury had waned Darius had found his son's will working like a chemical agent in his defenseless mind, and had yielded. It was astounding. And always it would be thus, until the time when Edwin would say 'Do this' and Darius would do it,

and 'Do that' and Darius would do it, meekly, unreasoningly, anxiously. (455)

D Resolution: Now the dominant person, Edwin finds his hatred of Darius turning to shame and pity.

The old man paused, half intimidated. With his pimpled face and glaring eyes, his gleaming gold teeth, his frowns of a difficult invalid, his grimaces and gestures which were the result of a lifetime devoted to gain, he made a loathsome object. Edwin hated him, and there was a bitter contempt in his hatred.

"I'm going to have that spawn and I'm going to have some change!... Give me some money!" Darius positively hissed.

Edwin grew nearly capable of homicide. All the wrongs that he had ever suffered leaped up and yelled.

"You'll have no money!" he said with brutal roughness. "And you'll grow no mushrooms! And let that be understood once for all! You've got to behave in this house." . . .

Darius, cowed, slowly and clumsily directed himself towards the door. Once Edwin had looked forward to a moment when he might have his father at his mercy, when he might revenge himself for the insults and the bullying that had been his. Once he had clenched his fist and his teeth and had said: "When you're old, and I've got you, and you can't help yourself—!" That moment had come, and it had even enabled and forced him to refuse money to his father—refuse money to his father!... As he looked at the poor figure fumbling towards the door, he knew the humiliating paltriness of revenge. As his anger fell, his shame grew. (495-496. Bennett's unspaced ellipses.)

As Darius further deteriorates, Edwin intensely pities the old

man.

"He's dying, I do believe!" thought Edwin, and the wonder of this nocturnal adventure sent tremours down his spine. He faced the probability that at the next bout his father would be worsted. . . . In the solemnity of the night he was glad that an experience tremendous and supreme had been vouchsafed to him. He knew now what the will-to-live was. He saw life naked, stripped of everything inessential. He saw life and death together.

.
 "What an awful shame!" he thought savagely. "Why couldn't we have let him grow his mushrooms if he

wanted to? What harm would it have done us? Supposing it had been a nuisance, supposing he had tried to kiss Jane, supposing he had hurt himself, what then? Why couldn't we let him do what he wanted?"

And he passionately resented his own harshness and that of Maggie as he might have resented the cruelty of some national injustice. (531, 533)

D Denouement: Edwin is freed by Darius' death. On the night of Darius' death, Edwin learns that the Conservative candidate whom Darius supported and he opposed has won the election.

It was in his resentment, in the hard setting of his teeth as he confirmed himself in the rightness of his own opinions, that he first began to realise an individual freedom. "I don't care if we're beaten forty times," his thoughts ran, "I'll be a more out-and-out Radical than ever! I don't care, and I don't care!" And he felt sturdily that he was free. The chain was at last broken that had bound together those two beings so dissimilar, antagonistic, and ill-matched,—Edwin Clayhanger and his father. (547)

With his father dead and the conflict between them thereby ended, Edwin enters a new stasis: he is now the master of a prosperous business and the head of his household.

H Crisis: Edwin realizes that he still loves Hilda. Even before Darius' death, Edwin discovers that no other woman, not even Janet, can take Hilda's place.

He remembered Hilda with painful intensity. He remembered the feel of her frock, under his hand in the cubicle, and the odour of her flesh that was like fruit. His cursed constancy!... Could he not get Hilda out of his bones? Did she sleep in his bones like a malady that awakes whenever it is disrespectfully treated? (491)

Later, when he saves Hilda from being evicted in Brighton, he is powerfully moved by their re-encounter.

On occasion he had very nearly made Maggie cry, and had felt exceedingly uncomfortable. But now, as he looked at the wet eyes and the shaken bosom of Hilda Cannon, he was aware of acute joy. Exquisite moment! Damn her! He could have taken

her and beaten her in his sudden passion—a passion not of revenge, not of punishment! He could have made her scream with the pain that his love would inflict. (604)

He is still intrigued by Hilda's mysteriousness.

There was one aspect of the affair that intrigued and puzzled him, and weakened his self-satisfaction. She had been defeated, yet he was baffled by her. She was a mystery within folds of mysteries. He was no nearer—he secretly felt—to the essential Her than he had been before the short struggle and his spectacular triumph. (611)

H Resolution: Edwin learns that Hilda is free to marry him.

"George's father was put in prison for bigamy. George is illegitimate." She spoke with her characteristic extreme clearness of enunciation, in a voice that showed no emotion.

"You don't mean it!" He gasped foolishly.

She nodded. "I'm not a married woman. I once thought I was, but I wasn't. That's all."

.
Amazing, incalculable woman, wrapped within fold after fold of mystery! . . . Her other friends deemed her a widow; Janet thought her the wife of a convict; he alone knew that she was neither wife nor widow. Through what scathing experience she must have passed! An unfamiliar and disconcerting mood gradually took complete possession of him. At first he did not correctly analyse it. It was sheer, exuberant, instinctive, unreasoning, careless joy. (685, 686)

More important, he learns that she still loves him.

"My heart never kissed any other man but you!" she cried. "How often and often and often have I kissed you, and you never knew!... It was for a message that I sent George down here—a message to you!... I named him after you.... Do you think that if dreams could make him your child—he wouldn't be yours—?" (698)

H Denouement: Edwin regains Hilda.

"After a whole decade his nostrils quivered

again to the odour of her olive skin. Drowning amid the waves of her terrible devotion, he was recompensed in the hundredth part of a second for all that he had suffered or might hereafter suffer. The many problems and difficulties which marriage with her would raise seemed trivial in the light of her heart's magnificent and furious loyalty. He thought of the younger Edwin whom she had kissed into rapture, as of a boy too inexperienced in sorrow to appreciate this Hilda. He braced himself to the exquisite burden of life. (698)

With Hilda regained and the conflict of Plot H thereby terminated, Edwin enters another new stasis: his empty life is now behind him and he looks forward to fulfillment and joy with Hilda.

These two plot lines, though structurally independent, nevertheless function together to show Edwin's development. In Plot D, Edwin's desires for an independent career are squelched by Darius; yet Edwin eventually gains dominance and freedom, but not happiness and fulfillment. In Plot H Edwin's desires to marry Hilda are prevented by circumstances; yet he eventually gains Hilda and shoulders the "exquisite burden of life." Thus, through the dual plots in Clayhanger, Edwin achieves success, freedom, and the woman he loves. But does he ultimately achieve happiness? This question is answered in the third volume, These Twain.

Hilda Lessways, the second volume, covers some of the same time period as Clayhanger; however, it is shorter and less complexly structured.

The basic narrative in Hilda Lessways concerns Hilda's quest for happiness and a rewarding life. Essentially a romanticist, Hilda gains a vision of what she wants in life, but through her own folly, she loses it. Disillusioned, she recognizes the harshness and uncertainty of life. The structure of the plot traces this process of disillusionment.

Introduction: Bored and lonely, Hilda desires a different, romantically exciting life.

She was in trouble; the trouble grew daily more and more tragic; and the trouble was that she wanted she knew not what. . . .

She was in a prison with her mother, and saw no method of escape, saw not so much as a locked door, saw nothing but blank walls. Even could she by a miracle break prison, where should she look for the unknown object of her desire, and for what should she look? Enigmas!

.
She could not define her need. All she knew was that youth, moment by moment, was dropping down inexorably behind her. And, still a child in heart and soul, she saw herself ageing, and then aged, and then withered. Her twenty-first birthday was well above the horizon. Soon, soon, she would be 'over twenty-one'! And she was not yet born! That was it! She was not yet born! If the passionate strength of desire could have done the miracle time would have stood still in the heavens while Hilda sought the way of life. (5-6, 9)

Definition: Acting on her own for the first time, Hilda consults an attorney.

There she was at last, seated in front of a lawyer in a lawyer's office—her ladyship consulting her own lawyer! It seemed incredible! A few minutes ago she had been at home, and now she was in a world unfamiliar and alarming. Perhaps it was a pity that her mother had unsuspectingly put the scheme into her head! However, the deed was done. Hilda generally acted first and reflected afterwards. She was frightened, but rather by the unknown than by anything she could define.

.
 Like a mouse she escaped down the stairs.
 She was happy and fearful and expectant....
 It was done! She had consulted a lawyer!
 She was astounded at herself. . . . The
 whole town, the whole future, seemed to be
 drenched now in romance. Nevertheless, the
 causes of her immense discontent had not
 apparently been removed nor in any way modified.
 (32-33, 37)

Herein lies the central conflict of the plot: deserting the security of her home, Hilda pits herself as an individual against the world in order to find happiness and romance. Thus Hilda's desire for an exciting life, based upon an illusion about what life should be, conflicts with the circumstances she encounters.

Complication: Her mastery of shorthand and entry into the masculine business world seem incredibly romantic to Hilda. Stricken with remorse after her mother dies, Hilda authorizes Cannon to sell her property and invest the money. Though she now feels independent, she is still unhappy. However, while visiting Janet in Bursley, she envisions what seems an "ideal life":

Without being in the least aware of it, and quite innocently, Janet had painted a picture of the young man, Edwin Clayhanger, which intensified a hundredfold the strong romantic piquancy of Hilda's brief vision of him. In an instant Hilda saw her ideal future--that future which had loomed grandiose, indefinite, and strange--she saw it quite precise and simple as the wife of such a creature as Edwin Clayhanger. The change was astounding in its abruptness. She saw all the delightful and pure vistas of love with a man, subtle, baffling, and benevolent, and above all superior; with a man who would be respected by a whole town as a pillar of society, while bringing to his intimacy with herself an exotic and wistful quality which neither she nor anyone could possibly define. She asked: "What attracts me in him? I don't know. I like him." She who had never spoken to him! She who never before had vividly seen herself as married to a man! He was clever; he was sincere; he was kind; he was trustworthy; he would have wealth

and importance and reputation. All this was good; but all this would have been indifferent to her, had there not been an enigmatic and inscrutable and unprecedented something in his face, in his bearing, which challenged and inflamed her imagination.

It did not occur to her to think of Janet as in the future a married woman. But of herself she thought, with new agitations: "I am innocent now! I am ignorant now! I am a girl now! But one day I shall be so no longer. One day I shall be a woman. One day I shall be in the power and possession of some man-- if not this man, then some other. Everything happens; and this will happen!" And the hazardous strangeness of life enchanted her. (217-218)

Before she can seek this ideal, however, she assumes the burdensome responsibility of helping and then caring for Miss Gailey. When Cannon proposes to her, she believes this vision of life has come true:

Was it conceivable that this experienced and worldly man had been captivated by such a mere girl as herself? . . . An intense pride warmed her blood like a powerful cordial. Life was even grander than she had thought!... She drooped into an intoxication. Among all that he had said, he had not said that he was not stronger than she. He had not relinquished his authority. She felt it, sitting almost beneath him in the slippery chair. She knew that she would yield to him. She desired to yield to him. Her mind was full of sensuous images based on the abdication of her will in favour of his.

.
When she felt his hand on her shoulder, and the great shadow of him on part of her face, her body seemed to sigh, acquiescent and for the moment assuaged: "This is a miracle, and life is miraculous!" She acknowledged that she had lacked faith in life.

.
She told herself how admirable was the man. She assured herself that he was entirely admirable. She reminded herself that she had always deemed him admirable, that only twenty minutes earlier, in the King's Road, when there was in her mind no dimmest, wildest notion of the real future, she had genuinely admired him. How

clever, how tactful, how indomitable, how conquering, how generous, how kind he was! . . . Indeed, she could not recall his faults. And he was inevitably destined to brilliant success. She would be the wife of a great and a wealthy man. And in her own secret ways she could influence him, and thus be greater than the great.

Love? It is an absolute fact that the name of 'love' did not in the first eternal moments even occur to her. And when it did she gave it but little importance. . . . The fact was that she overwhelmingly wanted George Cannon, and, as she now recognized, had wanted him ever since she first saw him. The recognition afforded her intense pleasure. She abandoned herself candidly to this luxury of an unknown desire. It was incomparably the most splendid and dangerous experience that she had ever had. . . . Happy to the point of delicious pain, she yet yearned forward to a happiness far more excruciating. She was perfectly aware that her bliss would be torment until George Cannon had married her, until she had wholly surrendered to him. (377-378, 379, 380-382)

But she soon realizes that her marriage to Cannon was a mistake:

She dimly admitted once more, as on several occasions previous to her marriage, that she had dishonoured an ideal. . . . She thought, as she prepared with pleasurable expectancy for her husband: "This is not right. This cannot lead to good. It must lead to evil. I am bound to suffer for it. The whole thing is wrong. I know it and I have always known it."

Already she was disappointed with her marriage. Amid the fevers of bodily appetite she could clearly distinguish the beginning of lassitude; she no longer saw her husband as a romantic and baffling figure; she had explored and chartered his soul; and not all his excellences could atone for his earthliness. (418-419)

Despite the shock, despite her extreme misery, despite the anguish and fear in her heart and the immense difficulty of the new situation into which she was thus violently thrust, Hilda was not without consolation. She felt none of the shame conventionally proper to a girl deceived. On the contrary,

deep within herself, she knew that the catastrophe was a deliverance. She knew that fate had favoured her by absolving her from the consequences of a tragic weakness and error. (446)

Crisis: Hilda falls in love with Edwin.

She knew that she alone of all human beings was gifted with the power to understand and fully sympathize with him. And so she grieved over the long wilderness of time during which he had been uncomprehended. She wanted, by some immense effort of tenderness, to recompense him for all that he had suffered.

.
 She fled triumphantly up Trafalgar Road, with her secret, guarding it. "He's in love with me!" If a scientific truth is a statement of which the contrary is inconceivable, then it was a scientific truth for her that she and Edwin must come together. She simply could not conceive the future without him.... And this so soon, so precipitately soon, after her misfortune! But it was her very misfortune which pushed her violently forward. Her life had been convulsed and overthrown by the hazard of destiny, and she could have no peace now until she had repaired and re-established it. At no matter what risk, the thing must be accomplished quickly....quickly. (489, 490-491)

Walking up Trafalgar Road, alone, she was so happy, so amazed, so relieved, so sure of him and his fineness and of the future, that she could scarcely bear her felicity. It was too intense.... At last her life was settled and mapped out. Destiny had been kind, and she meant to be worthy of her fate. She could have swooned, so intoxicant was her wonder and her solemn joy and her yearning after righteousness in love. (518-519. Bennett's unspaced ellipses.)

Thus, finding true love for the first time, Hilda comes close to achieving her ideal life.

Resolution: Discovering herself to be pregnant, Hilda forsakes Edwin and her hopes for happiness.

She would not write to Edwin. She could not bring herself to write anything to him. She could not

confess, nor beg for forgiveness nor even for sympathetic understanding. . . . She must suffer. Rather than let him know, in any conceivable manner, that, all unwitting, she was bearing the child of another at the moment of her betrothal to himself, she preferred to be regarded as a jilt of the very worst kind. . . . For her, the one possible attitude towards Edwin was the attitude of silence. In the silence of the grave her love for him existed. (528-529)

Instead of the happiness which she hoped for, Hilda now envisions a bleak and bitter future.

The prospects of the boarding-house were not well. She could work, but she had not the art of making others work. Already the place was slightly at sixes and sevens. And she loathed it. She loathed the whole business of catering. . . . Beyond it she envisaged the years to come, the messy and endless struggle, the necessary avarice and trickeries incidental to it,—and perhaps the ultimate failure. She would never make money—she felt that! She was not born to make money—especially by dodges and false politeness, out of idle, empty-noodled boarders. She would lose it and lose it. And she pictured what she would be in ten years: the hard-driven landlady, up to every subterfuge,—with a child to feed and educate, and perhaps a bedridden, querulous invalid to support. And there was no alternative to the tableau. (530-531)

Denouement: From this terrible reversal of her hopes comes a new understanding of life.

She had sinned. She admitted that she had sinned against some quality in herself. But how innocently and how ignorantly! And what a tremendous punishment for so transient a weakness! . . . It was all a matter of chance; sheer chance! She began to perceive what life really was, and the immense importance of hazard therein. Nevertheless, without frailty, without defection, what could chance have done? She began to perceive that this that she was living through was life. She bit her lips. Grief! Shame! Disillusion! Hardship! Peril! Catastrophe! Exile! Above all, exile! These had to be faced, and they would be faced. She recalled the fieriest verse of Crashaw and she set her shoulders back. There was the stuff of a woman in her.... (532-533. Bennett's unspaced ellipses.)

With her decision to forsake Edwin, Hilda enters a new stasis: caring for Miss Gailey, running the boarding house, and enduring life.

These Twain, the third volume, continues the story of Edwin and Hilda; it is longer and somewhat more tightly structured than Hilda Lessways. In These Twain the narrative focuses primarily upon Edwin, for it is he who undergoes a significant change. Hilda remains fairly consistent: though she varies her objectives, her basic attitude toward marriage remains essentially the same ("It's each for himself in marriage"). Edwin, however, realizes the need for compromise and decides to yield to Hilda; in reaching this decision, his attitude toward marriage markedly changes. The plot structure traces this course of events.

Introduction: Edwin and Hilda, recently married, adore each other.

Her presence there on the landing of the stairs was in the nature of a miracle. He had wanted her, and he had got her. In the end he had got her, and nothing had been able to stop him--not even the obstacle of her tragic adventure with a rascal and a bigamist. The strong magic of his passion had forced destiny to render her up to him mysteriously intact, after all. The impossible had occurred, and society had accepted it, beaten.
(23)

She knew that he was more deeply and helplessly in love with her than she with him, but even she was perhaps tightlier bound than in her pride she thought. (89)

Yet, because they married late (Edwin is 36; Hilda, 34), they come to each other with characters and habits already fully formed: Edwin is self-conscious, tightly self-controlled, extremely tidy, and precise about household and business details; Hilda is capricious, untidy, and maladroit at managing the house and servants.

Definition: Edwin and Hilda quarrel about his plans to build a new lithography plant.

"Anyone could get the better of you," she said. He resented this estimate of himself as a good-natured simpleton. He assuredly did not want to quarrel, but he was obliged to say:

"Oh! Could they?"

An acerbity scarcely intentional somehow entered into his tone. As soon as he heard it, he recognized the tone as the forerunner of altercations.

"Of course!" she replied, superiorly, and then went on: "We're all right as we are. We spend too much money, but I daresay we're all right. If you go in for a lot of new things you may lose all we've got, and then where shall we be?"

(84)

The resentment of each is based upon different conceptions of the marital relationship. Edwin believes that he should be the ultimate authority:

In his heart he said to her:

"What's it got to do with you? You manage your home, and I'll manage my business! You know nothing at all about business. You're the very antithesis of business. Whatever business you've ever had to do with you've ruined. You've no right to judge and no grounds for judgment. . . . And where would

you be now without me? Trying to run some wretched boarding house and probably starving. Why do you assume that I'm a d----d fool? You always do. . . . And moreover I won't have you interfering in my business. Other wives don't, and you shan't. So let that be clearly understood." (84-85)

Hilda, on the other hand, believes that Edwin, by temperament, is dangerously unable to wield authority:

Her habit was to assume that in any encounter between him and a stranger he would be worsted. She was afraid for him. She felt that she could protect him better than he could protect himself,—against any danger whatever. This instinct to protect him was also the instinct of self-protection; for peril to him meant peril to her. And she had had enough of peril. After years of disastrous peril she was safe and George was safe. And if she was passionately in love with Edwin, she was also passionately in love with safety. . . . At the least sign of recurring danger all her nerves were on the qui vive. Hence her inimical attitude toward the project of the new works and the extension of lithography in Bursley. The simpleton . . . might ruin himself—and her! In her view he was the last person to undertake such an enterprise.

. . . All the persons standing to make a profit out of the new project would get the better of his fine ingenuous temperament—naturally! . . . And then the interminable worry of the new enterprise—misgivings, uncertainties, extra work, secret preoccupations! What room for love, what hope of tranquillity in all that? He might argue—But she did not want to argue; she would not argue. She was dead against the entire project. He had not said to her that it was no affair of hers, but she knew that such was his thought, and she resented the attitude. No affair of hers? When it threatened her felicity? No! She would not have it. She was happy and secure. (90-91)

Within these different attitudes lies the basic conflict of the narrative: on the one hand, Edwin's insistence

upon his masculine superiority and final authority; on the other, Hilda's efforts to exercise her influence and gain domination. Thus, because of this clash of wills, in which each is determined to prevail, the definition raises the question of whether or not their marriage can succeed.

Complications: From this difference of attitudes arises a series of clashes between Edwin and Hilda. Hilda, for instance, wants Edwin to buy Maggie's house:

She had never seriously thought of the plan until that moment, and it appeared doubly favourable to her now, because the execution of it, by absorbing capital, ought to divert Edwin from his lithographic project, and perhaps render the lithographic project impossible for years. (95)

Though eventually he both buys the house and builds the new plant, he is angered by Hilda's meddling. Later, they clash over Hilda's headstrong behavior in visiting Dartmoor prison. When Edwin proves to have been right and then smoothly handles Cannon's demands for money, Hilda admires his efficiency. However, she still intensely resents his dominance in the household:

Edwin was in the right; his position could not be assailed. He had not been unpleasant, but he had spoken as one sublimely confident that his order would not be challenged. Within her heart Hilda rebelled. . . .

Why? Were they not equals? No, they were not equals. The fundamental unuttered assumption upon which the household life rested was that they were not equals. She might cross him, she might momentarily defy him, she might torture him, she might drive him to fury, and still be safe from any effective reprisals, because his love for her made her necessary to his being; but in spite of all that his will remained the seat of government, and she and George were only the Opposition. In the end, she had to incline. She was the complement of his existence, but he was not the complement of hers. She was just a parasite, though an essential parasite. Why?... The reason, she judged, was economic, and solely economic. She rebelled. Was she not as individual, as original, as he? Had she not a powerful mind of her own? Was she not of a nature profoundly and exceptionally independent? (349-350)

Hilda's mismanagement of the household and servants continually irritates Edwin, but her behavior when she takes George to London and contrives for Edwin to stay at Auntie Hamps' seems outrageous to him:

Hilda had divined nothing. She never did divine the tortures which she inflicted in his heart. She did not possess the gumption to divine. Her demeanour had been amazing. . . . Instead of cajoling, she bullied. Instead of tacitly admitting that she was infamously wronging him, she had assumed a grievance of her own—without stating it! Once she had said discontentedly about some trifle: "You might at any rate-----" as though the victim should caress the executioner. She had kissed him at departure, but not as usual effusively, and he had suffered the kiss in enmity; and after an unimaginable general upset and confusion, . . . she had driven off with her son,—unconscious, stupidly unaware, that she was leaving a disaster behind her. And last of all Edwin, solitary, had been forced to perform the final symbolic act, that of locking him out of his own sacred home! The affair had transcended belief. (430)

After this furor passes, they clash over Hilda's desire for a country house. Hilda envisions a new life for them:

She had still another and perhaps greater ambition—to possess a country house. In her fancy her country house was very like Alicia Hesketh's house, Tavy Mansion, which she had never ceased to envy. She felt that in a new home, spacious, with space around it, she could really commence the new life. She saw the place perfectly appointed and functioning perfectly She would leave old Darius Clayhanger's miracle-house without one regret. And in the new life she would be always active, busy, dignified, elegant, influential, and kind. And to Edwin she would be absolutely indispensable.

In these imaginings their solid but tarnished love glittered and gleamed again. She saw naught but the charming side of Edwin and the romantic side of their union. She was persuaded that there really was nobody like Edwin, and that no marriage had ever had quite the mysterious, secretly exciting quality of hers. (359-360)

However, Edwin deeply resents her efforts to manipulate him into buying Ladderedge Hall:

It was astounding that a man could pass with such rapidity as Edwin from vivid joy to black and desolate gloom. She well knew that the idea of living in the country was extremely repugnant to him, and that nothing would ever induce him to consent to it. And yet she must needs lay this trap for him, prepare this infantile surprise, and thereby spoil his Christmas. . . . The presence of Ingpen and the boy, and the fact of Christmas, forbade him to speak freely. He could not suddenly stop and drive his stick into the earth and say savagely:

"Now listen to me! Once for all, I won't have this country house idea! So let it be understood,—if you want a row, you know how to get it."

The appearance of amity . . . must be kept throughout the day. Nevertheless in his heart he challenged Hilda desperately. All her good qualities became insignificant, all his benevolent estimates of her seemed ridiculous. She was the impossible woman. He saw a tremendous vista of unpleasantness, for her obstinacy in warfare was known to him, together with her perfect lack of scruple, or commonsense, and of social decency. . . . The more rope you gave these creatures, the more they wanted. But he would give no more rope. Compromise was at an end. The battle would be joined that night. (494-495)

Crisis: Edwin decides that his marriage was a mistake. When he and Hilda return from their Christmas visit only to find a cold, dark, uncomfortable house awaiting them, Edwin storms out and walks through the dark streets, brooding about his marriage:

Edwin's brain throbbed and shook like an engine-house in which the machinery was his violent thoughts. He no longer saw his marriage as a chain of disconnected episodes; he saw it as a drama the true meaning of which was at last revealed by the climax now upon him. He had had many misgivings about it, and had put them away, and they all swept back presenting themselves as a series of signs that pointed to inevitable disaster. He had been blind, from wilfulness or cowardice. He now had vision. He had arrived at honesty. He said to himself, as millions of men and women have said to themselves, with awestruck calm: "My marriage was a mistake." And he began to face the consequences of the admission. He was not such a fool as to attach too much importance to the immediate quarrel, nor even to the half-suppressed but supreme dissension concerning a place of residence. He assumed, even, that the present difficulties would some how, with more or less

satisfaction, be adjusted. What, however, would not and could not be adjusted was the temperament that produced them. Those difficulties, which had been preceded by smaller difficulties, would be followed by greater. It was inevitable. . . . He must face the truth: "She wont alter her ways --and I shan't stand them." No matter what their relations might in future superficially appear to be, their union was over. Or, if it was not actually over, it soon would be over, for the forces to shatter it were uncontrollable and increasing in strength.

His indictment of his wife was terrible and not to be answered. . . . She could not see reason, and her sense of justice was nonexistent. If she wanted a thing she must have it. In reality she was a fierce and unscrupulous egoist, incapable of understanding a point of view other than her own.

. . .

She could not be moderate. She expected every consideration from others, but she would yield none. . . . The injustice of it all passed belief. There was no excuse for Hilda, and there never would be any excuse for her. She was impossible; she would be still more impossible. He did not make her responsible; he admitted that she was not responsible. But at the same time, with a disdainful and cold resentment, he condemned and hated her. (513-515)

Thus the crisis is a turning point in the Clayhanger marriage: at this point it comes closest to complete failure.

Resolution: Edwin decides to yield to Hilda's wishes and thus not be beaten by marriage.

He admitted that marriage must be a mutual accommodation. He was, and always had been, ready to accommodate. But Hilda was unjust, monstrously unjust. Of that he was definitely convinced. . . .

And then there flashed into his mind, complete, the great discovery of all his career. It was banal, it was commonplace; it was what everyone knows. Yet it was the great discovery of all his career. If Hilda had not been unjust in the assertion of her own individuality, there could be no merit in yielding to her. To yield to a just claim was not meritorious, though to withstand it would be wicked. He was objecting to injustice as a child objects to rain on a holiday. Injustice was a tremendous actuality!

It had to be faced and accepted. . . . To reconcile oneself to injustice was the master achievement. . . . He was thrilled by the realisation. He longed ardently to put it to the test. He did put it to the test. . . . And in yielding, it seemed to him he was victorious.

He thought confidently and joyously:

"I'm not going to be beaten by Hilda! And I'm not going to be beaten by marriage. Dashed if I am! A nice thing if I had to admit that I wasn't clever enough to be a husband!"

He was happy, but somewhat timorously so. He had the sense to suspect that his discovery would scarcely transform marriage into an everlasting Eden, and that serious trouble would not improbably recur. "Marriage keeps on all the time till you're dead!" he said to himself. But he profoundly knew that he had advanced a stage, that he had acquired new wisdom and new power, and that no danger in the future could equal the danger that was past. (522-523)

Denouement: Edwin tells Hilda that he will buy Ladderedge Hall for her. Hilda is happy; therefore, Edwin is also happy.

She had a strong desire to jump at Edwin and kiss him. She was saved. Her grandiose plan would proceed. The house sold, Edwin was bound to secure Ladderedge Hall against no matter what rival; and he would do it. But it was the realisation of her power over her husband that gave her the profoundest joy.

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Now, as before them all Hilda held him to her, the delicious thought that she had power over him, that she was shaping the large contours of his existence, made her feel solemn in her bliss. And yet simultaneously she was reflecting with a scarcely perceptible hardness; "It's each for himself in marriage after all, and I've got my own way." . . .

"What a romance she has made of my life!" thought Edwin, confused and blushing, as she loosed him. And though he looked round with affection at the walls which would soon no longer be his, the greatness of the adventure of existence with this creature, to him unique, and the eternal expectation of some new ecstasy, left no room in his heart for a regret. (540, 542)

Thus, Edwin's attitude toward his authority and marriage having undergone a marked change, the union enters a new stasis of relative peace and happiness.

Since the bulk of the narrative in "The Clayhanger Trilogy" concerns the relationship between Edwin and Hilda, quite logically the inclusive structure itself is based upon this relationship. From this structure emerges Bennett's general theme. However, Bennett's synchronous method of presentation raises some difficulty for a reader: Edwin and Hilda's relationship, the structural pattern, and its thematic significance become clear only if the reader comprehends the importance of the synchronous movement of the first two volumes. That is, Bennett's synchronous presentation of the lives of Edwin and Hilda, though making comprehension of the inclusive structure somewhat difficult, nevertheless constitutes part of his thematic statement. A brief analysis of the inclusive structure and theme will perhaps clarify this matter.

The inclusive introduction consists of the introduction of Plot H in Clayhanger and one of the major complications in Hilda Lessways. In the former, Edwin, finding his life drab and empty, meets Hilda and is intrigued by her "mystery"; in the latter, Hilda glimpses Edwin and envisions an "ideal life." Each character is the product of the life he has led thus far. Edwin, repressed by Darius' parsimonious tyranny, is a shy, sensitive, withdrawn young man. Yearning for a richer, fuller existence, he is dazzled by the luxury and zest of the Orgreaves' mode of life; to him, Hilda also seems a part of this rich, interesting life. Being ignorant about women and sex, he believes that Hilda follows him to the Clayhangers' unfinished house because she has a "crush" on him:

He thought: "She's taken a fancy to me!" And he was not a conceited coxcomb. He exulted in the thought. Nothing had ever before so startled and uplifted him. It constituted the supreme experience of his career as a human being. (C), 266)

However, the years of Darius' deprecatory treatment, Auntie Hamps' hypocritical praise, and Clara's sarcastic comments have produced in Edwin an extreme modesty; consequently, Edwin also scorns Hilda:

He despised her because it was he, Edwin, to whom she had taken a fancy! He had not sufficient self-confidence to justify her fancy in his own eyes. His argument actually was that no girl worth having could have taken a fancy to him at sight! (C1, 266)

Later, his vision of Hilda sympathetically tending to old Mr. Shushions becomes "one of the epochal things of his experience." Hilda has also led a sequestered existence: she has no close friends, her mother seldom goes out, and she knows very few men: "It was literally a fact that, except Mr. Skellorn, a few tradesmen, the vicar, the curate, and a sidesman or so, she never even spoke to a man from one month's end to the next." (HL, 9) Bored, she seeks an exciting life. Stenography and her work in Cannon's newspaper office seem inexpressibly romantic to her, but after Mrs. Lessway's death, Hilda feels conscience-stricken; shorthand and newspapers now seem trivial occupations. Only a vision of a tender and mysterious love, engendered by a glimpse of Edwin, seems to hold promise of happiness for her:

She saw all the delightful and pure vistas of love with a man, subtle, baffling, and benevolent, and above all superior; with a man who would be respected by a whole town as a pillar of society, while bringing to his intimacy with herself an exotic and wistful quality which neither she nor anyone could possibly define. (HL, 217)

Later, at the Orgreaves', one of Edwin's casual remarks moves her deeply:

Hilda was thunderstruck. She was blinded as though by a mystic revelation. She wanted to exult, and to exult with all the ardour of her soul. This truth which Edwin Clayhanger had enunciated she had indeed always been vaguely

aware of; but now in a flash she felt it, she faced it, she throbbled to its authenticity, and was free. It solved every difficulty, and loosed the load that for months past had wearied her back. "There's no virtue in believing." It was fundamental. It was the gift of life and of peace. Her soul shouted, as she realized that just there, in that instant, at that table, a new epoch had dawned for her. (HL, 241-242)

Consequently, she follows Edwin not because she has a "crush" on him but because she wishes to discover if he were sincere. After their brief meeting, Hilda is still excited:

In her mind were no distinct thoughts, either concerning the non-virtue of belief, or the new epoch, or Edwin Clayhanger, or even the strangeness of her behaviour. But all her being vibrated to the mysterious and beautiful romance of existence. (HL, 254)

Thus, the inclusive introduction shows two people whose different characters are the products of their pasts, meeting and misunderstanding each other's real nature and motives.

The inclusive definition consists of the definition of Plot H in Clayhanger and the crisis of Hilda Lessways: Edwin and Hilda fall in love with each other. Edwin's reactions to falling in love are a compound of bewilderment, uneasy happiness, and trepidation. Edwin is completely unable to understand Hilda's "mysterious" nature:

He was baffled. Far from piercing her soul, he could scarcely even see her at all; that is, with intelligence. And it was always so when he was with her: he was in a dream, a vapour; he had no helm, his faculties were not under control. She robbed him of judgment. (C1, 348)

Her finest quality was her mystery. Even now, as he gazed at her comfortably, she baffled him; all her exquisite little movements and intonations baffled him. (C1, 350-351)

He believes that she is absolutely necessary for his happiness:

The sole condition precedent to a tolerable existence was now to have sight and speech of Hilda Lessways. He was intensely unhappy in the long stretches of time which separated one contact with her from the next. And in the brief moments of their companionship he was far too distraught, too apprehensive, too desirous, too puzzled, to be able to call himself happy. (C1, 355)

However, he fears even to contemplate marriage:

Marriage.... He apologized to himself for the thought.... But just for the sake of argument... supposing... well, supposing the affair went so far that one day he told her ... men did such things, young men! No!... Besides, she wouldn't.... It was absurd.... No such idea really!... And then the frightful worry there would be with his father, about money and so on.... And the telling of Clara, and of everybody. No! He simply could not imagine himself married, or about to be married. Marriage might happen to other young men, but not to him. His case was special, somehow.... He shrank from such formidable enterprises. The mere notion of them made him tremble. (C1, 357. Bennett's ellipses.)

Thus, the shy, father-dominated young man again contemplates another independent action. Hilda, on the other hand, has already experienced love and marriage: she married Cannon believing that she was gaining her "ideal life": "She would be the wife of a great and a wealthy man. And in her own secret ways she could influence him, and thus be greater than the great." (HL, 381) She realizes her mistake, however, and now she covertly compares Cannon and Edwin:

She liked the feel of his faithful hand, and the glance of his timid and yet bellicose eye. And she reposed on his very apparent honesty as on a bed. She knew, with the assurance of perfect faith, that he had nothing dubious to conceal, and that no test could strain his magnanimity.

.
His whole attitude was utterly and mysteriously different from that of any other man whom she had known.... And with that simple, wistful expression of his! (HL, 471-472. Bennett's ellipses.)

When she realizes that Edwin loves her, she again experiences the excitement

of life:

A miracle had occurred, and it intimidated her. And, amid her wondrous fears, she was steeped in the unique sense of adventure. . . . The tragic sequel to one adventure had not impaired her instinct for experience. On the contrary, it had strengthened it. The very failure of the one excited her towards another. The zest of living was reborn in her. . . . The faculty of men and women to create their own lives seemed divine, and the conception of it enfevered her. (HL, 475)

Consequently, when they first kiss, she sees it as a portent of the fulfillment of her "ideal life":

His agitation appeared to be extreme; but she was calm; she was divinely calm. She savoured the moment as though she had been a watcher, and not an actor in the scene. She thought, with a secret sigh of bliss: "Yes, it is real, this moment! And I have had it. Am I astonished that it has come so soon, or did I know it was coming?" Her eyes drank up the face and the hands and the gestures of her lover. (HL, 516)

The disparate characters and experiences of Edwin and Hilda provide the basic conflicts of the inclusive structure. Edwin—inexperienced and somewhat naive—instinctively yearns for Hilda, but—shy and isolated—he fears the involvement marriage will bring. Hilda, more experienced but still a romanticist, yearns for an "ideal life," which she expects marriage with Edwin will provide. Yet each is also enmeshed in the circumstances of his past life: Edwin is still dominated by Darius, who grows ever more tyrannical; Hilda is still burdened by the responsibility of Miss Gailey and still subject to the consequences of her union with Cannon. Thus, the conflict which motivates the inclusive structure is not only that between the disparate natures of Hilda and Edwin but also that between

each character and the circumstances of his own life.

The first inclusive complication is the result of the conflict between each character and the circumstances of his life. It consists of the complication of Plot H in Clayhanger and the resolution in Hilda Lessways: Hilda "jilts" Edwin. After Hilda's return to Brighton, Edwin finally summons courage enough to ask Darius for a partnership so that he can marry; Darius, of course, refuses. Conditioned by a lifetime of subjugation to Darius, Edwin can only impotently rage:

Do what he would with his brain, the project of marriage and house-tenancy and a separate existence obstinately presented itself to him as fantastic and preposterous. Who was he to ask so much from destiny? He could not feel that he was a man. In his father's presence he never could feel that the was a man. He remained a boy, with no rights, moral or material. (C1, 384)

Later that same evening, he learns that Hilda has married Cannon:

This too he had always felt and known would come to pass: that Hilda would not be his. All that romance was unreal; it was not true; it was too good to be true; it had never happened. Such a thing could not happen to such as he was. (C1, 388-389)

First, his father crushes his ambition to be an architect; then, his father refuses him a decent livelihood; now, his loved one abandons him for someone else. Thus, to Edwin, bitter disappointment seems to be the terms of his existence. To Hilda, life seems equally malignant. Never having told Edwin of her having been victimized by Cannon, she cannot now tell him that she is pregnant:

Rather than let him know, in any conceivable manner, that, all unwitting, she was bearing the child of another at the moment of her betrothal to himself, she preferred to be regarded as a jilt of the very worst kind. (HL, 528)

She now finds herself with an invalid to nurse, a boarding-house to run, a child on its way, and "no alternative to the tableau." Having begun by seeking adventure and romance and by believing in "the faculty of men and women to create their own lives," she is now disillusioned and embittered: "She began to perceive what life really was, and the immense importance of hazard therein. Nevertheless, without frailty, without defection, what could chance have done?" (HL, 532)

The reversal of this complication is the denouement of Plot H of Clayhanger: Edwin and Hilda are reunited. Free at last from Darius' tyranny and the bigamous entanglement with Cannon, they are able now to meet again, express their love, and marry.

Yet ten years have passed since their thwarted engagement, and responding to their changed circumstances, Edwin and Hilda have also changed. Edwin is still orderly, comfort-loving, and sometimes socially awkward. However, with absolute command of his own time, money, business, and household, he has become more assertive, more authoritative:

Bit by bit he was assuming the historic privileges of the English master of the house. He had the illusion that if only he could maintain a silence sufficiently august his error of fact and of manner would cease to be an error. (C1, 552)

In some ways he has grown surprisingly like Darius. The elder Clayhanger's attitude toward his own career approached awe:

Darius's pride in the achievement of his business was simply indescribable. . . . To Darius there was no business quite like his own. He admitted that there were businesses much bigger, but they lacked the miraculous quality that his own had. They were not sacred. His was, genuinely. (C1, 171)

Edwin holds a nearly identical view: "His career, which to others probably seemed dull and monotonous, presented itself to him as almost miraculously

romantic in its development." (C1, 556) To Darius, the word business was sufficient excuse for any domestic tyranny:

No one asked where or why he had been detained; it was not etiquette to do so. If father had been 'called away' or had 'had to go away' or was 'kept somewhere,' the details were out of deference allowed to remain in mystery, respected by curiosity . . . 'Father--business' . . . All business was sacred. (C1, 58. Bennett's ellipses.)

Edwin, too, believes it so: "Edwin was just as laconic and mysterious as Darius had been about 'business.' It was a word that ended arguments or prevented them." (C1, 576) Thus, part of Edwin's inheritance from Darius is a domineering, authoritative attitude. The Edwin who marries Hilda is not exactly the same shy young man who ten years earlier had feared even to think of marriage.

Nor is Hilda precisely the same young girl. Her ten years of penury and struggle have changed her:

The harsh curves of her hair were the same. Her thick eyebrows were the same. Her blazing glance was the same. Her intensely clear intonation was the same. But she was a profoundly changed woman. . . . As, bending under the lamp-shade to arrange the wick, she exposed her features to the bright light, Edwin saw a face marred by anxiety and grief and time, the face of a mature woman, with no lingering pretensions to girlishness. She was thirty-four, and she looked older than Maggie and much older than Janet. She was embittered. (C1, 588)

Though her marriage to Edwin provides her with wealth, comfort, servants, and leisure, it cannot totally erase the effects of years of hardship, toil, and anxiety. Thus, the Hilda who marries Edwin is not the same young girl who believed that life was a romantic adventure, malleable to one's will.

The second inclusive complication is the definition of These Twain:

Hilda and Edwin quarrel over Edwin's plans to build a new lithographic plant. This quarrel stems from their disparate characters and attitudes toward marriage. Edwin is accustomed now to exercising authority in both his business and his home. Moreover, he has always been surrounded by submissive women--the self-effacing Maggie, the obsequious Auntie Hamps, the now-respectful Clara, even the compliant Janet; in the admirable Orgreave household, Mrs. Orgreave is the very model of devoted deference to her husband. In addition, Edwin has, he thinks, proved his mastery over Hilda at Brighton:

He looked at her like a conqueror. He had taught her a thing or two. He had been a man. He was proud of himself. He was proud of all sorts of details in his conduct.

.
If she had acted foolishly it was because of her tremendous haughtiness. However, he had lowered that. He had shown her her master. (C 607, 608)

Consequently, though he is willing to concede control of the household to her, he believes that his word should be family law. When Hilda begins to meddle in his business, he is outraged:

"You manage your home, and I'll manage my business! You know nothing at all about business. You're the very antithesis of business. . . . I won't have you interfering in my business. Other wives don't, and you shan't. So let that be clearly understood."
(II, 84-85)

This attitude--the result of Darius' tyranny, his earlier homelife, and his own pride-- is that which Edwin brings to marriage.

Hilda's attitude, on the other hand, is the result of the instability of her past and the years of her penury. She now craves security and comfort. Doubting Edwin's business capabilities, she opposes his plans:

After years of disastrous peril she was safe and George was safe. And if she was passionately in love with Edwin, she was also passionately in love with safety. . . . The simpleton . . . might ruin himself--and her! (TT, 90)

The result of her years of isolated struggle against adversity, her attitude contains a marked quantity of selfishness:

Her glance, when their eyes were very close together, was curious. It seemed to imply: "We are in love. And we love. I am yours. You are mine. Life is very fine after all. I am a happy woman. But still-- each is for himself in this world, and that's the bedrock of marriage as of all other institutions." Her sense of realities again! (TT, 135)

Later, when she takes George to London and contrives for Edwin to stay at Auntie Hamps', this attitude reappears:

She bent down and kissed him several times, very fervently; her lips lingered on his. And all the time she frowned ever so little; and it was as if she was conveying to him: "But--each is for himself in marriage, after all." (TT, 401)

In addition, her vision of an "ideal life," in which she would marry a "great and wealthy man," influence him, and thus be "greater than the great," again revives; in fact, she exults in her power over Edwin:

She thought: "It is marvellous. I can do what I like with him. When I use a particular tone, and look at him in a particular way, I can do what I like with him."

She was ecstatically conscious of an incomprehensible power. What a role, that of the capricious, pouting queen, reclining luxuriously on her lounge, and subduing a tyrant to a slave! (TT, 96)

.
She saw Edwin as an instrument to be played upon, and herself as a virtuoso. (TT, 478)

Therefore, though they love each other, their wills inevitably clash. Their characters and attitudes, shaped by their past lives and present ambitions, are too disparate for harmony. Consequently, they alternate

between happiness and misery: "In the great, passionate war of marriage, they would draw . . . apart, defensive and watchful, rushing together at intervals either to fight or to kiss." (II, 243)

The inclusive crisis is also the crisis of These Twain: Edwin realizes that his marriage is a mistake. When Hilda persists in contradicting his wishes about moving to the country, Edwin reappraises their relationship:

He no longer saw his marriage as a chain of disconnected episodes; he saw it as a drama the true meaning of which was at last revealed by the climax now upon him. . . . He said to himself . . . , with awestruck calm: "My marriage was a mistake." And he began to face the consequences of the admission. (II, 513)

His conclusion is a direct result of his past life and his attitude toward marriage. Having suffered thirty years of paternal tyranny, Edwin now finds himself subject to a will more loving but no less despotic than Darius'. Even before this particular quarrel, Edwin had yearned for freedom:

If he, Edwin, were free, what an ideal life he could make for himself, a life presided over by commonsense, regularity, and order! He was not free; he would never be free; and what had he obtained in exchange for freedom? . . . He had a wife and her child; servants-- at intervals; a fine works and many workpeople; a house, with books; money, security. . . . And what was the result? Was he ever, in any ideal sense, happy: that is, free from foreboding, from friction, from responsibility, and withal lightly joyous? Was any quarter of an hour of his day absolutely what he would have wished? (II, 400)

Thus, his conclusion reflects in part his life-long desire for independence reasserting itself:

There flitted through his mind the dream of liberty-- not the liberty of ignorant youth, but liberty with experience and knowledge to use it. Ravishing prospect!

Marriage had advantages. But he could retain those advantages in freedom. . . . And as he pictured such an existence . . . further souvenirs of Hilda's wilful naughtiness and injustice rushed into his mind by thousands (TT, 515-516)

Edwin's belief that his authority should be supreme also prompts his realization:

He must face the truth: "She won't alter her ways-- and I shan't stand them." No matter what their relations might in future superficially appear to be, their union was over. (TT, 513)

In that their quests for happiness come closest to failure here, the scene of Edwin's bitter realization is the crisis of the inclusive structure.

The inclusive resolution is the resolution of These Twain:

Edwin decides not to be beaten by marriage or Hilda but to yield to her demands. Though this decision represents a marked change in his attitude toward marriage, it nevertheless is characteristic of Edwin in several ways. First, Edwin has a profoundly forgiving nature. He forgave Darius for having thwarted his ambition to be an architect; though he angrily vowed revenge when Darius refused him a partnership, Edwin again forgave him and in the end pitied him; when he regained Hilda, he even forgave her for her cruel desertion: "Drowning amid the waves of her terrible devotion, he was recompensed in the hundredth part of a second for all that through her he had suffered or might hereafter suffer." (C1, 698) Thus to forgive Hilda's new transgressions seems natural to Edwin. Second, all of his life Edwin had sought intellectual and moral perfection. Though "the mysterious and holy flame of the desire for self-perfecting" (C1, 18) had at times burned low, it had never been extinguished in Edwin. Resolutions to "turn over a new leaf," programs to better himself, efforts

to practice tolerance and justice had all characterized Edwin's quest for perfection. Consequently, he sees his yielding to Hilda as a moral victory:

If Hilda had not been unjust in the assertion of her own individuality, there could be no merit in yielding to her. . . . To reconcile oneself to injustice was the master achievement. . . . In yielding, it seemed to him that he was victorious. (II, 522-523)

Thus, his decision seems a step toward moral perfection, if not the culmination of his quest:

He profoundly knew that he had advanced a stage, that he had acquired new wisdom and new power, and that no danger in the future could equal the danger that was past. . . .

It had taken him years to discover where he was. Why should the discovery occur just then? He could only suppose that the cumulative battering of experience had at length knocked a hole through his thick head, and let saving wisdom in. (II, 523)

Third, all of his life Edwin had sought happiness, only to have it elude him. Though he had gained his freedom from Darius, had achieved success in his business and respect in his community, and had obtained the woman he loved, none of these accomplishments had brought the happiness he sought. Yet the bitter disappointments which seemed the terms of his existence can now, he believes, be ended by yielding to Hilda:

The pleasure, the mere pleasure—call it sensual or what you like—of granting a caprice to the capricious creature! If a thing afforded her joy, why not give it? . . .

He was carried away by his own dream. To realise that dream he had only to yield, to nod negligently, to murmur with benevolent tolerance: "All right. Do as you please." (II, 519-520)

In his heart he so yields, and upon his returning home, the joy he experiences seems reward enough for his decision:

He was elated. The welcome of his familiar home was beautiful to him. . . . He could yield upon the grand contention how and when he chose. He had his acquiescence waiting like a delightful surprise for Hilda. As he looked at her lovingly, with all her crimes of injustice thick on her, he clearly realised that he saw her as no other person saw her, and that because it was so she in her entirety was indispensable to him. And when he tried to argue impartially and aloofly with himself about rights and wrongs, asinine reason was swamped by an entirely irrational and wise joy in the simple fact of the criminal's existence. (II, 526)

Thus, being based upon his forgiving nature, his sense of moral victory, and his desire for happiness, the marked change in Edwin's attitude toward marriage seems quite characteristic.

The inclusive denouement is the denouement of These Twain:

Hilda being made happy, Edwin is therefore also happy. Hilda's happiness springs from several sources: the country house will bring her dreams of a new life closer to reality; she has had her way in the controversy; most important, she has realized her power over Edwin. The final scene reveals the essence of Hilda's character: her love for Edwin, her pride in her power over him, and a trace of her selfishness:

Now, as before them all Hilda held him to her, the delicious thought that she had power over him, that she was shaping the large contours of his existence, made her feel solemn in her bliss. And yet simultaneously she was reflecting with a scarcely perceptible hardness: "It's each for himself in marriage after all, and I've got my own way." (II, 542)

Edwin's happiness springs from a single source: he has made Hilda happy. Having acted upon his decision to yield to her, he has no regrets, for he has achieved that which he sought as a young man and which Hilda even then seemed to promise-- a rich, full, exciting life:

"What a romance she has made of my life!"
thought Edwin. . . . And though he looked round with

affection at the walls which would soon no longer be his, the greatness of the adventure of existence with this creature, to him unique, and the eternal expectation of some new ecstasy, left no room in his heart for a regret. (II, 542)

Thus, the new stasis which concludes the sequence in These Twain is the logical outcome of the disparate influences, ambitions, and experiences--the separate lives of Edwin and Hilda--shown in Clayhanger and Hilda Lessways. Through these events, Bennett develops his general theme: the circumstances of life sometimes shape a person contrary to his wishes; consequently, such a person can achieve happiness only through a compromise between his wishes and circumstances.

To convey this theme, Bennett creates a singularly appropriate form through his control of fictive time. Within the individual volumes, the movement of fictive time is almost purely chronological: Clayhanger begins in July of 1872 and concludes in February of 1892; Hilda Lessways covers the time from October of 1878 to September of 1882; These Twain proceeds from August of 1892 to April of 1897. Thus, within each sphere of the sequence, time generally moves chronologically.

However, Bennett does vary this movement in two specific ways. First, as a method of building solid backgrounds, he often recites the history of a scene, object, or character. For example, to explain the isolation of the Five Towns, Bennett briefly recounts a history of its transportation system:

A hundred years earlier the canal had only been obtained after a vicious Parliamentary fight between industry and the fine and ancient borough, which saw in canals a menace to its importance as a centre of traffic. Fifty years earlier the fine and ancient borough had succeeded in forcing the greatest railway line in England to run through unpopulated country five miles off instead of through the Five Towns, because it loathed the mere conception of a railway. And now, people are enquiring

why the Five Towns, with a railway system special to itself, is characterised by a perhaps excessive provincialism. (C, 1-2)

To introduce Big James, Darius' shop foreman, Bennett devotes almost two pages to a history of his origin, pastimes, religious affiliations, and family. (C, 78-79) Similarly, Bennett spends five and a half pages recounting the growth of the suburb in which Edwin lives. (TT, 1-6) Many of these brief histories--such as those of the printing shop (C, 112-114) and of Tertius Ingpen (TT, 56)--are germane to principal events; others--such as those of a penny theatre (C, 84-85) and of a housemaid (HL, 44-45)--are perhaps less relevant. All, however, are part of Bennett's effort to recreate through multitudinous details the concrete milieu of Five Towns.

Second, Bennett also employs the fictive device of direct flashbacks. For instance, in Hilda Lessways, Bennett shows Hilda recuperating at Miss Gailey's three months after her mother's death; he then shifts backwards and describes Hilda's nervous breakdown immediately after her mother's funeral. (HL, 177-184) Perhaps the most important flashback, however, is the account of Darius' wretched childhood. (C, 31-43) Shifting forty years into the past, Bennett directly narrates how the seven-year-old Darius slaved in the pottery works, suffered in the county work-house, and was finally rescued by Mr. Shushions. Because it explains both the grimness of Darius' character and his almost religious attitude toward his career, it also explains Darius' attitude toward Edwin's desire to become an architect. Bennett thereby provides an important character motivation through this extensive flashback. Briefly, then, in that both the histories and the flashbacks move from the present point of the

narrative to some point in the past, they do constitute variations in the chronological movement.

This movement, of course, is intermittent. As do most novelists, Bennett concentrates upon some periods and omits others. Clayhanger, covering the longest period, contains more hiatuses than do the other two volumes. For instance, seven years elapse from the time Darius crushes Edwin's desire for architectural training until the narrative begins again. Similar omissions range from several weeks to four years. Hilda Lessways, covering the briefest period in the sequence, contains fewer lengthy omissions, the principal one being for fourteen months, from her initial encounter with Cannon until Hilda begins working for him as an editorial secretary. In These Twain, the longest hiatus is three years, from the time Cannon leaves for America until Hilda begins to want a country house. Throughout the novels, Bennett clearly signals this progress of time, especially whenever lengthy omissions occur:

Late on another Saturday afternoon, in the following March, when Darius had been ill nearly two years, he and Edwin and Albert were sitting round the remains of high tea. . . . (C, 498)

In three months, she had learnt a great deal about the new landlady of the Cedars. . . . (HL, 176)

A little over three years had elapsed since the closing of the episode of George Cannon, and for two of those years Hilda had had peace in the kitchen. (TT, 355)

Moreover, Bennett often provides a summary of significant occurrences during the interim. For instance, after the seven-year hiatus in Clayhanger, he describes the changes wrought in Darius, in Edwin, in the shop, and in Great Britain in general. Similarly, after the three-year hiatus in These Twain, he describes the changes in Hilda:

She was not stout, but her body was solid, too solid; it had no litness, none whatever; it was absolutely set; the cleft under her chin was quite undeniable, and the olive complexion subtly ravaged. Still, not a hair of her dark head had changed colour. It was perhaps her soul that was greying. Her married life was fairly calm. It had grown monotonous in ease and tranquillity. The sharp, respectful admiration for her husband roused in her by his handling of the Cannon episode, had gradually been dulled. (II, 357)

Thus, though omitting various periods of time, Bennett maintains the essential continuity of the narrative.

In those periods he does treat, Bennett achieves an extraordinarily dense texture. His customary method of building toward important scenes is twofold: he first lays a foundation of massive particularization, such as histories and detailed descriptions of setting and characters; he then concludes with brief, crisply dramatized action. For instance, when Edwin saves the print-shop floor from crushing under the weight of a new machine, this pattern occurs:

Edwin at work in the shop/ his attitude toward printing/ location of the print shop/ history of the building/ description of the building/ description of a steam-engine/ description of a steam printing press/ description of printing plant's interior/ odours in the shop/ its heating system/ description of various small machines and their uses/ the history and operating procedures of a large press/ operation and characteristics of another press/ a catalogue of material printed in the shop/ a description of the new machine/ Darius and Big James operating the new machine/ cracking of the floor/ Edwin's mental reaction/ Darius' anger and dismay/ Edwin's quick action to stop the press/ Darius' extreme joy.

The whole scene covers fifteen pages (C, 110-125): in the first ten, Bennett lays a basis of densely detailed description; in the last five, he swiftly dramatizes the peril, with Edwin's crucial action in the last

page and a half. Using this method, Bennett often devotes many pages to the events of only a few hours. For instance, he presents Edwin's three-hour visit to the Dragon in twelve pages (C, 88-100) and Edwin's evening at Auntie Hamps' in thirty (TT- 403-433). Similarly, Bennett concentrates six chapters and seventy pages on the evening of and the two days after Darius' initial stroke. (C, 393-463)

In addition to this massive particularization of major scenes, Bennett includes innumerable secondary and tertiary incidents. While these events do not advance the action, they do add to the solidity of the milieu in which the action occurs. For example, Bennett devotes ten pages to a club banquet attended by Bursley's elite (C, 514-524), two pages to a girl's religious tract (HL, 208-210), and eight pages to a children's birthday party (TT, 111-119). Through such massive particularization, Bennett gains an extremely dense narrative texture within each volume and, thus, as Wilbur Cross remarks, casts "over fiction the illusion of life as lived by ordinary men and women."⁴⁰

More important than his use of time within each volume, however, is Bennett's control of the time spheres of the sequence. As previously indicated, the first two volumes are synchronous spheres of time: Clayhanger spans twenty years, from 1872 until 1892; Hilda Lessways covers four years of this same period, 1878 to 1882. Two reasons account for the briefer duration of the second volume. First, Hilda has led the secluded life of a proper, middle-class Victorian girl; only when nearing twenty-one does she feel life slipping away from her:

She could not define her need. All she knew was that youth, moment by moment, was dropping down inexorably behind her. And, still a child in heart and soul, she saw herself ageing, then aged, and then withered.

Her twenty-first birthday was well above the horizon. Soon, soon, she would be 'over twenty-one'! And she was not yet born! (HL, 9)

After this realization, Hilda begins to crave an exciting, romantic life. The first reason, therefore, is simply that the conflict of the novel does not emerge until this point in Hilda's life. Second, after Hilda discovers her pregnancy and then renounces Edwin, she endures ten years of bleak, monotonous drudgery at Brighton. There would be little point in chronicling these ten drab years, for the essential conflict is resolved with her renunciation of Edwin. Hence, the second volume covers less time than the first not because it is less important but because its conflict emerges later in the synchronous time span and is resolved sooner. The third volume is chronologically consecutive to the first, with a lapse from February, at the end of Clayhanger, until August of 1892, at the beginning of These Twain.

The form which results from this arrangement of time spheres is both appropriate and necessary to express Bennett's theme. The first two volumes show separate protagonists who are shaped by the circumstances of their lives. Each responds to these circumstances according to how life has made him; yet each also desires a happier life and attempts to achieve it. Darius tyrannizes Edwin, and Edwin's character is the result of that tyranny; yet Edwin attempts to achieve happiness first through architecture, then through Hilda, then through a successful career, and then finally through Hilda again. Because of her drab existence in Turnhill, Hilda desires a romantic life; she seeks happiness first through Cannon and then through Edwin. Thus the conflict in each volume is essentially the same: the forces of circumstance vs. the quest for happiness. Conceivably Bennett might have encompassed both life-stories

in the same volume, but by his separate and synchronous narration, he better emphasizes each character as an isolated individual.

In at least one major way, this separate and synchronous presentation functions thematically: it illustrates the limitations of each individual's perspective and the choices each makes according to how circumstances have shaped him. To accomplish this, Bennett synchronously presents several major scenes in both Clayhanger and Hilda Lessways; these scenes, though intelligible when seen but once, gain their full significance only when seen again in the second volume. For instance, when Hilda follows Edwin to the new house, his first impulse is to hide; however, he stays to talk to her. When she leaves, he decides that she followed him because she is infatuated with him:

The chief of all his acute sensations in that moment was pride; sheer pride. . . . He thought: "She's taken a fancy to me!" And he was not a conceited coxcomb. He exulted in the thought. Nothing had ever before so startled and uplifted him. It constituted the supreme experience of his career as a human being. (C, 265-266)

Though now twenty-four, Edwin is shy and utterly ignorant about romance and women; consequently, he can attribute no other reason to Hilda's pursuit. However, Hilda Lessways reveals Hilda's real motive: for months Hilda had felt guilt-ridden about her mother's death and her own lack of religious conviction; after one of Edwin's casual remarks about religious belief, she suddenly feels free again:

Hilda was thunderstruck. She was blinded as though by a mystic revelation. She wanted to exult, and to exult with all the ardour of her soul. This truth which Edwin Clayhanger had enunciated she had indeed always been vaguely aware of; but now in a flash she felt it, she faced it, she throbbed to its authenticity, and was free. It solved every difficulty, and loosed the load that for months

past had wearied her back. (HL, 241-242)

Hence, she follows Edwin not with the thought of wooing him but with the intention of questioning him further:

She thought:

"I would give anything to be able to speak to him privately and ask him a little more about what he said tonight. I ought to. I may never see him again. At any rate, I may never have another chance. He may have meant something else. He may not have been serious. . . ." (HL, 247)

Similarly, when Hilda and Janet stop by the printing shop on their way to the Centenary, Hilda momentarily lingers within the office. Edwin, still believing her infatuated with him, thinks she delays so that he might accompany her:

Janet went out first. Hilda hesitated; and Edwin . . . stood attending her at the aperture. . . . At last she seemed to decide to leave, yet left with apparent reluctance. . . . Edwin fell into step with Hilda Lessways. Janet looked around, and smiled and beckoned. "I wonder," said Edwin to himself, "what the devil's going to happen now! I'll take my oath she stayed behind on purpose! Well,..." This swaggering audacity was within. (C, 281-282. Bennett's unspaced ellipses.)

In truth, as one learns in the second volume, Hilda pauses for quite another reason:

Janet went out first. . . . Edwin Clayhanger waited respectfully for Hilda to pass. But just as she was about to step forth she caught sight of George Cannon coming along the opposite side of Wedgwood Street in the direction of Trafalgar Road; he was in close conversation with another man. She kept within the shelter of the shop until the two had gone by. She did not want to meet George Cannon. . . . (HL, 259)

Because she still associates Cannon with her mother's death, Hilda avoids him. Thus, she also responds as circumstances have shaped her. Such

separate views of the same incidents are thematically significant: not only do they show the individuals isolated each in his own "world"; but more important, they show the misconceptions which necessitate sympathetic insights and compromises. Needless to say, such separate views are possible only through synchronous presentation.

Extended to the scope of separate volumes, this method of presentation enables Bennett to show the entire circumstances and the consequential actions which convey his theme. In one sense, Hilda Lessways is superfluous as far as the inclusive structure is concerned: all inclusive primary events are presented at least once in Clayhanger and These Twain. But in that Hilda is a major element in the thematic equation, Hilda Lessways is therefore necessary for the thematic development of the sequence. Thus, Bennett presents separate and synchronous narratives.

In the first two volumes, the focuses are upon Edwin and Hilda as individuals; in the third, the focus is upon them as a couple. These Twain thus brings them together and deals with life in its most familiar human form--marriage. This volume continues the conflict established in the preceding separate volumes: the circumstances of life vs. the quest for happiness. However, now the union itself and the nature of each person constitute the circumstances. Each seeks happiness, but again each defines it in different terms. For Hilda, a happy life means freedom, security, and influence over Edwin; her goal is based upon a protective selfishness instilled in her by her earlier disappointments and her years of penury at Brighton. For Edwin, a happy life means a superior and comfortable home, good friends, a prosperous business, a fine wife, and authority over all; his goal is based upon a paternalism, milder but not

unlike that of Darius, produced by his youthful disappointments and the whole tenor of his life. The goal of each is determined by his character, which in turn has been shaped by the circumstances depicted in Clayhanger and Hilda Lessways. From the disparity in their goals and characters springs the conflict in These Twain. The conflict is resolved only when Edwin realizes that his happiness lies solely in Hilda and, in consequence, yields to her desires. Through this course of events, Bennett's theme receives its final and fullest articulation.

The temporal arrangement of the sequence is itself an expression of this theme. In one sense the form of the sequence is analogous to Bennett's method of presenting important scenes by first laying a foundation of histories and descriptions and then culminating with crisply detailed action. In this sense, the first two volumes—the histories of Edwin and Hilda—are essential foundations for the third. Expanded to the proportions of the entire sequence, this method is indicated by the titles: Clayhanger, Hilda Lessways, These Twain. This pattern is itself thematically significant: just as two individuals combine in marriage, so do the individual conflicts and aspirations in the separate volumes combine in the third. Thus the form—two separate volumes ultimately culminating in a third—is an almost direct equivalent of the action and theme of the sequence. Bennett, of course, creates this singularly appropriate form in part through his control of fictive time.

Equally important in shaping the form and expressing the theme of the sequence is Bennett's control of point of view. To achieve this goal, Bennett uses the traditional omniscient third-person point of view. The nature of this narrative technique is significant in two important ways.

First, the voice of the implied author (in Professor Booth's terms) appears throughout the sequence. It appears in first-person comments such as these:

They considered themselves the salt of the earth or of that part of the earth. And I have an idea that they were. (C, 147)

Edwin was saddened as by pathos. I believe that as he gazed at the procession wagging away along Wedgwood Street, he saw Sunday schools in a new light. (C, 273)

It appears in the tone of pointedly ironic passages such as this one:

Thus the doddering old fool who had given his youth to Sunday Schools when Sunday Schools were not patronized by princes, archbishops and lord mayors, when Sunday Schools were the scorn of the intelligent, and had sometimes to be held in public houses for lack of better accommodation,—thus was he taken off for a show and a museum curiosity by indulgent and shallow Samaritans who had not even the wit to guess that he had sown what they were reaping. . . . Mr. Shushion's sole crime against society was that he had forgotten to die. (C, 303-304)

It also appears in authorial comments, many of which are extraneous to the primary narrative. Some of these comments contrast the past with the present:

Although paralytic strokes were more prevalent at that period than now, they constituted even then a striking dramatic event. Moreover, they were considered as direct visitations of God. (HL, 16)

In the dusky road, Edwin curtly signalled to the vast ascending steam-car, and it stopped. Those were in the old days, when people did what they liked with the cars, stopping them here and stopping them there, according to their fancy. The era of electricity and fixed stopping-places, and soulless, conscienceless control from London had not set in. (TT, 137)

Other comments examine or criticize the milieu in which the action occurs:

Here was the oligarchy which, behind the appearances of democratic government, effectively managed, directed

and controlled the town. Here was the handful of people who settled between them whether rates should go up or down, and to whom it did not seriously matter whether rates went up or down, provided that the interests of the common people were not too sharply set in antagonism to their own interests. Here were the privileged, who did what they liked on the condition of not offending each other. Here the populace was honestly and cynically and openly regarded as a restless child, to be humoured and to be flattered, but also to be ruled firmly, to be kept in its place, to be ignored when advisable, and to be made to pay. (C, 518)

Although these authorial comments are part of Bennett's effort to build a concrete background and to deepen the significance of his action, they nevertheless clearly signal the presence of the implied author.

Second, Bennett's narrative method exercises an extremely wide privilege, evident in three important ways. First, through this narrative technique, the implied author gives direct analysis of character. For instance, in introducing Mrs. Lessways, the implied author explicitly reveals her character:

Her mother was a creature contented enough. And why not—with a sufficient income, a comfortable home, and fair health? At the end of a day devoted partly to sheer vacuous idleness and partly to the monotonous simple machinery of physical existence—everlasting cookery, everlasting cleanliness, everlasting stitchery—her mother did not with a yearning sigh demand, "Must this sort of thing continue for ever, or will a new era dawn?" Not a bit! Mrs. Lessways went to bed in the placid expectancy of a very similar day on the morrow, and of an interminable succession of such days.

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Mrs. Lessways, who was incapable of sustained thought, and who had completely forgotten and recalled the subject of the cottage-rents several times since the departure of Mrs. Grants, nevertheless at once diagnosed the cause of the trouble; and with her usual precipitancy began to repulse an attack which had not even been opened. Mrs. Lessways was not good at strategy, especially in conflicts with her daughter. She was an ingenuous, hasty thing, and much too candidly human. And not only was she

deficient in practical common sense and most absurdly unable to learn for experience, but she had not even the wit to cover her shortcoming by resorting to the traditional authoritativeness of the mother. Her brief, rare efforts to play the mother were ludicrous. She was too simply honest to acquire stature by standing on her maternal dignity. By a profound instinct she wistfully treated everybody as an equal, as a fellow-creature; even her own daughter. (HL, 5-6; 19-20)

Second, through this narrative method, the implied author exercises the privilege of interior views of the character's thoughts.

Sometimes these views are direct ones:

They were alone together in the house. And all the time Edwin was thinking: "I've never been through anything like this before. Never been through anything like this!" And he recalled for a second the figure of Florence Simcox, the clog-dancer.

And below these images and reflections in his mind was the thought: "I haven't known what life is! I've been asleep. This is life!" (C, 212)

Amid her fright and her joy, and the wonder of her extreme surprise, . . . she calmly reflected, somewhere in her brain: "The door is not locked. Supposing some one were to come in and see us!" And she reflected also, in an ecstasy of relief: "My life will be quite simple now. I shall have nothing to worry about. And I can help him." (HL, 379)

Frequently, interior views are indirect, such as this one:

He wondered how the affair would end? It could not indefinitely continue on its present footing. How indeed would it end? Marriage.... He apologised to himself for the thought.... But just for the sake of argument... supposing ...well, supposing the affair went so far that one day he told her...men did such things, young men! No!.... Besides, she wouldn't.... It was absurd.... No such idea really!... And then the frightful worry there would be with his father, about money and so on.... And the telling of Clara, and of everybody. No! He simply could not imagine himself married, or about to be

married. Marriage might happen to other young men, but not to him. His case was special, somehow.... He shrank from such formidable enterprises. The mere notion of them made him tremble. (C, 357. Bennett's ellipses.)

Often, the views are authorial summaries of a character's thought processes:

Approaching, he saw that the old man was very old. And then memory stirred. He began to surmise that he had met the wizened face before, that he knew something about it. And the face brought up a picture of the shop-door and his father standing beside it, a long time ago. He recalled his last day at school. Yes, of course! This was the old man named Shushions, some sort of an acquaintance of his father's. (C, 299)

Third, through this narrative method, the implied author surrounds the action with explanatory or evaluative comments. Thus, he explains the reasons for a character's behavior:

Any person who might chance to come into the shop would hear. But Darius cared neither for his own dignity nor for that of his son. He was in a passion. The real truth was that this celibate man, who never took alcohol, enjoyed losing his temper; it was his one outlet; he gave himself up almost luxuriously to a passion; he looked forward to it as some men looked forward to brandy. (C, 198)

"I'm afraid I couldn't come tonight, or tomorrow night," he answered with firmness. A statement entirely untrue! He had no engagement; he never did have an engagement. But he was frightened, and his spirit sprang away from the idea, like a fawn at a sudden noise in the brake, and stood still. (C, 213)

Similarly, he explains the significance of events themselves:

Darius ate the sausage with the fork alone. His intelligence had failed to master the original problem presented to it. He ate steadily for a few moments, and then the tears began to roll down his cheek, and he ate no more.

This incident, so simple, so unexpected, and

so dramatic, caused the most acute distress. And its effect was disconcerting in the highest degree. It reminded everyone that what Darius suffered from was softening of the brain. For long he had been a prisoner in the house and garden. For long he had been almost mute. And now just after a visit which usually acted upon him as a tonic, he had begun to feed himself. Little by little he was demonstrating, by his slow declension from it, the wonder of the standard of efficiency maintained by the normal human being. (C, 471-472)

The implied author also explains attitudes and character relationships:

The former and the present mistress of the house kissed with the conventional signs of affection. But the fact that one had succeeded the other seemed to divide them. Hilda was always lying in wait for criticism from Maggie, ready to resent it; Maggie divined this and said never a word. The silence piqued Hilda as much as outspoken criticism would have annoyed her. She could not bear it. (TT, 67)

Finally, he sometimes injects direct evaluative comments about characters and their actions:

Sometimes this profound infelicity of hers changed its hues for an instant, and lo! it was bliss that she bathed in. A phenomenon which disconcerted her! She did not know that she had the most precious of all faculties, the power to feel intensely. (HL, 9-10)

In brief, then, Bennett's point of view is marked by the presence of the implied author (apparent in the first-person remarks, ironic tone, and direct authorial comments) and by the wide privilege exercised (apparent in the implied author's direct analysis of character, interior views, and explanatory or evaluative comments).

Despite the wide privilege which Bennett exercises, however, he does impose one major and significant limitation upon his point of view: in Clayhanger, he never reveals the thoughts of Hilda, nor does he in Hilda Lessways ever enter the thoughts of Edwin. All other characters are

subject to frequent authorial exposition of thought⁴¹; nevertheless, within the first two volumes, Bennett focuses primarily upon their respective protagonists. Consequently, throughout these two volumes, in scenes which present both Hilda and Edwin, Bennett reveals the thoughts only of the protagonist. For instance, in the dual scene previously quoted (see page 221 above), Clayhanger exposes only Edwin's thoughts as Hilda lingers in the shop doorway; similarly, Hilda Lessways offers only Hilda's thoughts. One obvious effect of this limitation of point of view is that the protagonist is always the primary focus of the reader's attention. In These Twain, of course, Bennett necessarily dispenses with this limitation and reveals the thoughts of both Hilda and Edwin.

One quite important effect stems from this narrative method: through it, Bennett provides the reliable commentary which establishes the norms of the sequence and validates his theme. With varying degrees of intensity, he employs an ironic tone throughout the sequence; with this irony he creates a discrepancy between an event or character and the significance which the implied author attaches to it. For instance, this brief ironic vignette illumines Auntie Hamps, who, with a great flourish, has just given Bertie Benbow a half-sovereign for his birthday:

Auntie Hamps sat like an antique goddess, bland, superb, morally immense. And even her dirty and broken finger-nails detracted naught from her grandiosity. She might feed servants on drippings, but when the proper moment came she could fling half-sovereigns about with anybody. (II, 114)

The simile of Auntie Hamps as a grandiose "antique goddess" and the slightly vulgar phrase "fling half-sovereigns about with anybody," with its implications of ostentatious display, markedly contrast with the stipulated

details of her untidiness ("dirty and broken finger-nails") and her private miserliness (her servants must eat "drippings"). A more important example is the previously quoted passage about old Mr. Shushions (page 224 above). In it, the implied author presents the public's view of Mr. Shushions as "the doddering old fool"; he then implies the man's actual value: "[he] had given his youth to Sunday Schools when Sunday Schools were not patronized by princes, archbishops, and lord mayors, when Sunday Schools were the scorn of the intelligent. . . ." The "indulgent and shallow Samaritans" who treat the old man as "a show and museum curiosity" reveal that they lack "the wit to guess that he had sown what they were reaping." The author then summarizes the scene in the biting ironic line, "Mr. Shushions' sole crime against society was that he had forgotten to die." Thus, by implying Mr. Shushions' real value, by stipulating the crowd's lack of wit, and by suddenly contrasting the idea of old age's being a crime against society with the universal idea of reverence for Life, Bennett guides the reader toward a proper evaluation of the event.

Equally important in establishing the evaluative norms is the fact that Bennett provides the reader with information denied to the characters. Perhaps the most important example of this dramatic irony is that of Darius' youth. In twelve pages (C, 31-43), the narrator tells of the seven-year old Darius' sufferings in a pottery works and in the Bastille, the county workhouse. However, Edwin himself is ignorant of his father's early history.

Darius had never spoken to a soul of his night in the Bastille. All his infancy was his own fearful secret. His life, seen whole, had been a miracle. But none knew that except himself and Mr. Shushions. Assuredly Edwin never even faintly suspected it. (C, 43)

Thus, the reader possesses important information unknown to the principal character. Consequently, when Edwin wishes to abandon printing to become an architect, the reader can better understand Darius' wrath:

Darius had a painful intense vision of that miracle, his own career. Edwin's grand misfortune was that he was blind to the miracle. Edwin had never seen the little boy in the Bastile. But Darius saw him always, the infant who had begun life at a rope's-end. (C, 169)

Similarly, because of his privileged information, the reader can understand what Edwin cannot--Darius' reaction to Mr. Shushions' death:

Four days previously Edwin and Maggie had seen their father considerably agitated by an item of gossip, casually received, to which it seemed to them he attached an excessive importance. Namely, that old Shushions, having been found starving and destitute by the authorities appointed to deal with such matters, had been taken to the workhouse and was dying there. Darius had heard the news as though it had been a message brought on horseback in a melodrama. "The Bastile!" he exclaimed in a whisper, and had left the house on the instant. Edwin . . . was disposed to regard the case of Mr. Shushions philosophically. Of course it was a pity that Mr. Shushions should be in the workhouse; but after all, from what Edwin remembered and could surmise, the workhouse would be very much the same as any other house to that senile mentality. Thus Edwin had sagely argued, and Maggie had agreed with him. But to them the workhouse was absolutely nothing but a name. They were no more afraid of the workhouse than of the Russian secret police; and of their father's early history they knew naught.

And Edwin . . . sedately pitied his father for looking ridiculous and grotesque. . . . What he did not suspect was the existence of circumstances which made the death of Mr. Shushions in the workhouse the most distressing tragedy that could by any possibility have happened to Darius Clayhanger. (C, 403-404)

Because he possesses this privileged information, the reader is better able to evaluate the behavior of both Edwin and Darius. Thus, by providing such information, Bennett helps establish the evaluative

norms of the sequence.

The primary method by which Bennett establishes the evaluative norms, however, is the implied author's presence and comments. These comments may be direct ones in which the author clearly stipulates a value and leads the reader to accept it as his own:

Sometimes this profound infelicity of hers changed its hues for an instant, and lo! it was bliss that she bathed in. A phenomenon which disconcerted her! She did not know that she had the most precious of all faculties, the power to feel intensely. (HL, 9-10)

However, the implied author also employs the rhetoric of his presence in less obvious ways. The following scene illustrates this fact; on the evening of Edwin and Hilda's first At Home, Auntie Hamps unexpectedly brings along Mr. Peartree, the district Missions Superintendent. Edwin, who has never liked him, is disconcerted when Mr. Peartree asks him to become the Chapel Funds treasurer; however, he and Hilda immediately refuse. To salvage something from her defeat, Auntie Hamps proposes that the Benbows take over the Clayhangers' church pew. Instead of refusing, as Auntie Hamps half expects, Hilda instantly agrees:

"We shall be only too pleased for Albert to take over the pew," said Hilda.

"But have you chosen another pew?" Mrs. Hamps looked at Edwin. . . .

"Now, Auntie," the tingling woman warned Auntie Hamps as one powerful individuality may warn another, "don't worry about us. You know we're not great chapel-goers."

She spoke the astounding words gaily, but firmly. She could be firm, and even harsh, in her triumphant happiness. Edwin knew that she detested Auntie Hamps. Auntie Hamps no doubt also knew it. In their mutual smilings, so affable, so hearty, so appreciative, apparently so impulsive, the hostility between them gleamed mysteriously like lightning in sunlight.

"Mrs. Edwin's family were Church of England," said Auntie Hamps, in the direction of Mr. Peartree. "Nor great church-goers, either," Hilda finished cheerfully.

No woman had ever made such outrageous remarks in the Five Towns before. A quarter of a century ago a man might have said as much, without suffering in esteem—might indeed have earned a certain intellectual prestige by the declaration; but it was otherwise with a woman. Both Mrs. Hamps and the minister thought that Hilda was not going the right way to live down her dubious past. Even Edwin in his pride was flurried. Great matters, however, had been accomplished. Not only had the attack of Auntie Hamps and Mr. Peartree been defeated, but the defence had become an onslaught. Not only was he not the treasurer of the District Additional Chapel Funds, but he had practically ceased to be a member of the congregation. He was free with a freedom which he had never had the audacity to hope for. It was incredible! Yet there it was! A word said, bravely, in a particular tone,—and a new epoch was begun. The pity was that he had not done it all himself. Hilda's courage had surpassed his own. Women were astounding. They were disconcerting too. His manly independence was ever so little wounded by Hilda's boldness in initiative on their joint behalf.

"Do come and take something, Auntie," said Hilda, with the most winning, the most loving inflection. (TT, 44-45)

Throughout the scene, the narrator is unobtrusively present, but nevertheless exercising a wide privilege. He enters the thoughts of the characters at will; he shows Auntie Hamps and the minister's reactions; then shifting to Edwin's thoughts, he gives Edwin's reactions, his sense of freedom but also his feeling of injury to his "manly independence." Moreover, from his perspective of the present, he explicitly evaluates the significance of Hilda's remarks for the reader: "A quarter of a century ago a man might have said as much, without suffering in esteem . . . ; but it was otherwise with a woman." He injects explicit adjectival or adverbial modifiers which carry further evaluations: "the tingling

woman," "astounding words," "gaily but firmly," "triumphant happiness," "great matters," "a word said, bravely." He succinctly reveals the sugar-coated hostility between Hilda and Auntie Hamps; moreover, he allows the action to support this explicit commentary, with telling irony: "'Do come and take something, Auntie,' said Hilda, with the most winning, the most loving inflection." More important, the narrator persuades the reader to accept his evaluation of the scene: having previously shown Auntie Hamps' characteristic meddlesomeness and hypocrisy and Mr. Peartree's narrowness of mind, the narrator then shows their judgment of Hilda's action and her whole past: "Both Mrs. Hamps and the minister thought that Hilda was not going the right way to live down her dubious past." To whatever extent the reader has developed antipathies toward them, to that extent will he probably accept Hilda's "outrageous" action as correct. The narrator reinforces this conclusion with an explicit evaluation of Hilda's action: "Great matters . . . had been accomplished." The narrator further intensifies this effect by revealing Edwin's sense of freedom and elation; notably, however, this revelation is ambiguously indirect, conveying something of both Edwin's thought processes and the narrator's own judgment. Through these devices --all dependent upon the nature of the point of view--Bennett establishes the norms by which the reader responds to the scene and characters.

In addition to establishing the evaluative norms of the sequence, Bennett's point of view also helps shape its form and express its theme. Through the omniscience of the narrator, Bennett provides necessary transitional links among the time spheres of the sequence. For instance, having finished Clayhanger, the reader knows that Edwin and Hilda are reunited

in 1892. However, Hilda Lessways, which ends in 1882, intervenes in the chronological reading experience. Consequently, in These Twain, the implied author supplies information which both reminds the reader of what occurred in Clayhanger and bridges the interim from February, 1892, when the first volume ends, to August, when the last volume begins:

Edwin Clayhanger, though very young in marriage, considered that he was getting on in years as a householder. His age was thirty-six. He had been married only a few months, under peculiar circumstances which rendered him self-conscious, and on an evening of August 1892, as he stood in the hall of his house awaiting the commencement of a postponed and unusual At Home, he felt absurdly nervous. (II, 6)

While describing the house, the narrator also associates certain rooms in it with the action which occurred in Clayhanger:

In the drawing-room, with its new orange-coloured gas-globes that gilded everything beneath them, Edwin's father used to sit on Sunday evenings, alone. And one Sunday evening, when Edwin, entering, had first mentioned to his father a woman's name, his father had most terribly humiliated him. But now it seemed as if some other youth, and not Edwin, had been humiliated, so completely was the wound healed. . . . And in the drawing-room too he had finally betrothed himself to Hilda. That by comparison was only yesterday; yet it was historical and distant. He was wearing his dressing-gown, being convalescent from influenza; he could distinctly recall the feel of his dressing-gown; and Hilda came in--over her face was a veil.... (II, 9-10. Bennett's unspaced ellipses.)

Thus, the wide privilege of Bennett's point of view enables him to reinforce the formal continuity of the sequence.

Similarly, his privileged point of view enables Bennett to stress certain thematic elements. For instance, her desire for an exciting life leads Hilda to become involved first with Cannon and then with Edwin. Consequently, in the authorial comments with which he surrounds the action,

the implied author repeatedly emphasizes Hilda's idealistic responses to her experiences: the word romance runs like a leitmotiv throughout Hilda Lessways. After her first action on her own, during which she meets Cannon, Hilda gains a new perspective: "'I was there!' she said. 'He is still there.' The whole town, the whole future, seemed to be drenched now in romance." (37) Her new relationship with Cannon is thrilling: "She lived to the utmost in every moment. The recondite romance of existence was not hidden from her. The sudden creation--her creation--of the link with Mr. Cannon seemed to her surpassingly strange and romantic." (66) Even shorthand now becomes an adventure: "In their mysterious strokes and curves and dots she saw romance, and the key of the future; she saw the philosopher's stone." (79-80) Her work on Cannon's newspaper seems "romantic and beautiful." (157) After her mother's death, Hilda is lifted from her depression by a visit from Cannon: "Beneath George Cannon's eyes, she actually perceived again that romantic quality of existence which had always so powerfully presented itself to her in the past." (191) While visiting Janet in Bursley, she first sees Edwin: "His face had made in those few thrilling seconds a deep impression on Hilda. . . . It presented itself to her, in some mysterious way, as a romantic visage. . . ." (214) Her first talk with Edwin greatly stimulates her: "All her being vibrated to the mysterious and beautiful romance of existence." (254) Returning to London, she is enchanted by Cannon's plans to open a Brighton boarding-house: "The mere tone in which he mentioned his enterprise seemed . . . to dignify hotels, and even boarding-houses; to give romance to the perfectly unromantic business of lodging and catering!" (298-299) On her way to Brighton with Miss

Gailey, she is still enchanted: "The poignant romance of existence enveloped her in its beautiful veils." (306) Though soon disenchanted by drab daily routines, she yet remains subject to Cannon's charm: "She saw glimpses, beautiful and compensatory, of the romantic quality of common life." (372) When Cannon proposes, she accepts, but disillusionment soon comes: "She no longer saw her husband as a romantic and baffling figure; she had explored and chartered his soul, and not all his excellences could atone for his earthliness." (419) After Cannon leaves her, she again visits Janet and again sees Edwin: "She regarded . . . his face with a keen sense of pleasure. It was romantic, melancholy, wistful, enigmatic—and, above all, honest." (470) At this point, life again seems beautiful to her. When Edwin proposes, she feels "herself to be steeped in the romance of an adventure." (503) But this joy, too, is short-lived; responsible for an invalid, penniless, and pregnant, she is bitterly disillusioned about life:

She began to perceive what life really was, and the immense importance of hazard therein. Nevertheless, without frailty, without defection, what could chance have done? She began to perceive that this that she was living through was life. She bit her lips. Grief! Shame! Disillusion! Hardship! Peril! Catastrophe! Exile! Above all, exile!
(532-533)

Hilda's idealistic misconceptions about life lead her to eventual disillusionment and to the selfishness she demonstrates in her marriage with Edwin—that selfishness which generates the conflicts of These Twain and which necessitates Edwin's compromise. Thus, by using a privileged point of view to emphasize Hilda's "romantic" misconceptions, Bennett effectively stresses the thematic development of the sequence.

The limitation of the point of view in the first two volumes is

also instrumental in shaping the form and expressing the theme. Indeed, one might say that the limited focus creates the formal pattern: not revealing Hilda's thoughts in Clayhanger necessitates--if the thematic equation is to be complete--the revelations of Hilda Lessways. In the first volume, Edwin's dominant impression of Hilda is her "mysteriousness":

Her finest quality was her mystery. Even now, as he gazed at her comfortably, she baffled him; all her exquisite little movements and intonations baffled him. (C, 350-351)

It was her mysteriousness that agitated him, and her absence rendered him unhappy in his triumph. (C, 374)

She had been defeated, yet he was baffled by her. She was a mystery within folds of mysteries. (C. 611)

This mystery is also created for the reader by the limitation of point of view: the implied author never reveals Hilda's thoughts, as he does those of others. Moreover, he does not reveal why Hilda jilted Edwin and married Cannon: in Clayhanger the reader learns no more about Hilda's motives than does Edwin. Thus, in order to explain this mystery and to give the reader the thematically necessary understanding of her, Bennett provides the second volume, devoted to Hilda. Hence, the limitation of point of view creates the mystery which the form unfolds.

Furthermore, the limitation of point of view effectively conveys Bennett's principal theme. In reading the first two volumes, the reader gains a double view of the two protagonists: he sees Edwin in a detailed narrative and sees Hilda through Edwin's eyes; he then views Hilda in detail and Edwin through Hilda's eyes. Consequently, the reader knows much that the characters do not. For instance, Edwin first sees Hilda while she is turning the pages for two Orgreave children playing a Beethoven piano piece, and he assumes that she is a proficient musician;

this evidence of her culture is part of her charm for him. In Hilda Lessways, however, the reader learns that Edwin is mistaken:

Hilda listened with pleasure and with exaltation to the scherzo. Beyond a little part-singing at school, she had no practical acquaintance with music; there had never been a piano at home. (HL, 223)

She had stationed herself behind the grand piano, on the plea of turning over the pages for the musicians (though it was only with great uncertainty, and in peril of missing the exact instant for turning, that she followed the music on the page) (HL, 233)

In the extensively detailed first two volumes, the reader therefore learns what each character really is and what each believes the other to be. In the sequence, this discrepancy between reality and belief generates the thematic conflicts and necessitates the compromises. Thus, in broad terms, the limitation of point of view and the formal pattern which it creates present a concrete situation by means of which the reader can readily understand both the shaping forces of circumstances and the need for compromise.

In the final volume, Bennett uses a point of view of almost total omniscience: in addition to the other means of privilege exercised, he now reveals the thoughts of both Hilda and Edwin concurrently. Formally, the volume is the capstone of the sequence: the first two volumes reveal single individuals and employ a limited point of view which distinctly separates them; the last volume shows these individuals united and employs a dual focus point of view. Thus, in one sense, the point of view is the technical analogue of the marriage itself. From this variation of point of view comes the formal pattern of the sequence.

The dual point of view also functions thematically. Through the

dual focus, Bennett reveals how the characters--shaped by the circumstances shown in the preceding volumes--now react to the new circumstances of marriage and the need for a realistic understanding of each other. Four major problems endanger the Clayhanger union: the question of the new lithographic plant, with the complication of the house purchase; the Cannon affair, with the disputed visit to Dartmoor Prison; Hilda's visit to London, with Edwin's miserable evening at Auntie Hamps'; and the controversy over Ladderedge Hall. In each of these important events and in numerous secondary incidents, the point of view fully reveals both Hilda and Edwin's characteristic thought and behavior. Hilda, shaped by her disillusionments and years of penury in Brighton, is fixed in a selfish search for security; she consistently misunderstands both Edwin's motives and her own; therefore, she never really perceives the important discrepancy and the need for compromise. Because the point of view makes him privy to all of her thoughts and motives, the reader can, however, understand all of this. Edwin, after initially misunderstanding Hilda, does eventually recognize both his mistaken beliefs and the real nature of Hilda; with this insight, he is thus able to compromise, in order to assure their happiness. This thematically significant process of change is presented primarily through the action of the story itself; however, the point of view enables the author to reveal the processes of the character's thoughts. For instance, Edwin's decision not to abandon his marriage but to compromise with Hilda (the resolution of the inclusive structure) is presented in a thirteen page exposition of Edwin's thoughts as he walks through the streets of Bursley (II, 511-524). Again, because the point of view reveals the slow growth of Edwin's understanding and

the sincerity of his decision, the reader can understand the importance of his compromise. Thus, since it enables the reader to know both characters' thoughts and thus better evaluate the significance of the events, the point of view is thematically functional.

In summary, the Clayhanger sequence consists of three volumes which constitute a single unified work expressing a single theme: the circumstances of life sometimes shape a person contrary to his wishes; consequently, such a person can achieve happiness only through a compromise between circumstances and his wishes. The synchronous first two volumes and the chronologically subsequent third volume enable Bennett both to show the evolution of the protagonists' characters and the circumstances which shaped them and then to show these protagonists' reactions under the new circumstances of marriage; moreover, the third person point of view—selectively limited in the first two volumes but completely omniscient in the final one—enables Bennett not only to isolate the separate identities of his two major characters, but also to establish the evaluative norms and to reveal the actions and thought processes which validate his theme. Thus, Bennett's handling of fictive time and point of view determines the form of his sequence novel.

Cary's First Trilogy

Joyce Cary's First Trilogy represents the fourth major pattern of the sequence novel: each volume is narrated in the first person by a different individual; although the moment of narration throughout the sequence is chronologically progressive, the substance being narrated in essence is temporally synchronous.

In the sequence, three characters tell their own stories: Sara Monday in Herself Surprised, Thomas Wilcher in To Be A Pilgrim, and Gulley Jimson in The Horse's Mouth.⁴² From their narratives emerges Cary's general theme: each individual creates his own "world" according to his own nature and, if faithful to his nature, achieves triumph or suffers tragedy according to the relationship of that "world" with the rest of society.

Cary has remarked that an artist must possess a general view of life—a world view—before he can create: "All writers have, and must have, to compose any kind of story, some picture of the world, and of what is right and wrong in that world."⁴³ From this world view come the significant ideas which his art will communicate. Moreover, Cary maintains, "Without some unifying idea, it is impossible for a book to have a form."⁴⁴ Therefore, in order best to understand the formal structure of Cary's sequence and to see how it articulates his theme, one must understand something of Cary's epistemology and creative methods.

Cary's basic epistemological premise is that each individual is isolated within himself: "We are almost entirely cut off from each other in mind, entirely independent in thought, and so we have to learn everything for ourselves."⁴⁵ Consequently, each individual creates his own personal reality through his imagination:

Every man and woman begins from childhood to create for himself a world to which, as creator, he is deeply attached. Each of these worlds is highly complex and extensive. One man, for instance, does not create for himself only a home, a business, a family, but a religion, a political idea, a nation, a world idea. He creates them in his imagination, and lives in them.⁴⁶

As a result of this isolation inherent in the human condition, each

individual reality is personal and unique.⁴⁷ However, an objective reality external to man's personal reality does exist; it consists of "the laws of fact and feeling,"⁴⁸ that is, the laws of physical nature-- "the material consistencies"⁴⁹--and the constants of fundamental human nature.⁵⁰ Personal reality must to some extent agree with this objective reality or else the individual suffers from the discrepancy. Thus, the boy who imagines that he can fly and jumps from a roof suddenly discovers the law of gravity, a constant of physical nature;⁵¹ similarly, demagogues, such as Hitler, who do not take into account "that reality which stands . . . as a permanent character of nature, both in men and things," create for themselves destructive and impossible worlds.⁵² Consequently, a "gap" exists in man "between his individual mind seeking to know a truth, and the universal consistencies of nature human and material as recorded by his sensibilities."⁵³

That which produces this "gap," however, also produces the means to bridge it, for man's isolation creates man's freedom:

It is easy to see that if we were not so cut off from each other, if we were parts of a social commune, like ants or bees, we should not be free agents. Freedom, independency of mind, involves solitude in thought.

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It is the independent reason of man in which his individuality, his freedom, resides.⁵⁴

This freedom consists most importantly of man's ability to make choices, decisions, or judgments in three vital areas: moral, rational, and intuitive. In the first area, a "moral real" exists: it consists of "fundamental human nature" and constant standards of human behavior.⁵⁵ Thus, moral freedom is man's freedom to attain or fulfill his own nature, for men are "free moral agents deciding their own actions in a world of

incessent vicissitude."⁵⁶ In the second area, reason is the exercise of the intellect in contact with the "laws of fact and feeling"; hence, rational freedom is man's ability to 'accept new facts and truths about both the objective reality and his personal reality.⁵⁷ In the third area, intuition is "discovery" or "a subconscious recognition of the real, that takes place within a common personality."⁵⁸ Intuitive freedom is therefore part of the "fixed character" of man, the ability to perceive or recognize the real. It is also the foundation of both rational and moral freedom, for one must perceive in order to accept or to attain the real.⁵⁹ Thus, this tripartite yet united freedom--produced by the very fact of man's isolation--can bridge the "gap" between personal and objective realities.

The agency which, working freely, allows individuals thus to become attuned with reality is the creative imagination:

[Man] is faced all the time with unique complex problems. To sum them up for action is an act of creative imagination. He fits the different elements together in a coherent whole, and invents a rational act to deal with it.⁶⁰

Each man, in "a world of free responsible action,"⁶¹ bears the responsibility for his own choices and actions. Yet each man imaginatively creates his own personal world in accordance with his own individual nature. Therefore, the successful person exercises his freedom--intuitive, moral, and rational--in order to stay true to his own nature. Through intuitive freedom, he perceives, perhaps subconsciously, the reality of his own nature. Through moral freedom, he determines to attain it; personal morality thus becomes a question of how a man lives in accordance with his own nature.⁶² Through rational freedom, he

formulates choices or actions to express it. Through his creative imagination, he creates a "world" which fulfills his nature.⁶³ Consequently, the one primary constant of human society is man's "incessantly striving towards a personal achievement in a world which is essentially free and personal."⁶⁴

From this fact emerges the conflict between, on the one hand, the individual seeking to achieve his own "world" and thus to fulfill his own nature, and on the other, society, a changing composite of an infinite number of wills. This conflict, central to virtually all of Cary's novels, is the basic conflict in the First Trilogy, as Cary clearly indicates in his discussion of the sequence:

The centre of the plan was character; the characters of my three leading persons in relation to, or in conflict with other characters and the character of their times; (and beyond that, of course, with "final" character. I mean the shape of things and feelings which are "given," and which perhaps have to be so or nothing would exist at all)--the books had to be soaked in character.⁶⁵

In addition to indicating the central conflict of the sequence, this comment by Cary also implies that his creative method begins with character. Elsewhere, Cary has remarked that he begins with a conception (or intuition) of a character, creates a scene illustrating it, and then develops a plot and form to convey his meaning.⁶⁶ Cary has most succinctly summarized this process in "The Way a Novel Gets Written":

I begin . . . not with an idea for a book, but with a character in a situation. Then if both seem to me useful and significant, I write a few pages to show that character in that situation.

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Thus a finished book of mine starts usually perhaps ten years before as a character sketch and a bit of description; it goes on to an incident or so, it gathers subsidiary characters, and then perhaps I grow interested

in it, and set out to give it form as a book. I sketch a plan; I may write the end, the middle, and the beginning, and very often in this order. That is, I decide how and where the book shall end, which is just as important to a book as a play; and then I ask myself where are the most difficult turns in the book. Then I may write one of these difficult passages to see if it is viable. And if, as often happens, it does not work, I may stop there. But if it does work, then I may devise a beginning and finish the book.⁶⁷

This comment reveals two quite significant aspects of Cary's creative method. First, situations are primarily designed to reveal character and, through character, the meaning or theme of the work. Elsewhere Cary has amplified this point:

It is a very common experience of the writer to discover that his content cannot be given form in words. He is obliged to sacrifice something, he is obliged almost always to sacrifice immediacy; that is to say, a strong and intense experience requires so many words for its expression that it becomes dilute. In that case, of course, the writer must attempt to convey it in action by inventing a situation, a scene between characters, which will convey to the reader the full impact of his intuition.⁶⁸

Thus, in Cary's fiction, plot is subordinate to character. Indeed, Cary has said, "A plot is the last thing I think about, and it is never fixed until the story is finished. I may make fundamental changes of plot in my last draft."⁶⁹ Second, in constructing his "plan," Cary concentrates upon important "turns." This term implies a shift in the direction of the action. Since Cary focuses upon his characters so intently, the "turn" would most probably be the main character's choice or decision in a significant situation. Indeed, Cary describes such an instance in his Prisoner of Grace: Nina's decision to remain with Nimmo is an important determinant in the plot;⁷⁰ Cary has remarked that this was the first scene finished, the scene which showed him that the book could

be written.⁷¹ It was important, he has said, because it recorded for him "an experience fundamental to the book's meaning."⁷² He has added, "It is interesting to see how often novelists do, early in a book, give a scene which fixes some fundamental point of experience."⁷³ In brief, then, Cary's comments on his creative method show that he is primarily concerned with revealing the essence of his characters in crucial situations.

From these characters and the crucial situations emerges the meaning of the work, and for Cary the meaning is always a matter of morality:

A novelist creates a world of action and therefore he has to deal with motive, with morality. All novels are concerned from first to last with morality.

. . . That is to say, the novelist addresses his meaning finally to the moral judgment. His whole apparatus of characters, plot, and description is designed to give knowledge of a world, his world, in which men, as he understands them, work out their destiny as moral beings.⁷⁴

For Cary, of course, morality means not just the simple pieties of orthodox religion but the way men live in accordance with their own nature--how they "work out their destiny as moral beings."

If one examines Cary's epistemology, his central conflict, and his creative method, the conclusion seems clear: Cary creates narratives in which the moral nature of the character and his efforts to fulfill his nature conflict with society; the narrative's structure is likely to be episodic, with situations which reveal character and "turns" which demonstrate the character's exercise of decision, according to his efforts to create his own "world" and thus fulfill his own nature.

A brief analysis of the novels in the First Trilogy

reveal such to be the case. The first volume, Herself Surprised, presents Sara Monday's moral nature in conflict with the conventional morality of society.

This narrative is designed to reveal the essence of her character as Sara creates her personal "world" and fulfills her nature. In discussing Sara, Cary has called her a "nest-maker" and has remarked that "her morals [are] the elementary morals of a primitive woman, of nature herself, which do not change."⁷⁵ Sara's efforts to fulfill this moral nature motivate her actions, but they also conflict with society's conventional laws and moralities. From this disparity stems most of the dramatic tension of the novel.

The scene which both introduces the essential Sara and defines the conflict is one which Sara remembers from her honeymoon in Paris:

I remember the first time I saw myself in my true body. It was on my honeymoon, in Paris, in a grand shop, the grandest I had ever seen. It had big mirrors in the showroom, between the pillars, like glass doors, and I was walking to the stairs in my new hat as big as an Easter cake, and feeling the swish of my new silk petticoats and the squeeze of my new French stays. I seemed to be looking into the next saloon, and I thought: Look at that fat, common trollop of a girl with a snub nose and the shiny cheeks, jumping out of her skin to be in a Paris hat. Wouldn't you bet she was out from Dartmouth fair last week?

You can almost smell the cider on her lips. What a shame to expose herself like that--and her nation--to these foreigners.

But in the same flash I saw that it was me. It stopped me dead with the blow. I knew I was not a beauty, but till that hour I had not seen myself with the world's eye. I had made a love of my nose, snub and broad though it was, and my eyes which were nothing but brown. Are not any eyes wonderful if you will look at them alone and forget the rest? I had praised the shining of my hair and even the shape of my big hands and every bit of me at one time or another. So I had made a belle of myself when I was nothing, as they used to say at home, but maiden meat. My husband Matthew saw me stop and said: "What is it, love, is it the hat? I thought perhaps it was a bit bright for your complexion.

I was going to say, "Yes, indeed," but instead the words popped out: "No, it's not the hat--it's the glass. I never saw one so big." So I kept the hat, and if people looked at me I thought: If I am a body then it can't be helped, for I can't help myself.

So would I think in those days; whenever I wanted to please myself; even against my husband. Yet I meant to be as good as my vows and better. For I could not but wonder that he, a gentleman and rich, had taken me, an ordinary country girl, neither plain nor pretty, with none of the advantages he might have expected. (HS, 2-3)

From this scene comes an initial understanding of the essential Sara. She speaks in a simple, familiar style, sprinkled with country clichés and homely images (a hat "as big as an Easter cake"). She loves sensual pleasures, such as the swish of silk petticoats and the squeeze of new stays. She speaks impulsively ("the words popped out") and behaves instinctively. Although she is aware of the discrepancy between her inclinations and her intentions, she rationalizes--albeit not intellectually--in order to have her own way: ". . . I can't help myself." As introduced here, Sara is a young woman of flesh and instinct, surprised by what she is but not altogether displeased either, ready to be as good as her vows and better but eager to have her own way, to make her "nest," to create her "world."

The scene defines the thematic conflict as well. Obvious is the conflict of social classes inherent in the marriage of a rich gentleman to "an ordinary country girl." Even Sara shows recognition of the disparity, both in her statement of wonder at the marriage and in her glimpse in the mirror of a "fat, common trollop of a girl" who shamefully exposes herself--"and her nation"--before foreigners. Less obvious is the primary conflict. Even after Sara recognizes the "fat, common trollop" as herself, she still behaves according to her nature: she keeps the hat and defensively rationalizes her behavior. Though she wishes to keep her marriage vows, thus does she behave whenever she wishes to please herself, "even against [her] husband." Here appears the major conflict between, on the one hand, the implied norms of socially accepted behavior and morality and, on the other, Sara's instinctive willfulness toward gaining her own ends and thus creating her own "world," her "nest."

After this introduction and definition scene, the novel traces Sara's success, in regard to her own moral nature, and her decline, in terms of society's moral norms. Structurally the narrative divides into three major parts, each being Sara's relationship with a man—her marriage to Matthew, her "marriage" to Gulley, and her "arrangement" with Wilcher. Each relationship further defines the essential Sara and, as she adheres to her own moral real, moves her further and further beyond the bounds of conventional morality. Sara becomes involved in each situation by a characteristically impulsive and instinctive decision; her characteristic behavior complicates and terminates each situation.

The complication, or rising action, of the novel is Sara's marriage to Matthew. Sara begins this relationship when she impulsively accepts his proposal:

He kept asking me every day; and one day, when he asked me if I could not like him enough, though I meant to say no, yet the words came out of my mouth that I would try.

I don't know what was in my mind, for though in our parts girls did sometimes try a marriage with a man and marry him after, I can't have thought that. I wouldn't have thought it with my religion, and I know, too, that Mr. Matt wanted a marriage at once.

All that evening I was surprised at myself. (10)

She thus suddenly finds herself elevated from a servant to the mistress of the household: "In one week from that idle word my whole state was changed as much as if I had been made over into another woman" (10).

Shortly after her marriage, a visit from Rozzie endangers her new status, for Rozzie's tactless chatter and gaudy clothing outrage Bradnall's class consciousness. When Sara dresses as Rozzie does, she defends her willfulness:

Poor Matt did once try to make me wear something more ladylike, but I pretended that I did not know what he meant. "I like a little color," I said. But I knew quite well that I was making an exhibition of myself and that everyone was saying: "There goes the girl poor Monday married—she was a cook and doesn't she look like it!" (15)

As the years pass, Sara grows involved with her home, her four children, and her efforts to bring Matthew out into public prominence. She captivates Hickson and persuades him to help her, even though he takes liberties with her:

I may reproach myself for being too free with Mr. Hickson, over so many years; allowing him so much that I can't believe the eyes of my memory, or its feelings; yet he did me great services, and was a good close friend. (38)

When Hickson persuades the Mondays to accommodate Gulley Jimson, Sara immediately likes the shabby artist: "I thought: You're not one to care what the world thinks, and so I warmed to him at first" (43). Even though they quarrel over the grotesque portrait of Matthew, Sara continues to visit the Jimsons at the inn. Though surprised at herself, she even sits for Gulley semi-nude:

I could not believe it was myself, sitting there, half naked, but there was my dear Nina in the room, as calm as you please, sewing a shift; and Jimson painting and humming and looking at me as coldly as if I had been a statue.

It seemed to me then that I had been a fool to be so prim before and yet I wondered at myself. I could not tell whether I had done a religious thing or a bad one. When I went home again, I was in wonder and dismay all the evening. I thought: What will I do next?—there seems to be nothing I wouldn't do. (67)

When Matthew discovers her visits, he furiously accuses her of adultery with Hickson, Jimson, and others. Although his charge is not true, Sara sees herself with "the world's eye" and says only, "I can't trust myself. I never meant to deceive you." To placate him, she even confesses to his accusations (74). Though Matthew eventually forgives her, he retires from business and withdraws into himself. Thus, Sara's impulsive behavior ruins her marriage, as she recognizes: "Now I know that it was a bad kind of peace and that it brought our downfall. Not a great scandal or the loss of my home and Matt, as I had feared, but the ruin of the whole . . ." (74).

The first crisis is Sara's relationship with Gulley. Even before Matthew's death, Gulley returns to Bradnall. Sara enjoys his good spirits and often entertains him in the kitchen, even though her daughters tell her it is making a scandal. When Matthew does die,

Gulley insists that she marry him. Though Sara does not wish to encourage him, her nest-making instinct emerges:

His coat sleeve was ripped at the shoulder, and I saw that it would be out tomorrow. But I wasn't going to say a word about it, for I didn't want to show my interest in him, now that Matt was dead and I was a real widow, without natural protection.

Talk away, I thought, but I won't ask you to tea. I'll give you no encouragement. But he went on talking about his great chance and the hole in his coat kept catching my eye until I said to him as coldly as a stranger: "Excuse me, but your coat seam is ripped."

"Oh, yes," he said, "it's been like that a long time," and he started again on his wall and his travels. So I said to myself, if you will ruin a good coat, you will, and nothing can stop you. Wives or coats, you're a born waster. But the coat kept on nagging at me. It was opening its mouth like a baby crying to be taken up and at last I could not bear it, and I said: "Mr. Jimson, for poor Nina's sake, let me sew up your coat." (91)

After her plans to set up a boarding-house with Rozzie fail, Sara is extremely unhappy. When Gulley badgers her to marry him, Sara, rather to her own surprise, accepts: "At the end of a week we were engaged. And yet I could not say I wanted it, but that it had come upon me" (107).

A few days later on the beach, Sara yields to Gulley's impassioned advances:

I love the heat and lying in the sun and I know it makes me lazy and careless so I don't care what happens. So that my mind was laughing at little Jimson when he held my hand and told me he could make me so rich and give me furs and jewels; yet my flesh delighted in his kindly thoughts. So it grew sleepy and I forgot myself and he had his way, yet not in luxury, but kindness, and God forgive me, it was only when I came to myself, cooling in the shadow, that I asked what I had done. (109-110)

Thereafter, her resistance completely crumbles:

But though I jumped out of the bed the next night when he came in to me, I thought it was not worth while to keep what little decency was left me, and to deny him what he thought so much of. So I got back again to him, as sad and mild as any poor girl that has no right to her own flesh and

let him do as he pleased.

So it was every night. I even made it seem welcome to please the man, for I thought, if I must give him his pleasure, it was waste not to give him all that I could. (110)

When Gulley confesses that he already has a wife, Sara at first is angry, but eventually she again gives in: "I was dog tired and said at last I did not care what happened. So we went up to bed as man and wife . . ." (114). On their "honeymoon," Sara enjoys herself enormously: "I caught myself laughing and thinking: Well, whatever is coming to me of trouble, I am the luckiest woman to have such gaieties and a new loving husband, at my age" (118). After they settle at Miss Slaughter's in Ancombe, Sara begins to "encourage" Gulley toward success: she speaks to Hickson about an exhibition and obtains a portrait commission for Gulley. Furious at her nagging, Gulley hits her on the nose, and Sara packs and leaves. However, she feels wretched:

I woke up so miserable that though the day was beautiful and the hotel better than most, I could hardly even bring up a smile for the girl that brought my tea and I ate nothing for breakfast. I don't know how it was, but I felt as if I had no business to be there alone in Queensport. (135)

Consequently, when Miss Slaughter comes for her, Sara returns:

I am not a crying woman, but all the way back in the bus I was flooding with tears. They did not come out of my eyes, but my whole blood was swimming with their bitterness and my heart was drowned under their salt. For I felt that I was leaving behind me the last of my youth and all good hopes before I needed. I was wasting my poor self, so healthy and strong and full of life, so ready to enjoy that my whole flesh would often seem waiting to laugh at nothing at all

So I sat feeling like a martyr going to the torturers and slow hard death, and all for what? There was nothing religious nor any sense in it. God knows, I thought, you're a floating kind of woman; the tide takes you up and down like an old can. (138-139)

Though she and Gulley are soon reconciled, Sara realizes what her

return entails:

Though all seemed peace and comfort, and I found myself singing over my pots, delighted every day to be back in my own home, I knew very well that I had given myself up to a bad, uneasy life. . . .

A beaten woman that goes back to be beaten again can never know the same happiness or hold up the head of her soul. She feels a disgust at herself that works into her flesh. I was a worse woman for going back to Gulley. But who knows? if I had gone to Rozzie I might have taken to her way of life and thinking, which would have destroyed me altogether. For I was not made of that battering stuff. I never had Rozzie's art not to care for anything and to keep myself going on, like a horse, without any kind of happiness or hope or proper object in life. (142)

Several years pass as Gulley works on his mural; after it is finished, the villagers damage it. When Sara demands that Gulley repair it, he grows furious:

I said I was not going to let us be ruined and wasted, all for want of a little spirit.

So then he turned savage and told me that if I said another word, he would hit me. And I daresay I said the word, for he gave me the worst beating of all. (161)

Gulley then packs his paint box and leaves Sara. Here again, Sara's instinctive desire to have a man and to create a home—to fulfill her nature as "nest-maker"—both involves her in a relationship and ultimately terminates it. Moreover, in terms of the basic conflict, Sara's impulsive behavior leads her from a respectable widowhood into a quasi-"marriage" with Gulley: she creates her world despite the moral strictures of society.

The reversal of this crisis is Sara's return to a simple, ordered existence. After Gulley leaves, Sara is arrested for writing bad checks, and the fact of her not having been married to Gulley becomes generally known. Sara is made to feel her removal from respectability when she

applies for a job, for the registry woman will offer her only Tolbrook, a place of bad reputation:

She shook her head again and said that it was not really on her books, for she could not recommend it to any respectable girl. But perhaps it was all I could get. When I heard this I felt myself turn over within. It was the first time I was made to feel like a criminal, not just to the police, but to the world, and to know what it is not to have a character. (166)

Sara accepts the job and at first feels wretched at Tolbrook: "I will admit that when I stood in my bath and looked down upon myself I have cried to think that I was done for, and thrown away upon a living tomb, pitying my flesh as well as my skill" (169). But as she busies herself cooking and cleaning and caring for the old place, she soon comes to love it:

It seemed to me that it was Providence Himself that had taken me by the hand and led me back to the kitchen. For where could a woman find a better life. . . .

Then it came back to me about what poor Jimson had said about my true home being in a kitchen and that I was a born servant in my soul, and my heart gave a turnover and I felt the true joy of my life as clear and strong as if the big round clock over the chimney mouth was ticking inside me. So here I am, I thought, mistress of my own world in my own kitchen, and I looked at the shining steel of the range and the china on the dresser glittering like jewels, and the dish covers, hanging in their row from the big venison one on the left to the little chop one on the right, as beautiful as a row of calendar moons, and the kitchen table scrubbed as white as beef fat and the copper on the dark wall throwing out a glow to warm the heart, and the blue delf bowls like pots of precious balm.

And then beyond where the larder door stood ajar you could see bottles of oil and relish and anchovies and pickles and underneath the lid of the big flour bin as white as its own lovely flour; I call it a treat for queens to sink your hands in new wheaten flour. And next the larger, the dark scullery door with just a wink within the brass taps to say: "Your servants, madam," and a slow drip from the one or other to tell me: "We are ready this minute and never will fail," and next the scullery, the kitchen pantry. I could not see its glass-fronted cupboards as fine as the British Museum, or its china and glass in thick heaps like the treasures of Aladdin.

I could not see them, but I felt them like kingdoms in my charge. And, indeed, I felt bits of myself running out from the grand kitchen into pantry and scullery and larder and beyond into the passage and the stillroom and even to the wood cellar and the boot hole as if I was really a king or queen whose flesh is brought up to be the father of all his countries, and not to forget the little bye-lands even when they are on the dark side of the sun. You would say I was putting out buds like a shallot with my big kitchen heart in the middle and my little hearts all around in the empire of those good faithful offices, all fitted up as they were, even the cupboards, in the best of country materials. . . .

. . . Well, I thought, if you tied a knot of all the roads and railways and pipes and wires in the world it would come to a kitchen in the middle of it. . . .

So I looked around me that night and many more afterward in the Tolbrook kitchen, and prayed: "Let me only live cook in this dear place and not die too old for the work, and I'll never want another heaven." (182-184)

Thus, as Sara imaginatively constructs the pots and pans, the larder and the scullery, into her own kingdom, she becomes mistress of her own world and again finds peace and serenity of mind.

The second crisis is Sara's "arrangement" with Wilcher. Though Sara dislikes Wilcher's dreary London townhouse, she agrees to serve there as both cook and housekeeper. However, she soon comes to love this house, too, and is contented with her work. When Gulley unexpectedly shows up, Sara reluctantly agrees to return to him, even though she knows it will probably mean her death (206). But they quarrel and Gulley beats her. When Wilcher returns, Gulley leaves. One evening several years later, Wilcher asks Sara if she will "add to his comfort." Thinking that he means marriage, she accepts. When she discovers that he wants her to become his mistress, she is confused:

I have to confess that I was quite confused between my conscience and my duties. . . . Yet all the time, I knew I would give way. For I liked my happiness in Craven Gardens and my comforts and my peace and my dear Mr. W. himself far too well to do anything to lose them, or do them any injury.

So that (I'll confess) more than half my grief was simply the perplexity how to tell him that I would do what he liked, without making myself ashamed, and without giving him any offense. (214)

She does accept Wilcher's "arrangement" and thereafter lives comfortably:

Now although in the next years I often suffered in conscience, and wondered at myself, while I walked in the gardens and thought: How is it that I can go about like this, like an ordinary person, and not be found out, or sink into the ground with shame? Yet the truth was that I was very happy. (215)

Thus Sara's instinctive response--based upon her love of ease and an ordered homelife--moves her still farther away from conventional "respectability."

As time passes, Sara becomes intimately involved in Wilcher's family affairs, although Blanche warns her against interfering. At the same time, Sara begins to cheat on the household expenses:

As for my robberies, that was another thing and I still wonder at myself. For at this very time, when I was helping Mr. W. to economize, and cutting down even his own dinners, I was still cheating him. How I came into this double way of life, I cannot tell, except that I got used to my pickings; and that I was bound to send something to Gulley. . . . (225)

When Wilcher is arrested for exposing himself in the park, Sara is pleased to comfort him: "I was glad only that, at the time of his many troubles, he took to staying the whole night and keeping warm. I'll own it at once, I liked the feel of a husband again . . ." (238). When Wilcher, close to a nervous breakdown, begs Sara to marry him, she agrees in order to quieten him. Blanche persuades Wilcher to fire Sara; but when his house burns down, Wilcher finds Sara, posts their banns, and installs her in a new cottage. A few years earlier, Sara had met Gulley again at Rozzie's funeral. Thereafter she had often visited him and his new

"wife" had paid their rent and bought Gulley's supplies, and having become attached to his young son, had paid for his schooling. She had thoroughly enjoyed her visits:

I looked forward all the week to my Wednesdays, and . . . I would always manage an afternoon or evening on some other day, if it was only because they could not do without me, poor things, and Lizzie would keep all her washing and hold her mending till I came. (267)

Yet she had also valued Wilcher and her new cottage:

Fond as I was of Gulley . . . and Pretty Lizzie . . . and Tommie . . . , yet I knew Mr. W. was worth three Gulleys, a better and a deeper man, and a more tried. I knew myself honored by him and I meant to make him a good wife. And though I loved my river dawdlings and my chitchat in the shed, I had grown fond of Ranns Park too, as any young bride-to-be. (268)

Thus Sara finds herself—the mistress of one man and the ex-"wife" of another—managing the households of both: she has found ample scope for her nest-making instinct, even though both relationships are beyond the pale of conventional morality. But her expenses at both households being heavy, she sells some of Wilcher's property to an antique dealer.

From this characteristic action stems the resolution of the major conflict. Blanche and a detective search Sara's trunk and find various trinkets, receipts, and her savings book. Instead of protesting or defending herself, however, Sara merely begins to prepare dinner, for she realizes her guilt:

I knew I was a guilty woman. I felt like the ghost of myself, just floating along in the draft from the stove to the sink and back again. I was not even afraid or unhappy. I was only surprised at myself and my devastation. (272)

Sara is arrested. During her trial, the fact of her having once passed bad checks and the nature of her relationship with Wilcher and Gulley

emerge, and Sara is sentenced to eighteen months in jail. Thus the central conflict between Sara's moral real and society's moral values is resolved: Sara consistently attempts to create her own world and fulfill her own nature as "nest-maker"; she thus lives in accordance with her own moral real, but in increasing opposition to society's conventional morality. Ultimately this disparity brings about her fall, and the forces of social respectability triumph.

The denouement of the volume is Sara's new status. Publicized as a flagrant sinner and imprisoned as a felon, Sara now professes a moral rehabilitation. She says that she now knows herself, and she writes her confession so that "some who read [it] may take warning and ask themselves before it is too late what they really are and why they behave as they do" (2). But she also writes her confession for a hundred pounds so that she can pay Gulley's rent and Tommy's school fees. And her closing words look forward to her future and another nest:

A good cook will always find work, even without a character, and can get a new character in twelve months, and better herself, which, God helping me, I shall do, and keep a more watchful eye, next time, on my flesh, now I know it better.
(274-275)

Thus Sara remains the essential Sara.

Viewed in brief, Sara's character is consistent: she always attempts to fulfill her nature. As her opportunities or means to do so diminish, she moves farther and farther away from the realm of conventional morality, not because she chooses to do so—indeed, she is always surprised that she has—but because she instinctively does what is necessary to create her "nest." Her misfortune lies in choosing as mates Gulley, who by nature is not malleable to her will, and Wilcher,

who has not yet discovered his own moral real; her success lies in her unwavering fidelity to her own nature. As Cary comments, "The everlasting enterprise which was her undoing was also her salvation. She was still making a world for herself, a home, a family, when she was cut off."⁷⁶

The second volume presents the story of Wilcher. Here again the central conflict is that between an individual's fulfillment of his own nature and the constraining forces of society. Wilcher's case is opposite to that of Sara's, however: Sara remains faithful to her own nature, at great expense to her social respectability; Wilcher abides by the expectations of society, at great cost to his own essential nature.

Wilcher's narrative runs on two time levels: his present life with Robert and Ann at Tolbrook, and his memories of his past life. Of the 155 chapters in the volume, eighty-eight record the past, fifty-six depict the present, and eleven contain both. Of the six primary structural elements, however, all but the extended complication occur in the present.

The introduction presents Wilcher's present stasis: still devoted to Sara but now in the power of Ann, Wilcher is confused and bitter. He resents Ann's cheerless modernity (he himself is one of only two men in England who still wear a curly brimmed bowler), and he fears his family's machinations against him. Yet he is delighted to be returned to Tolbrook:

I was excited by the thought of exploring the old house, after so many years. I opened all doors to these memories, from which, in my late mental anxiety, I had fled, and at once my whole body like Tolbrook itself was full of strange sensations. My veins seemed to rustle with mice, and my brain, like Tolbrook's roof, let in daylight at a thousand crevices. (6)

Wilcher is thus initially identified with Tolbrook, as though both were in the same condition and of the same substance.

The definition scene is Wilcher's shocking experience: deep in childhood memories, he suddenly hears Lucy's voice whisper "To be a pilgrim" in his ear. Unsettled, he allows Ann to put him to bed, but

he has gained a valuable insight:

I did not want to lose my discovery. . . . "Yes," I thought, "that was the clue to Lucy, to my father, to Sara Jimson; it is the clue to all that English genius which bore them and cherished them, clever and simple. Did not my father say of Tolbrook which he lived so much, 'Not a bad billet,' or 'Not a bad camp?' And Sara. Was not her view of life as 'places,' as 'situations' the very thought of the wanderer and the very strength of her soul? She put down no roots into the ground; she belonged with the spirit; her goods and possessions were all in her own heart and mind, her skill and courage.

And is not that the clue to my own failure in life? Possessions have been my curse. I ought to have been a wanderer, too, a free soul. Yes, I was quite right to break off from this place. Although I have loved it, I can never have peace till I leave it.

. . . "Yes, I must go," I thought. "I must move on— I must be free." (8-9)

Herein is clearly defined the conflict of the volume: on one side, Wilcher's yearning to be free to fulfill his nature, his "pilgrim spirit"; on the other, his adherence to social forms and expectations, manifest in his acquired spirit as conservator and his love of things.

That Wilcher's essential nature truly is the "pilgrim spirit" is indicated by his memory of his fear of Puggie Brown, the Benjamite preacher:

No foes shall stay his might,
Though he with giants fight;
He will make good his right
To be a pilgrim.

At these words, I felt my heart turn over, and I drove away as fast as I could. . . . I was afraid of Brown; I thought he could convert me, and I was enjoying life then as never before, in my first year at Oxford. . . . But when he sang those verses from Bunyan, . . . then something swelled in my heart as if it would choke me unless I, too, opened my own mouth and sang. I might have been a bell tuned to that note, and perhaps I was. For the Wilchers are as deep English as Bunyan himself. A Protestant people, with the revolution in their bones. . . . I did not know it then because I knew nothing and nobody real, only knowledge about things. . . . At that time my own English spirit, like Lucy's, was a mystery to me. I fled from Brown because I felt that if I did not run he would get me. (13)

Brown, the wandering evangelist, is one manifestation of the "pilgrim spirit," to which Lucy later responds so fervently. Because of his ancestry and his essential nature, Wilcher, too, responds: he "might have been a bell tuned to that note. . . ." But because he is already conditioned by his class and fear of change,⁷⁷ he flees Brown's presence.

The extended complication explains why Wilcher did not "make good his right/ To be a pilgrim"; why, that is, he submerged the "pilgrim spirit" beneath the spirit of the conservator. These reasons exist in the past and are thus conveyed through Wilcher's memories. Consequently, though his memories receive counterpoint in the present in the Robert-Ann subplot, the principal present action of the complication is simply Wilcher's remembering. What he remembers explains both his present condition and his subsequent actions. His development as conservator stems primarily from three relationships--with Lucy, with Edward, and with Bill, Amy, and their son John--and the actions and attitudes which these attachments prompt.

Wilcher's childhood attachment for Lucy was "a country legend":

I perceive how I loved Lucy then, with a love belonging only to that time, when we were both amusing ourselves with life. It was a love such as can exist only between brother and sister, who, because they are brother and sister, do not suffer the exasperation of the flesh. We never wished to play the martyr. We gave each other freedom to be in love with others, and even discussed our flirtations. Yet our tie was stronger than all. (14)

Yet, when Lucy tricked or taunted him as she often did, Wilcher could also hate her: "I never hated anyone as I could hate Lucy; and I was right to hate her. For what I loathed in her was the devil. That destroyer, when you see him face to face, is always terrifying and

hateful" (20). Wilcher now realizes that "the way to a satisfying life, a good life, is through an act of faith and courage" and that Lucy was "one of those whose faith is like a sword in their hands, to cut their own destinies" (48). Yet when Lucy ran off to join the Benjamites, Wilcher went to bring her back. Among the squalor and humiliations of the evangelical group, Wilcher seemed suddenly to understand Lucy's happiness, and, fearfully tempted, he fled:

I felt a moment of fear. It was as though a dark wave had stretched itself before me in a bright and calm night, inviting me to approach.

.
I felt such rage against Lucy that I could have beaten her, and yet I know that half my rage was fear. For her words, her voice, her look filled me with the same weakness which had seized upon me before. . . . I say filled with weakness, because it was a positive thing, a feeling as if some spirit had entered into me, cut my sinews, and dissolved my self-will.

.
Lucy fixed her eyes on me and smiled as she sang. And in her smile I saw the mischievous girl who had so often, in so many ingenious ways, used me and made a fool of me. It was the smile which saved me, or damned me, I cannot tell which. I shouted at her, "Yes, and this is another of your devil's tricks," and rushed out of the house.

.
I had not dared to wait another moment in case I, too, . . . had fallen on my knees and confessed myself a miserable sinner. The dark wave was rising over me, and I had longed to drown in it, to get rid of self; to find what? A cause. Excitement. The experience of suffering, of humiliation, so attractive to my sense. Above all, an answer to everything. (60-62)

Thus, partly out of reaction to Lucy, partly out of fear, Wilcher again rejected an opportunity to yield to his "pilgrim spirit" and to perform "an act of faith and courage." This "turn" in the plot therefore leads Wilcher away from the "pilgrim spirit."

Shortly after Lucy left, Wilcher developed an intense admiration

for Edward, who became Wilcher's model and hero and "perhaps [his] refuge from Lucy's Lord" (62). At that time Wilcher did not realize how susceptible he was to others' influence, "moved this way and that by every source of power, by Pug Brown, by Lucy, by Edward" (70). Thus he adopted Edward's mode of dress, political philosophy, and aesthetic judgments. Nevertheless, because of an intense experience during a reading party on Mt. Snowdon, Wilcher decided to become a missionary: "My excitement has acquired a meaning, and so I can understand it and respect myself as a reasonable being. What glory, for a small undignified person, at whom others were inclined to laugh, to be a missionary" (136). Shortly after, however, Wilcher was drawn more deeply into Edward's affairs. Yet he still yearned to be a missionary, even giving lectures in Indian costume. However, after their father's death, new burdens fell upon him:

Responsibility is an idea. For three years I had made all decisions. But because I had acted in my father's name, I felt no burden. Now when I was asked to decide this or that, I hesitated. I lay awake at night under the burden of this thought, "Destiny, the happiness of others, depends on me." For the first time I understood that heavy word—"duty."

. . . I felt as if the very frame of things in which I had lived so securely were falling apart, like broken screens; to show behind, darkness and chaos. Tolbrook suddenly appeared to me like a magic island, preserved in peace among the storms of the world only by a succession of miracles. (155)

Especially burdensome was Edward's financial irresponsibility, which produced enormous debts and impatient creditors with whom Wilcher had to cope. When Edward suggested selling Tolbrook and its timber and when Bill and Amy insisted that he do all he could to help Edward, Wilcher abandoned his plans for a missionary career and joined the

family law firm:

And as I walk in the park on my way home, I seem to hear not only Bill and Amy, and Tolbrook, but the very park trees, humbly accepting the dirt of London poured upon them from the smoky twilight. "You mustn't desert us, your people. The humble and the helpless."

I remembered Edward's absent-minded voice, "They'll take the timber at once."

The next day I wrote to Edward, proposing to accept the agency, on proper conditions of pay, etc., and a proper security for the house. . . . I joined the firm at once. . . . Within a week I began to read for my articles as a solicitor. (176)

Through this action Wilcher did what the family expected of him, but at the expense of his "pilgrim spirit." This "turn" thus leads Wilcher deeper into the role of the conservator.

As the years passed, the spirit of the conservator possessed

Wilcher:

The love of possessions. It is spoken for a reproach, and I feel it like shame. But what are these possessions which have so burdened my soul? Creatures that I have loved. The most helpless of dependents. For their very soul, their meaning, is in my care.

A woman loves her baby in its weakness and dependence, but what is more dependent than a home, a chair, those old books, a tree?

.
All the Tolbrook trees, even so far as Tenacre, . . . were like children to me. I knew their shapes from every side. They were present to me even when I sat at a table, and the loss of any one of them, by storm or decay, was a pain to me even while I did not recognize it. (216-217)

Wilcher fretted more and more about revolution, war, and changes in politics, fashion, or social customs. During World War I, Wilcher grew deeply attached to Amy and Bill and their son John, whom he planned to make his heir (244). But Bill grew increasingly ill and then suddenly died; John became involved with Gladys; Edward, his career in ruins, drifted aimlessly about Tolbrook. Then Wilcher, coming to fear change

even more, had a terrifying experience: while discussing revolutions with Edward, Wilcher suddenly intuitively understood the prevalence of change:

I remembered suddenly an old couplet of his:

Men, women, laws relax. When Angelo doffed
His coat, they say, the waiting stone turned soft.

And suddenly the idea came home to me and I was frightened. It seemed that the very ground grew thin beneath me, and everything about me began to change form, to dissolve. As if there were an infection of change in the very walls. . . .
(274)

A few minutes later Wilcher went to inspect his fields before a threatening storm; there he seemed to lose all contact with material reality, even his own physical reality:

The thunder did not break. Instead, the drops increased in number and suddenly became a flood. The trees, the hedges, and the fields, the sky itself and all its gesticulating silent mobs wavered like reflections in a stream, suddenly touched by a breeze, and then dissolved into an air which was largely water. I found myself alone among warm cataracts, with no distinction of material for the sense except the variety of noise. . . . Which proved so delusive that in the thickened twilight I lost my way and found myself walking in the stubble, mixed with new clover, of a field already cut; an accident not surprising on such an evening. But now of such bewildering effect that, as I stood, with every clover leaf pouring its waterfall into my boots, I felt as if the very earth were liquefying under my feet, as if the familiar trees, fields, and sky had actually melted into some primitive elementary form, and that the world of German philosophy, in which everything can be anything else, as the philosopher pleases, had actually realized itself in a universal nothingness, whose very color was uncertain. And I, the very last individual being of the old creation, though still solid in appearance, and capable of supporting a hat, as I ascertained by touch, trousers, umbrella, etc., as I perceived by sight, was yet already wavering in essence, beginning to lose the shape of my ideas, memory, etc., preparatory to the final and rapid solution of my whole identity. (276)

After this horrifying experience, the spirit of the conservator—the

effort to hold on to his possessions and identity—became even more intense in Wilcher. However, in rather rapid sequence thereafter, John married Gladys and left the family law firm, Amy moved away, Edward died, John was killed, and Lucy died. All of Wilcher's carefully conserved world seemed empty or dead:

Virtue had gone from me and from the house. It was now that Tolbrook began to frighten me by something more than loneliness. I felt for the first time in its quiet corridors what I feel now, the weight of a deserted and childless home. As if some old unhappy creature hung upon my shoulder, with the crushing weight of masonry. (297)

The crisis is Wilcher's flight from Tolbrook. After remembering these losses, Wilcher has a terrible dream:

This morning I dreamed that Tolbrook itself was growing smaller and smaller. The walls closed in; the roof came down upon me. The house became a coffin and it seemed that I had been shut up in it alive. The undertakers were screwing down the lid. I heard even the grating of the screws in the hard wood and tried to cry out that I was not dead yet; to strike up against the coffin lid. But my arms were pinioned and my jaws were tied. I could neither speak nor move.

And what was most terrible all my body, quite apart from me, seemed full of bitterness against me. As if every cell were complaining, "What has he done with us? We are betrayed." (298)

Consequently, Wilcher escapes to London to seek Sara. Himself rather surprised at his sudden deed, he nevertheless understands its significance:

"After all," I thought, "I am a Wilcher—I am like Bill and Lucy; like my father who spent half his life in camps and lodgings. It is in my blood, which is English. The Latin, the Celt strike root; they want only to make a home somewhere; and if they must wander they take with them always a dream or legend of home. But the English soul is a wanderer, a seeker. . . . No." I think gazing from the window at a flying village on its green carpet, "when I wanted to be a missionary, when I dressed up like a Hindu to talk about the Indian wisdom, I was fulfilling my destiny. And that house which I loved and

hated so much has been my treacherous Delilah. It brought me back from God, from India, from Sara. But not again."

.
 . . . I have said that it was the art of a woman like Sara, a servant bred, to make herself a home everywhere. But now I saw that to the wanderer all the world is home. He is the least homeless of men because he possesses all, the earth and the sky, the houses and the trees, with the eyes of a homekeeper. and all men and women are his familiars. (299-300)

Thus, his abandonment of Tolbrook is quite literally the turning point of the narrative, for by this deed Wilcher forsakes the role of conservator and comes closer to fulfilling his nature as a "pilgrim spirit."

The reversal of the crisis is Sara's betrayal of Wilcher. While he seeks Sara, confident that she will marry him and "save [his] soul alive," he remembers the bleak years after Lucy's death: how he had begun to hate Julie and to speak to girls in the park, how the family had forced him to see a psychiatrist, and how he had grown increasingly fond of Sara. When he does find Sara, he feels redeemed: "Only to hear Sara's step in the passage was a reminder of the truth . . . that we were travelers in the world, enjoined to live 'like men upon a journey'" (320). However, Sara merely detains Wilcher until Robert and Ann can arrive to return him to Tolbrook. Wilcher feels betrayed and imprisoned: "They did not ask me any longer about my own wishes. And I did not protest. It was somehow understood among us that I had no right to protest. I had become a dependent member of the family . . ." (323).

The resolution of the conflict is Wilcher's acceptance of change at Tolbrook and, thus, his rejection of the spirit of conservator. After his return to the old manor, Wilcher discovers that Robert has converted the elegant Adams saloon into a threshing room:

The huge machine, like a species of Roman siege engine, towers in the middle of the floor, driven by a tractor among the broken laurels. The driving band passes through one of the beautiful windows from which the panes have been knocked out of the sashes. The carts are backed in turn along the west side, brushing the painted walls. And behind Farley . . . I see over the middle window a rural trophy in plaster of delicate scythes and sickles, sheaves and hayforks, tied up in pale blue ribbon. But the thick chaff dust, which lies along every panel molding like yellow snow, is already hiding their beautiful detail, characteristic of Adams refinement.

.
The girl Molly lifts off the filled sacks and . . . drags them across the floor . . . to the side door, where Robert, by taking out a panel and knocking down the bricks, has made a loading platform. The grinning and horned Pan who, in white marble, plays upon his syrinx under one end of the magnificent mantel-shelf, famous among scholars of architecture, carries on one horn some laborer's luncheon, tied up in a red handkerchief; and round his waist, mixed with the marble flowers and grasses, hangs a bunch of real onions on a string. (326)

However, instead of being horrified at this seemingly barbaric transformation, Wilcher perceives its significance:

I sit in the armchair . . .; and the very ruin of this beautiful room is become a part of my happiness. I say no longer, "Change must come, and this change, so bitter to me, is a necessary ransom for what I keep." I have surrendered because I cannot fight and now it seems to me that not change but life has lifted me and carried me forward on the stream. It is but a new life which flows through the old house; and like all life, part of the sustaining power which is the oldest thing in the world.

Tolbrook, so Jaffrey says, is losing value—it is already not much better than a farmhouse. But is it not a fall back from death to life?

Robert, I suspect, is more Brown than Wilcher, a peasant in grain. But he does not destroy Tolbrook, he takes it back into history, which changed it once before from priory into farm, from farm into manor, from manor, the workshop and court of a feudal dictator, into a country house where young ladies danced and hunting men played billiards; where, at last, a new-rich gentleman spent his week ends from his office. . . . Robert has brought it back into the English stream and he himself has come with it. . . . (327-328)

The initial identification of Wilcher with Tolbrook, established in the introduction, is here symbolically reiterated: just as the old manor

gains a new function, so does Wilcher achieve a new opportunity to fulfill his essential nature. Wilcher's earlier flight from Tolbrook had been an act of desperation, a negative abandonment of his previous life and the role he had filled. But now he truly understands the fact of change and finds happiness in it; his acceptance is thus in itself a positive act of faith and courage.

The denouement is Wilcher's acquisition of peace of mind as he approaches death. After meeting Blanche again, Wilcher has another heart attack, and as he lies in bed, he reflects upon his failure in life:

I have always been a lover rather than a doer; I have lived in dreams rather than acts; and like all lovers, I have lived in terror of change to what I love. Time itself has haunted my marriage bed like a ghost of despair. And on the day when I possessed Tolbrook my keenest fears began. It was not till I was a pillar of the old order that I felt how the ground trembled under my feet, how close beneath the solid-looking stone was the primitive bog. (333)

He remembers with what calm fortitude Amy had died. And, as his own life ebbs away, he realizes that he, too, has been—and can be—part of the English pilgrim spirit:

I thought I could be an adventurer like Lucy and Edward, a missionary. I shouted the pilgrim's cry, democracy, liberty, and so forth, but I was a pilgrim only by race. England took me with her on a few stages of her journey. Because she could not help it. She, poor thing, was born upon the road, and lives in such a dust of travel that she never knows where she is.

.
I never liked lodgings. I was too fond of my dear ones at home. And what if they were trees and chairs and furniture and books and stones?

Material love. What is material? What is the body? Is not this house the house of spirits, made by generations of lovers? I touched in my mother the warmth of a love that did not belong to either of us. Why should I not feel, when I lie in English ground, the passion of a spirit that beats in all English souls? (342)

Consequently, though near death, he is happy: "In [Ann's] silence, it was understood between us that whether I die today or tomorrow does not matter to anybody. But for her that is a defeat; for me it is a triumph" (342). Thus the denouement to the narrative records Wilcher's final stasis: peace of mind--an acceptance of his failure, but a knowledge of his triumph.

The Horse's Mouth, the final volume in the sequence, is the memoirs of Gulley Jimson. As in the preceding volumes, the primary conflict is that between an individual's efforts to fulfill his own nature and the forces of society which oppose such efforts.

The introduction of the narrative presents Gulley's stasis: clad in clothing tattered and patched, almost penniless and with little hope of getting money anywhere, Gulley returns to Greenbank after a month in prison for "uttering menaces" against Hickson. More important than presenting his physical or financial condition, however, the introduction shows the operation of Gulley's artistic vision, which transforms nature into image and symbol:

I was walking by the Thames. Half-past morning on an autumn day. Sun in a mist. Like an orange in a fried fish shop. All bright below. Low tide, dusty water, and a crooked bar of straw, chicken-boxes, dirt and oil from mud to mud. Like a viper swimming in skim milk. The old serpent, symbol of nature and love. (1)

Through his creative imagination, he sees the "Thames mud turned into a bank of nine carat gold rough from the fire." (1). The introduction

thus establishes the immediacy and authenticity of Gulley's artistic sensibility.

The definition dramatizes the primary conflict of the volume: Gulley's efforts to create vs. the societal forces which oppose or prevent his creating. When explaining why he had threatened Hickson, Gulley says, "I got in a state, Coker. I got thinking how I'd been done. And that always makes me mad" (3). Thus, after he discovers that The Fall has been mutilated and his paints and brushes stolen during his absence, Gulley is considerably upset:

Here am I, I said, Gulley Jimson, whose pictures have been bought by the nation, or sold at Christie's by millionaires for hundreds of pounds, pictures which were practically stolen from me, and I haven't a brush or a tube of colour. Not to speak of a meal or a pair of good boots. I am simply forbidden to work. It's enough to make an undertaker smile. (6)

Although he tells himself that he "mustn't get up a grievance" and attempts to minimize his misfortunes, he impulsively calls Hickson again:

"I am the President of the Academy. I understand that Mr. Jimson is now destitute. And I was informed on the best legal advice that you have no right to his pictures. I understand that you conspired with a drunken model to rob him of this valuable property.

.

"But I'm speaking as a friend. If Jimson doesn't get his rightful due in the next week, he fully intends to burn your house down, and cut your tripe out afterward. He means it too." (7)

The forces in conflict are explicit in this scene: on the one hand, the world at large, which thwarts Gulley's creativity, represented to Gulley here by Hickson; on the other, the world of Gulley Jimson.

The world which Gulley has created for himself is one of pure art: everything is subordinated to his creative urge. His inspirations arrive, without conscious intellectualization, "straight from the horse's mouth"; his paintings are direct expressions of this creative imagination. Hence, Gulley must cope with everything which upsets or thwarts this delicate creative mechanism. His problems, therefore, are three-fold. First, he must obtain money to buy paints and supplies and simply to subsist, in order to create. But this task is difficult in a society which does not appreciate art in advance of its time or which looks upon art as a commercial venture. Consequently, Gulley is driven to trickery or theft in order to paint. Second, he must retain the purity of his vision. But this freedom of imagination is difficult when the indifference or injustice of society operates against him. Thus, after calling Hickson, Gulley says, "Anything like bad temper is bad for me. It spoils my equanimity. It blocks up my imagination. It makes me stupid so that I can't see straight" (8). When Gulley does let himself grow angry, he becomes destructive or vindictive, as in his call to Hickson. Third, he must remain free. As a result of his direct conflict with the law (his thefts, threats, and destructions), Gulley constantly runs the risk of imprisonment, which would certainly thwart his creativity. But, equally important, Gulley must remain free of any emotional or personal relationship which would restrict his personal liberty or vitiate his artistic vision. For this reason he had years earlier beaten and then

abandoned Sara; for this same reason he discourages Nosy's adoration and flees from Coker's rough maternal care. In brief, in order to obtain the means to create, to retain his equanimity, and to remain free--all necessary to his efforts to create and thus to fulfill his nature--Gulley pits himself against society's indifference, injustice, distractions, and laws.

The complication, or rising action, stems directly from this conflict, as Gulley attempts to create. His efforts focus upon three successive pictures, and in each instance, but to an increasing degree, he must struggle for money, equanimity, and freedom, against an increasingly hostile society.

The first picture is The Fall. Upset to find it mutilated upon his return, he nevertheless filches paints, fashions a brush from a rope, and continues to work on it. He grows excited about a new idea which came, he feels, "straight from the horse" (19), but before he can execute it, Coker carries him off to see Sara on business. Excited by again seeing Sara, "the individual female," Gulley has another idea for his picture. Borrowing a bit from Coker and pawning a silver frame he had pocketed at Sara's, he buys supplies and works joyfully. However, Plant and two preachers interrupt, and Gulley's ebullience fades before Plant's inanities and the preachers' disdain. Gulley remembers some lines from Blake:

I rubbed a little white into the burnt sienna and touched
it up. While old Billy cried:
 And if the babe is born a boy, that is to say,
 a real vision,
 He's given to a woman old,
 Who nails him down upon a rock,
 Catches his shrieks in cups of gold.

Which means that some old woman of a blue nose nails your work of imagination to the rock of law, and why and what; and submits him to a logical analysis. (38-39)

When they finally leave, Gulley's vision has disappeared, and he is desperately angry—at himself:

I should have liked to take myself in both hands and pull myself apart. To spite my guts for being Gulley Jimson, who, at sixty-seven years of age, after forty-five years of experience, could be put off his intentions, thoroughly bamboozled and floored, by a spout of dogma, a blind shepherd, a vegetated eye, a puffed-up adder of moralities. (41)

Wandering desolately in the streets, he passes a telephone booth and again impulsively calls Hickson. When a local bar-tender sends warning that the police are searching for him, Gulley hangs up and flees, suddenly frightened by the realization that five years in jail would kill him (44). That night, attending Plant's meeting, he unexpectedly meets Sara. Again inspired by "the everlasting Eve, but all alive," he regains his equanimity and begins again on The Fall. However, he is again interrupted by Coker, who takes him to her flat and then to see Hickson on business. Gulley is enormously excited to see his painting of Sara after fifteen years; as Coker and Hickson discuss money, Gulley contemplates his painting and the processes of the creative imagination: "What you get on the inside, I said to myself, is the works—it's SOMETHING THAT GOES ON GOING ON. Hold on to that, old boy, I said, for it's the facts of life. . . . It's the kick in the old horse. It's the creation" (94). He filches some paper and begins to work on a new idea for The Fall. However, when Hickson discovers some objets d'art missing and calls the police, Gulley grows angry and hurls some snuff boxes through Hickson's windows. Arrested, he spends six months in jail.

He emerges with still another vision for The Fall. Eager to set to work, he discovers, however, that Coker and her mother have occupied his boathouse. He undertakes a plan to drive them out; in the meantime, he meets Alabaster and upon his invitation, visits the Beeders. Gulley sees the Beeders as an opportunity to obtain money:

I saw that this was a turning point in my life. Or probably not. A thousand pounds, I thought, or let's say fifty pounds, it would set me up for life. I could get a new studio, a good one with a roof as well as a wall. Even twenty pounds would give me a fresh start. Of course, I thought, it's not a likely tale. I haven't sold a picture for fifteen years, and my last big commission was from that old woman in Ancombe, who was more or less mad. Or she wouldn't have given me the job. . . . All the same, I thought, even ten pounds, I'd be painting again. (136)

He is completely candid in his conversation: "I wasn't afraid of embarrassing nice people. I knew they would be used to unfortunate remarks. Rich people are like royalty. They can't afford to be touchy. Richesse oblige" (142). He is particularly frank in his appraisal of Lady Beeder's water-colors: "All this amateur stuff is like farting Annie Laurie through a keyhole. It may be clever but is it worth the trouble" (144)? Nevertheless, the Beeders invite him to dinner, and Gulley brashly offers to paint tigers on their wall or Lady Flora in the nude or both, for a hundred guineas apiece. The Beeders politely decline. The next morning, Gulley learns that Mrs. Coker has cut up The Fall to patch the roof; he is intensely upset: "I really thought I should cry. I didn't know how I could live without the Fall" (159). He struggles to regain his equanimity and finally grows gay at the idea of starting a new paintings:

"What I do like," I said, "is starting new ones." And the very notion made me feel full of smiles.

.....
 "No, you want to start clear, with a clean canvas, and a bright new shining idea or vision or whatever you call the thing. A sort of coloured music in the mind."

And the very words made me grin all down my back. certainly an artist has no right to complain of his fate. For he has great pleasures. To start new pictures. (161)

Throughout this sequence of events--the most protracted of the three principal episodes in the complication--the pattern of the thematic conflict remains consistent: Gulley struggles to gain money and to keep his freedom and equanimity; he is constantly distracted or prevented from working; when he gives in to his rage at Hickson, he is imprisoned; finally his work is destroyed by the fierce Mrs. Coker (the very incarnation of domestic respectability), who values his painting not for its spirituality but for its utility as a roof patch.

After this disaster, Gulley must start anew, and the second segment of the complication concerns his efforts to paint The Raising of Lazarus. After the destruction of The Fall, Gulley is not long daunted, for he soon envisions a new painting. Again, however, he lacks money or the materials to execute it. When Sir William, through Alabaster, offers him 300 guineas for a nude study like Hickson's, Gulley remembers the one Sara had kept. He finds her in the slums and eventually persuades her to give him the painting; however, when he opens the parcel, he finds that Sara has substituted some rolls of toilet tissue. At this failure, Gulley almost loses his temper:

I laughed. It was either that or wanting to cut the old woman's throat. And even to think of cutting Sara's throat always put me in a rage. Because, I suppose, I'd got her in my blood. I'd been fond of her. And it's very highly dangerous to murder anyone you've been fond of, even in imagination. Throws all the functions out of gear. Blocks up your brain. (184)

When he calls on the Beeders to present an excuse, he learns that they

are in America for three months and he persuades Alabaster to leave him in the apartment. Examining the walls, Gulley conceives of an epic painting: "A good wall, as they say, will paint itself. And as I looked at this beautiful shape, I saw what it was for A Raising of Lazarus" (187). However, still without money, he decides "to sell Lazarus to Sir William"; that is, he pawns some of the Beeders' property, orders supplies, and begins to paint. Gulley is unable to prevent a sculptor's also moving in. However, with Nosy's assistance, he continues. As they work, Gully pawns more and more of the Beeders' possessions, eventually even the chain out of the W. C. When the Beeders unexpectedly return and the police are called, Gulley and Nosy flee. Gulley, of course, fears imprisonment:

"It's not that we have done anything illegal," I said, but there would have to be a legal investigation which would waste a lot of time. I'd be badgered to death by inquiries and solicitors when I ought to be at work."

.
But the truth was, that I was a trifle upset. For I kept on thinking, I'm getting on for seventy now, and I haven't the constitution I had at sixty. I'm in my prime as a painter, but how long will it last? Ten, fifteen years at the outside. . . . No, I can't afford to waste my time in jug, or hospital. (206-207)

But as they ride a bus into the country, Gulley begins to lose his equanimity: "I was wondering what would happen to my palettes and colours and drawings; all my gear left behind at the Beeders'. I'm too old, I thought, to be poor. And too hardworking to be deprived of my tools and my studio. It's an outrage" (209). However, when he begins to rail against the government as the embodiment of a society hostile to the creative imagination (209-211), he suddenly feels ill:

Then I began to say what I might have said about governments.
 . . . And I was just going to tell them what I thought of
 the People, when I gave a stagger. Nosy caught hold of me.
 And I noticed my head was aching. And I thought, it's a
 stroke. So they've killed me after all--they've done worse
 than kill me. I daren't speak or move. In case I should
 find I was dumb or helpless. And I felt my indignation
 so hot and strong it was big enough to blow the stars out
 of their nail-holes. (211)

Nevertheless, with great effort, he regains some composure:

"I forgive 'em, Nosy. And tomorrow I shall forget 'em.
 To forgive is wisdom, to forget is genius. And easier.
 Because it's true. It's a new world every heart beat. The
 sun rises seventy-five times a minute. . . . I forgive [the
 government]. . . , the brick-faced hypocrite that would wipe
 art and artists off the face of the earth as it would skin
 an orange, and cut the balls off the genius of the Lord to make
 a tame gee-gee for the morning Park. I forgive it. . . ."
 (211)

This second major episode of the complication also illustrates
 the thematic conflict: Gulley struggles to obtain money and to create;
 defeated in these efforts by Sara's tenacious possessiveness and by the
 Beeders (the inhabitants of Beulah Land, for whom art is only a social
 grace or a prestigious investment), Gulley attempts to retain his
 equanimity and freedom. Despite an entire society hostile to art (repre-
 sented by the government to Gulley), he is able to "keep on keeping on,"
 though at greater and greater cost to body and spirit.

The final movement of the complication is Gulley's efforts to
 paint The Creation. When he and Nosy arrive at a seaside resort, Gulley
 makes a bit of money selling postcards, until he is severely beaten.
 While in the hospital, Gulley conceives of a new painting: "I was des-
 perate for a few pounds, because I knew that I had the biggest idea of
 my life. It had begun from those trees on our first night in the country.
 Something bigger than the new Fall. A Creation" (221). From Alabaster

he learns that Sir William still wants the nude study of Sara. Upon his return to London, he arranges to lodge with Coker, but he feels hampered by her fiercely maternal care: "I had to be out in the air. Even one day in bed was putting a cramp on my ideas, tucking them up in a tight parcel. My imagination was working inwards instead of outwards . . ." (231). After he eludes Coker, he discovers an abandoned chapel nearby:

What knocked me down was the east end wall. Twenty-five by forty. Windows bricked up and all smooth plaster round. Sent from God. . . . I thought, no, it can't be. It's another joke. They're having me on. I can hear them getting ready with the big laugh. My legs were trembling so much I had to sit down.

.
I sat down and laughed. And then I began to cry. Well, I said, you old ballacher, you've rolled into port at last. You've got your break. First the idea and then the wall. God has been good to you. That is to say, you've had a bit of luck. (233, 235)

But, of course, he still lacks money to execute his idea. When he calls Hickson to borrow it, he learns that Hickson is dead. Dashed by this unexpected blow, he returns to Coker's. A few days later he visits Rozzie's grave, where he meets Sara. After reminiscing about Rozzie and old time, Gulley leaves Sara in a pub and hurries to her apartment to steal the painting. When Sara unexpectedly returns and calls for the police, Gulley is upset: "I got a big fright. I didn't want the police. It might have meant five years. And five years would have finished me" (254). He scuffles with Sara and accidentally pushes her down the cellar steps. As the police arrive, he flees, without the picture.

When he learns that Hickson's picture is in the Tate, he quickly

paints a copy and sells it to Sir William. With the money he begins to work in great haste, in fear that the police will arrest him for his assault on Sara. When a town councillor warns him that the chapel is condemned, Gulley works all the harder. When a group of wealthy people arrive, Gulley hopes that they have come to help fight the condemnation: "That deputation, in fact, so expensive and important, gave me such pleasure that I nearly fell off my legs. Yes, I thought, this is indeed a triumph" (262). He is terribly upset to learn that they have no interest in saving The Creation but only want him to paint a portrait: "I simply didn't know what to say. The tears were standing in my eyes; either of gratitude or some other feeling" (269). With his assistants, he goes to Coker's bar; there he encounters the owner of the chapel, who furiously shouts that Gulley's picture is blasphemy, until Coker throws him out. Because of the impending condemnation and the owner's abuse, Gulley becomes extremely depressed:

I felt such a sigh come up that I thought I had had too much beer. But I . . . recognized it as grief for mortal things. Yes, I thought, I'll never finish that wall—I may just manage the whale. But no. Probably not. The roof will fall in and break my skull. Or probably not. It will be something I didn't expect. (273)

Through this final section of the rising action, the conflict has intensified: in his efforts to create, Gulley's clashes with the representatives of society become increasingly violent and numerous. Though ultimately successful in obtaining money, he kills Sara in his efforts to do so; though successful in finding a wall, he carries on in the face of the legal processes of the city council, the indifference of his wealthy "patrons," and the abuse of the religious owner; overshadowing all, he desperately fears the loss of freedom consequent from

his attack on Sara. He therefore verges on despair, feeling doomed never to finish his masterpiece.

The crisis is Gulley's imaginary conversation with Sara, while he paints. While still in Coker's pub, he hears that Sara has died but has described her assailant. Certain that he will now be arrested, Gulley hastens to the chapel, where he simultaneously paints his whale and weeps for Sara:

Boo-hoo, there's a tear on my palette. Who would have thought I could cry a tear as big as a halfpenny? At sixty-eight, for a battered old helmet like Sara Monday. Who would have thought that at my age and experience she could take me by the throat like this, and choke me? Boo-hoo. The whale looked at me with such something or other that I couldn't contain myself. The tears ran down my nose, and I said, It's a masterpiece. Perhaps.
(280-281)

As he works feverishly, he imagines Sara's spirit speaking to him. She urges him to quit work and take care of himself, but Gulley refuses: "Yes, I'm dead, and that shows how ill you are. You've got a temperature, Gulley—you must be delirious to see me like this. Get down like a sensible man, do, and go to bed." "I haven't time, Sall. I've got a lot to do before tomorrow evening" (281). They discuss their old life together—how she had sometimes cared for him despite his wishes: "And that's why you hit me on the nose, didn't you, Gulley? Because you didn't like me being on your mind. You didn't like not to be free, did you?" "No, I wasn't a meal for any old wife. And I had work to do" (282). Again she urges him to stop painting:

"I'm all right, Sall. You've only got to look at me, full of jump." "Oh dear, aren't I looking and grieving? Don't I know that you know that you're done for? Come, dearie, give it up. Listen to your Sara. Didn't I give you comfort and peace often and often when you were fit to be tied with

worrying about your greens and your blues and the rest of your nonsense?" (283)

Finally, however, he banishes her completely in order to continue his work:

"And you don't really want Me?" "Not just now, my dear,"
 "And aren't you sorry I'm dead?" "Well, look at me, my
 dear, boo-hoo, with the tears running down my nose, real
 tears. A genuine grief. Yes, I'm sorry you're dead, my
 dear, and that I'm done for. But after all, we mustn't
 get too upset, must we? It's the way things are." "Oh
 dear, oh dear, I ought to know what life is." "Yes,"
 I said, putting another touch on the old un's nose, to
 give it more elevation. "Practically A MATTER OF LIFE AND
 DEATH, you might say, or thereabouts." (284)

Although this conversation occurs only in Gulley's fevered imagination, it is the crisis of the narrative, for Gulley here comes closest to fulfilling his own nature. Sara to him represents all of the distractions and obstruction of the world: his loss of freedom--both in his old relationship with her and as a consequence of her death--and his abrasive conflicts with society in general. She also represents those obstructions within himself: the alluring desire for comfort and life; the beguiling appeals of reason to stop, for he knows he is "done for." But even while he "converses" with Sara, he continues to create his masterpiece. By continuing, he risks death, both the death of imprisonment and a literal death by illness. Hence, when he banishes Sara, he symbolically chooses to risk his own physical existence rather than his spiritual existence as an artist. Thus, it is literally A MATTER OF LIFE AND DEATH, for with Gulley, not to paint is to be dead.

The resolution is the destruction of The Creation. The next morning, the slightly delirious Gulley surveys his night's work and finds it good. When a policeman questions him about Sara, Gulley is surprised

to learn that she had given a false description: "But I thought, just like Sara. To diddle a man with her last breath"(284). Although a borough engineer warns him that demolition is to begin and although firemen attempt to remove him for his suspended seat, Gulley ignores them and continues to paint. When Nosy and his assistants fight with the councillors and policemen, Gulley paints. Even when men with sledge-hammers start wrecking the wall, Gulley continues. But suddenly he must stop:

And just then the whale smiled. Her eyes grew bigger and brighter and she bent slowly forward as if she wanted to kiss me. I had a shock. I was touched, of course, to see this affection in a favourite child, but I thought I must be dreaming again. . . .

And all at once the smile broke in half, the eyes crumpled, and the whole wall fell slowly away from my brush; there was a noise like a thousand sacks of coal falling down the Monument, and then nothing but dust; a regular fog of it. I couldn't believe it, and no doubt I was looking a little surprised with my brush in my hand, and my mouth open, because when the dust began to clear I saw through the cloud about ten thousand angels in caps, helmets, bowlers and even one top hat, sitting on walls, dustbins, gutters, roofs, window sills and other people's cabbages, laughing. That's funny, I thought, they've all see the same joke. God bless them. It must be a work of eternity, a chestnut, a horse-laugh.

Then I perceived that they were laughing at me. (287)

Even then, Gulley thinks only of continuing: "I didn't want to cause any trouble. I wanted a new studio quickly. I wanted to get that whale straight down again before I lost the feeling of her" (287) However, before he can dismount, he falls from his seat and loses consciousness.

This scene thus resolves the conflict between Gulley's efforts to create and the opposing forces of society. Society apparently triumphs: wealthy "patrons" disdain a picture they do not understand; religious people hate a picture they consider unorthodox and blasphemous;

civic officers prevent a community nuisance and a "danger" to their children; all combine, with or without intent, to destroy Gulley's art. And the destruction provides them with an enormous "horse-laugh." Yet Gulley, too, triumphs: though his masterpiece is destroyed and he is injured, he remains true to his own nature: he continually creates.

The denouement is Gulley's new stasis. He awakens in a police ambulance, unable to move and barely able to speak. When Nosy bewails the catastrophe, Gulley chides him:

"There you go," I said, "getting up a grievance. Which is about the worst mistake anyone can make, especially if he has one. Get rid of that sense of justice, Nosy, or you'll feel sorry for yourself, and then you'll soon be dead--blind and deaf and rotten. (288)

He recalls his own life filled with injustice--his mother's ignominious fate, his own neglect by fortune--but his art has saved him: "Walls have been my salvation, Nosy. . . . And above all that wall which is now no more. . . . Yes, boys, I have to thank God for that wall. And all the other walls" (289). Thus, he tells Nosy, "Go love without the help of anything on earth; and that's real horse meat. A man is more independent that way, when he doesn't expect anything for himself. And it's just possible he may avoid getting in a state" (289). When the attendant nun cautions him to be quiet because he is seriously ill, Gulley's response is almost gay: "Not so seriously as you're well. How don't you enjoy life, mother. I should laugh all round my neck at this minute if my shirt wasn't a bit on the tight side." "It would be better for you to pray." "Something, mother" (289). Thus, though defeated by the forces of society, Gulley ultimately triumphs: having remained true to his own nature, he can laugh in the face of the world.

Each of the three volumes in the sequence thus illustrates Cary's general theme. Each individual creates his own "world" and fulfills his own nature: Sara creates her world in her homes and is happy only when she has a husband and a kitchen to care for (even other people's houses—notably Miss Slaughter's and Wilcher's—become her "own home" in her creative imagination); Wilcher creates a world of familial ties and material affections contrary to his essential nature, but ultimately realizes and fulfills that nature; Gulley creates his world of pure imagination through symbolic art and fulfills his nature when he "keeps on keeping on," that is, when he continues to create. Each protagonist suffers defeat in his clash with society: Sara loses her homes and is jailed; Wilcher loses his cherished possessions and is reduced to dependency upon his family; Gulley loses his paintings and is confined both in prisons and in the hospital. Thus society wins, in at least external ways. Yet each protagonist triumphs: Sara, in that she perseveres despite society's conventional moralities; Wilcher, in that he does ultimately become a "pilgrim" of the spirit; Gulley, in that he forgives society for its injustices and continues creating. Hence, each volume dramatizes Cary's basic theme.

However, unlike the previously examined sequences, Cary's First Trilogy has no formulaic inclusive structure. In the previous sequence patterns, a single and continuous train of events moves through all of the volumes—the Irene-Soames conflict in The Forsyte Saga, George's mental and moral development in The Memoirs of George Sherston, and the Hilda-Edwin relationship in the Clayhanger trilogy. Each of these sequences exhibits a continuous movement from beginning to end, from

inclusive introduction to inclusive denouement. But no such single, straight-line progression of events occurs in the First Trilogy.

One might perhaps make a case for Sara's life-history as the basis of an inclusive structure. Sara is the single figure who appears significantly in each volume: in the first, she tells about her youth and middle age; in the second, she appears in her older age; in the final volume, she dies. One does find here something like the life-process development which is the basis of many sequences; hence, one might logically conclude that an inclusive structure emerges from this development. However, such a reading seriously distorts the sequence, for it diminishes the significance of Wilcher and Jimson, while according far too great a prominence to Sara. Moreover, it contravenes Cary's expressed intentions in the sequence:

It is complained of this trilogy that it is not a trilogy at all in the ordinary sense of the word. Though its three parts cover the same period of history, they are in different styles, about different people and have a very casual relation in form. But this was intended. What I set out to do was to show three people, living each in his own world by his own ideas, and relating his life and struggles, his triumphs and miseries in that world. They were to know each other and have some connection in the plot, but they would see completely different aspects of each other's characters.⁷⁸

Hence, because each volume contains its own relatively independent narrative and because no straight line of events moves throughout the entire sequence, the First Trilogy does not contain a conventional inclusive structure.

However, to say that the First Trilogy lacks continuity on the plane of action is not to suggest that it also lacks either the unity and coherence essential to a sequence novel or a symbolic inclusive

structure. Indeed, it is unified in four important ways and does contain an inclusively structured pattern of symbols.

The first of these bases of unity is the epistemological premises upon which the sequence is founded. Although these premises are explored above, perhaps Cary's explicit comments about the sequence are more pertinent here:

Their situation . . . was to be that of everyone who is doomed or blessed to be a free soul in the free world and solve his own problems as he goes through it. He must have power to think for himself and so he must be cut off from the mass instincts which join ants and bees in communities which have no need to think and no individual freedom.

Each of us is obliged to construct his own idea, his own map of things by which he is going to find his way, so far as he can, though life. He must decide what he wants and how he shall achieve himself.⁷⁹

In each volume of the sequence, exactly this process occurs: each protagonist, according to his "map of things," attempts to "solve his own problems"; each decides "what he wants and how he shall achieve himself." That is, each volume exemplifies Cary's basic view of human existence and reality. Though this fact in itself does not constitute a formal unity, it does indicate that Cary's world view provides a fundamental unity, without which any merely formal unity would be meaningless.

A second unity derives from important similarities among the three volumes. The similarity of the thematic conflict in each volume has already been noted. In addition, three significant similarities among the protagonists exist. First, all of the protagonists are immoral, if judged by society's conventional standards. Sara probably cuckolds Monday, lives as the mistress of one man and the "wife" of at least three

others (Jimson, Robins, and Byles), and steals. Wilcher keeps two mistresses, burns down his house for the insurance, and exposes himself to girls in the park. Gulley lives with a series of different women despite having a legal spouse in Glasgow, steals almost anything pocketable, utters menaces, perpetrates frauds, and commits manslaughter. Yet despite these transgressions against society's codes, all are intensely moral people, if judged by the standards of Cary's world view. To Cary, the only right and moral way to live is in accordance with the "universal consistencies of nature human and material." Hence, all three protagonists are moral in that each (though Wilcher belatedly) finds a workable mode of life which frees and fulfills his own essential nature.

The second similarity, also arising from Cary's world view, is that each character does succeed in creating his own world, but suffers intensely thereby. Cary sees that tragedy is the inevitable concomitant of man's freedom:

For good and evil, man is a free creative spirit. This produces the very queer world we live in, a world in continuous creation and therefore continuous change and insecurity. A perpetually new and lively world, but a dangerous one, full of tragedy and injustice.⁸⁰

Sara creates her "nests" but loses them; her children grow up and go away; her mates die or leave her; she grows old and unattractive. Wilcher ultimately creates an attitude of pilgrimage, but in so doing loses much that is precious to him—his reverence for Lucy and Edward, his fixed conceptions about life, and, worst of all, Tolbrook itself. Jimson creates an artistic vision which encompasses eternal truths about man, God, and nature, but never is he able to complete his expression of it:

his symbolic paintings are all destroyed, and he is mortally wounded. Thus, all suffer because of their "free creative spirit."

A third and more important similarity now appears: despite their defeats by society and their tragic losses, all accept life as it is. Because they are true to their natures, their basic happiness stems from their being. Yet each recognizes the world for what it is and gains happiness despite the terms of his existence in it. Sara confesses to her "wicked ways" and feels contrite for awhile, but continues with them. When Blanche and the policeman search her trunk, she neither argues nor protests; she merely submits without bitterness, for she recognizes society's right to punish her. Yet she goes right on being herself, keeping house for Robins and Byles, and forgiving the world. Wilcher rejects life throughout most of his adulthood. He imposes a hostile life-mode over his essential nature when he becomes a conservator rather than a pilgrim; only after the course of his final two years at Tolbrook does he fully realize and then fulfill his true nature. And only then can he fully accept life and its principal constituent--change. Gulley accepts and loves life, even the injustices which ruined his father, killed his mother and sister, and destroy him. Hence, even after his final failure, he can tell Nosy, "Go love without the help of anything on earth; and that's real horse meat. A man is more independent that way, when he doesn't expect anything for himself" (289). All of the characters, therefore, accept the world and their own terms of being.

Again these similarities among protagonists give a unity of content rather than a unity of form. However, they do indicate a formal similarity among the three volumes. All of the volumes are structured

around three major episodes: Sara's unions with Monday, Jimson, and Wilcher; Wilcher's relationships with Lucy, Edward, and Bill and Amy; Gulley's efforts to finish The Fall, The Raising of Lazarus, and The Creation. All of the episodes move from a creative success to defeat, and the structure of each volume as a whole moves from success through defeat to a spiritual triumph for the protagonist.⁸¹ Hence, a unity through similarity of form does exist in the sequence.

In addition to these patterns of similarities, the First Trilogy achieves coherence and unity in a third important way—the complementary triple view of each character. By nature and the fact of his freedom, each character is isolated in his own world. Consequently, his view of the other characters is necessarily fragmentary and biased. Cary was aware of, indeed planned this effect:

Sara regards herself as a tenderhearted creature whose troubles are due to her good nature. This estimate is true. Wilcher sees in her an easygoing mistress who will cherish him in his decrepitude. He is quite right. Gulley calls her a man grabber, and he is also right. All of the ideas of the three about each other are right from their own point of view.⁸²

However, rather than segment the sequence, these separate views actually help unite it. As the reader moves through the sequence, he sees each narrator not only as he reveals himself but also as he is revealed in the other narratives: Jimson and Wilcher in Sara's, Sara and Jimson in Wilcher's, and Sara and Wilcher in Jimson's.⁸³ Thus, for the reader, the characters gain "three-dimensional depth from their contrasting views of themselves and each other."⁸⁴ Moreover, this effect is incremental: as one reads through the sequence, he gains new insights from the varying viewpoints and thus modifies his conception of each character.

As he reads, the three views of each character fuse in his imagination to create a single view of their reality. The effect of this tripartite view of each protagonist, therefore, is not division but completion and unity.

The fourth basis of unity is the increment from volume to volume of the narrators' knowledge of reality in terms of society, time, and eternal truth. In the first volume, Sara learns through her conflict with society's moralities that one's own world is part of the larger world and that society has the power to grip and to punish. She signifies her recognition of this truth by her submissiveness to Blanche's search and by her professed rehabilitation. Thus, though she remains true to her own nature, Sara learns that one lives in society and is subject to its injustices. What Sara has so painfully learned by the end of her narrative, Wilcher already knows at the beginning of his. Having lived in the grip of social forces all of his life and now specifically in the power of his family, Wilcher well knows about injustice. But in order to achieve himself, he must learn still more about life. What he learns is the inevitability of change. Through remembrance of the past and rational scrutiny of the present, he realizes that life involves not only injustice but also the insecurity of changes wrought by time. Only after acceptance of this fact can he fulfill his true nature. At the beginning of his narrative, Gulley already knows what both Sara and Wilcher learn; the histories of his father, mother, and sister, as well as his own career, have taught him about both change and injustice. He also knows that man is free: "The fallen man--nobody's going to look after him. The poor bastard is free--a free and responsible citizen"

(THM, 165). What he learns from his painful failures is that neither temporal change nor social injustice can destroy the essential freedom of man's creative imagination, and that without imagination, "even enough to laugh" (THM, 165), one goes mad. He learns that the eternal world is knowable through this imagination and that to disdain the temporal and unjust is to be truly free and to approach the eternal. It is this truth he conveys when he says that laughter is "the same thing" as prayer. Thus, as the sequence progresses, each volume gathers up the truth learned by the protagonist in the preceding volume and adds to it; having reached the creative imagination, the agency by which man creates his own world and perceives the eternal, the final volume can go no farther. This incremental development, by building each volume on the basis of the preceding one, provides an extraordinary unity to the sequence.

The First Trilogy, therefore, is united in four important ways: through the epistemological premises underlying the sequence; through the similar patterns of thematic conflict, morality, suffering, and acceptance in each volume; through the complementary tripartite view of each character, and through the increment of knowledge learned by the successive narrators.

However, rather than being based upon the sequence of events, the inclusive structure of the First Trilogy operates on the plane of thematic abstractions; that is, it depends not on a development of action but upon a progression of symbolic significances conveyed in the three protagonists. Several critics have examined these three as symbols.

Andrew Wright sees them as representatives of three human types which appear repeatedly in Cary's fiction--the eternal Woman, the Conservative Man, and the Free Man.⁸⁵ Jack Wolkenfeld discusses them in terms of social types: Sara is lower class; Wilcher is upper middle class; and Gulley, having abandoned the middle class to become an artist, is classless. Thus, the three "together represent varying parts of one single total sociological situation."⁸⁶ Fred Stockholder suggests that according to the Socratic trope in the Symposium they might represent "the three human faculties of the mind."⁸⁷ Stockholder also suggests, as does Hazard Adams,⁸⁸ that the protagonists represent the Blakean figures of Woman (in varying guises), Urizen, and Los⁸⁹--the sensual and material, the rational and institutional, and the creative and spiritual.

All of these readings are valid, just as each character's ideas about the others are right from his point of view; but none of the readings seems to go quite far enough in terms of Cary's whole epistemology. Moreover, to impose Blake's vision upon the whole sequence is to extend beyond its boundaries what was intended primarily as a literary frame of reference for Gulley; it is to accept Gulley's point of view without regard to those of Sara and Wilcher.

A more balanced view, however, stems directly from the only view which encompasses the whole sequence--Cary's epistemology itself. In discussing his work, Cary has explained something of his beliefs:

The free individual person has a character of feeling. (We can't go into how he develops it--he has--something in-born in him--and of course . . . something special to him, his . . . own set-up, his own mixture, his own complex of personal feelings.) Of course, all these personal feelings arise in

the first place out of universal Nature. He's a bit of universal Nature. But as an individual, each man uses his mind and his imagination to create a world satisfactory to himself.

.
 All our happiness arises from this centre of feeling in ourself, our 'self-feeling,' you see. At any rate, it can't be helped, because this is a fundamental character of being, d'you see, it is a real and actual part of a situation which simply is, it simply exists. We don't know why; it is something, and because it is that it can't be that. I mean, even a scientist will tell you all the things that God can't do, because He exists; and you can call it a perfection, or a limitation—I mean, they say existence is a perfection—but, because it exists 'so', and not 'this other way', it is also a limitation; and so that life is shot right through, not only with happiness, the happiness of our free, imaginative creation, but also with the tragedy of that situation.⁹⁰

Herein lies the central paradox of Cary's work: the individual is free, but the fact that he is free limits his freedom. Under analysis, however, this paradox resolves itself. Each individual is limited by the external world (the laws of nature and society) and by his own capabilities. Each individual is capable of sufficient intuition to grasp the reality of his own nature; this is the "self-feeling" of which Cary speaks. But beyond this capability lies the freedom to act upon the intuition. Here man's freedom is limited not only by the external world (which may in many ways prevent his acting freely) but also by "his own mixture." The gap between mind and body which frees man, Cary says, is not fixed but "varies from individual to individual and continually shifts its place." The gap is not between man and nature but is "in the man, between his individual mind seeking to know a truth, and the universal consistencies of nature human and material as recorded by his sensibility."⁹¹ In other words, his own particular nature and the responses of which that nature makes him capable may limit an individual's ability to act with moral,

rational, or creative freedom.

With this fact in mind, one can readily see that each protagonist symbolizes a capability or degree of freedom inherent in the human condition. As has been previously noted, each of the protagonists is "imprisoned" at the moment of his narration, as a result of his conflict with society. On the symbolic level, of course, each individual is "imprisoned" by the external world against which he must fight to create his own personal world.

Moreover, each protagonist is limited by his own nature and responses. One of these limitations is the way he responds to his intuitions of the eternal world of beauty, truth, and spirit.⁹² Sara is an intensely physical woman; consequently, she feels the eternal world and reduces it to her familiar terms of domestic imagery and sensual delight:

We would sit down . . . and watch the sun going down like a hot penny through green and yellow snapdragon fires; you could see right through them into the sky behind, and above the sky was like a Dutch bowl, blue delf. Then the waves seemed to come up suddenly all glittering with hundreds and thousands, like cakes for Easters and birthdays, and try to go on forever, and only get so far and break themselves to pieces with a mournful noise, and fall back with a long sigh. It made me feel sad to see such waste of their work and to think of it going on forever, but then it was a comfort too, to think that they would always be there, whether anyone was looking or not; such is the bounty of Providence, to pour out pleasures. (HS, 118-119)

Nor is Sara a person of deep rational reflection. She always acts impulsively, without self-knowledge: "I could not tell whether I had done a religious thing or a bad one. When I went home again, I was in wonder and dismay all the evening. I thought: What will I do next?--there seems to be nothing I wouldn't do" (HS, 67). Without understanding

herself on the rational level, Sara is constantly surprised at herself. At the end of her narrative she professes to have gained self-knowledge, but subsequent views show that she has not. However, she does live constantly in accordance with her own nature; despite the strictures and censures of society, she ever is at work building her "nests." In these acts, she exercises her moral freedom.

Wilcher misuses both moral and rational freedom before he ultimately exercises both correctly. As previously shown, Wilcher imposes the role of conservator over his essential nature of pilgrim; hence, he suppresses his moral freedom. Rational freedom is the capability to recognize and to accept new facts, but Wilcher uses reason to resist recognition and acceptance. As conservator, he responds to an intuition from the eternal world--the fact of temporal change--in a destructively analytic manner:

I felt as if the very earth were liquefying under my feet, as if the familiar trees, fields, and sky had actually melted into some primitive elementary form. . . . And I, the very last individual being of the old creation, though still solid in appearance, and capable of supporting a hat, as I ascertained by touch, trousers, umbrella, etc., as I perceived by sight, was yet already wavering in essence, beginning to lose the shape of my ideas, memory, etc., preparatory to the final and rapid solution of my whole identity. (TBAP, 276)

In taking an inventory of his sensory impressions, Wilcher attempts to counteract this upsetting intuition with a process of analytic reasoning. This process, however, fails to comfort him. Wilcher is not, of course, a person of pure reason. He does act impulsively and irrationally; indeed, much of his misery stems from such actions. But release comes for Wilcher from a sustained and explicit rational process--that of his

remembrance. In the "prison" of Tolbrook, he reviews his past, understands the errors of his previous conceptions, and compares the past with the present. Through this process he recognizes a universal truth --the inevitability of change. More important, he accepts this new fact:

I say no longer, 'Change must come, and this change so bitter to me, is a necessary ransom for what I keep.' I have surrendered because I cannot fight and now it seems to me that not change but life has lifted me and carried me forward on the stream. (TBAP, 327-328)

His acceptance then frees Wilcher to fulfill his nature as pilgrim.⁹³

Material love. What is material? What is the body?
Is not this house the house of spirits, made by generations
of lovers? . . . Why should I not feel, when I lie in
English ground, the passion of a spirit that beats in all
English souls? (TBAP, 342)

Thus Wilcher represents rational freedom--the human capability to recognize and accept new facts.

Gulley exercises both moral and rational freedom. He has long lived in accordance with his nature as artist, ever since he one day began doodling and discovered his true nature (THM, 51). In addition, he is the most intellectually honest and acute of the three. He accepts new facts, painful though they be. For instance, early in his career he was a confirmed Classicist: "I'd gone through a lot to get my experience, my technique, and I was going to paint like that all my life. It was the only way to paint" (THM, 52) But then he saw a new style of painting: "One day I happened to see a Manet. . . . And it gave me the shock of my life. Like a flash of lightning. It skinned my eyes for me, and when I came out I was a different man. And I saw the world again, the world of colour" (THM, 52). Unlike his father,

who was unable to perceive beauty in a style other than his own, Gulley accepts the fact of a new form of beauty. Similarly, he is able to accept the injustice in the world--the wretched lives of his sister and of Plant, as well as his own misfortunes, such as the loss of his paintings.

Beyond moral and rational freedom, Gulley is capable of creative freedom. All of the protagonists, of course, create their own worlds, those of their "self feeling," through their imagination. But Gulley's nature makes him capable of closer contact with the eternal world. Whereas Sara feels it and Wilcher reasons about it, Gulley sees it. He imaginatively transmutes nature into symbols of truth: "Low tide, dusty water and a crooked bar of straw, chicken-boxes, dirt and oil from mud to mud. Like a viper swimming in skim milk. The old serpent, symbol of nature and love" (THM, 1). His artistic visions come "straight from the Horse," and his paintings are attempts to communicate these intuitions. That is, Gulley responds to the eternal world and attempts to embody his intuitions in his paintings, through the agency of his creative imagination:

"Because the world of imagination," I said to Nosy, "is the world of eternity." For, as Billy says, "There exist in that eternal world the permanent realities of everything which we see reflected in this vegetable glass of Nature." And, I thought, in the works of Gulley Jimson. (THM, 219)

His freedom to express his visions is limited by the external world--his lack of money, the indifference of his patrons, the hostility of religion and government. But because Gulley can create beyond the "self feeling," he is truly free. He transcends the temporal worlds of body and mind into the realm of spirit and eternity:

Even the worst artist that ever was, even a one-eyed mental deficient with the shakes in both hands who sets out to paint the chicken-house, can enjoy the first stroke. Can think, By God, look what I've done. A miracle. I have transformed a chunk of wood, canvas, etc., into a spiritual fact, an eternal beauty. I am God. (THM, 161)

The inclusive structure of the sequence emerges from these symbolic significances of the protagonists. It represents an ascending expansion of the freedoms of being possible in the human condition.⁹⁴ Its progress illustrates the bases of man's greatest fulfillment, the fruition of human potential. Moral freedom—fidelity to one's nature—is the basis of the other freedoms; without it, no fruition is possible. Hence, in terms of the structure, Sara comes first. In terms of personal relationships in the narratives, Sara, being non-intellectual and sensual, cannot fully understand the mental anguish of Wilcher nor the creative frustrations of Gulley (rather like Pertelote, she believes that a laxative would cure Gulley's frenzies). In that her volume presents man's incessant struggle against the external world to exercise moral freedom, it is the definition of the symbolic inclusive structure.

However, though a necessary antecedent, moral freedom alone is insufficient for the highest human fulfillment. Beyond this, man must be capable of rational freedom. To survive among the complex problems of life, man "fits the different elements together in a coherent whole and invents a rational act to deal with it."⁹⁵ That is, imprisoned in the flux and pressures of the external world (particularly as manifest in society), man must be able to perceive and accept new facts. Hence, in the symbolic structure, Wilcher comes second. He represents both the dangers inherent in misuse of the reason and the liberating powers of its correct use. In the personal relationships, Wilcher scarcely

mentions Gulley, though he does know him. Symbolically, reason is aware of but unable fully to understand the realm of the creative spirit, a plane higher than its own. On the other hand, Wilcher believes that Sara can save him (TBAP, 13, 27, 302-303). Instead, she betrays him. However, Wilcher had first betrayed Sara by allowing her to go to prison for selling "some useless trinkets" (TBAP, 1). In his own life, Wilcher had betrayed his moral freedom by becoming a conservator rather than a pilgrim and had then defended that betrayal with misused reason. Not until he exercises his reason properly and accepts the facts which it reveals to him is he able to fulfill his true nature. Symbolically, moral freedom alone cannot redeem misused rational freedom. Man must exercise both correctly before his human potential can reach greater fruition. In that this volume illustrates the possible dangers, the necessity, and the powers of rational freedom, it is the crisis of the symbolic structure.

The highest fruition of man's potential is reached through creative freedom. It is this which Gulley achieves and which he represents. Consequently, his volume is the final one in the sequence. In their personal relationships, Gulley takes money from Wilcher but feels his hostility and lack of understanding as "Abstract philosophy warring in enmity against Imagination" (THM, 177). From Sara, Gulley receives inspiration (THM, 37, 76), but he must resist her efforts to dominate him (THM, 244). Symbolically, creative freedom must depend upon moral and rational freedom, yet must transcend them; it must move beyond body and mind into the eternal world. In that this volume does illustrate the transcendency of creative freedom, it is the resolution of the symbolic

inclusive structure.

Thus, despite the three separate narratives and the lack of a straight-line sequence of events, a symbolic inclusive structure does exist in the First Trilogy. The protagonists and their actions create the symbolism, and the symbolism constitutes the structure. Both illustrate Cary's general theme: each individual creates his own "world" according to his own nature and, if faithful to his nature, achieves triumph or tragedy according to the relationships of that "world" with the external world. In the concrete action, each narrative shows the individual's nature and the conflict of his "world" with society. On the symbolic level, the sequence as a whole shows natures of progressively greater capability for freedom and for achieving the potential of mankind. In that it thus depicts the whole range of human freedoms and of man's relationships with society and the eternal world, Cary's First Trilogy contains a total statement about the human condition.

Cary creates this statement primarily through his handling of fictive time and point of view. His use of fictive time is of especial importance. Within each volume of the sequence, two distinct strata of time occur: the past which the protagonist remembers and the present, toward which the past progresses. The particular relationship between these two strata determines the structure of the volume and characterizes each narrator.

Herself Surprised employs an envelope structure: the past is enclosed within brief scenes of the present. Sara begins her narrative with the judge's concluding remarks at her trial and her admission into prison, and concludes it with her having accepted a commission to write

her confession for a newspaper. Inserted between these beginning and concluding scenes of Sara in prison is the story of her life. The time span of this narrative begins in 1897: Sara goes to work for the Mondays during the Diamond Jubilee (HS, 4). It concludes with Sara's arrest in the late summer of 1936; when Wilcher begins his narrative a month after Sara's conviction, he remarks that Ann is then twenty-six; subsequently, he indicates that she was born in 1910 (TBAP, 111).

Sara's history is straight-forwardly chronological, with one important exception. Significantly, this deviation prepares for the resolution of the volume's structure. Sara reveals that even after she had moved to the Ranns Park cottage, she had visited with Gulley and his new "wife." In a brief regression in time, she tells how she had met Gulley at Rozzie's funeral two years earlier, had begun to visit him, and had started buying his supplies and paying for Tommy's schooling (HS, 251-266). These expenses cause her to sell some of Wilcher's property, and this deed, of course, causes her arrest and downfall. Through this regression, Cary reveals important information at the structurally appropriate time, thus intensifying the effect of Sara's narrative.

The texture of her narrative varies because Sara omits large stretches of time. Her present, for instance, contains an indeterminate number of months in 1936 while she composes her confession. Yet little time seems to elapse during these months, for Sara does not mention any events which occur during them. Similarly, during the thirty-nine years covered in her history, she focuses upon the three significant periods when she is living with Monday, Jimson, and Wilcher. This omission of events during her past and present is characteristic of Sara, for when

she is not making a "nest," she considers that nothing happens. Technically, of course, Cary had to omit much material, as he remarks in his prefatory note (p. xi), in order to capture the essential character of Sara.

In terms of the novel's structure, all of the primary events except the denouement occur in the past. Literally, Sara is being paid only for her past and she therefore records essentially that. But thematically, Sara has moral existence only when fulfilling her nature. Hence, since her imprisonment interrupts and prevents that fulfillment and since she professes to be rehabilitated, her moral being does exist solely in her past.

Throughout most of To Be A Pilgrim, the past and the present exist as parallel strata. In his diary Wilcher records both the progressing events of his present life at Tolbrook and his memories of the past. The present of Wilcher's narrative begins in the autumn of 1936, one month after Sara's imprisonment, and continues chronologically for almost exactly three years, ending in September of 1939. Although his diary entries about the present are intermittent, the passage of time is measurable in two ways. First, Wilcher often remarks upon the passing seasons or seasonal signs. Thus appear references to autumn colors (p. 4), a January afternoon (73), April (109), an English summer (130), February (187), a spring wind (207), summer weeks (234), a snow fall (290), spring coats (300), and September (323). Two winters, two summers, and three autumns thereby carry the narrative to September of 1939. Second, the period is also measurable through the Robert-Ann subplot. Robert and Ann both stay at Tolbrook after Wilcher's return there;

about six months later they marry (29); their child Jan is fourteen months old when Robert and Molly leave (209); several months later Molly has a child and Ann goes to see Robert about a divorce; they are reconciled and return to Tolbrook; in September of that year Ann is five months pregnant. All together, nearly three years elapse in the action of the subplot.

The majority of the primary structural elements of the novel occur during these three years. Wilcher hears Lucy's voice whisper, "To be a pilgrim" (the definition) shortly after his return to Tolbrook. He then begins to remember his past (the extended action which constitutes the complication). He flees Tolbrook in search of Sara (the crisis). Returned again, Wilcher accepts the eternal fact of change (the resolution) and thus acquires peace of mind and a sense of triumph (the denouement). The events of the present, therefore, are the basic foundation of the novel's structure.

However, interspersed among these events are Wilcher's memories of the past. They constitute the substance, if indeed not the literal action, of the complication. The time span contained within these memories begins about 1873, when Wilcher is a small child, and concludes with scenes of Sara and of Wilcher's trouble with the law, in about 1934. This time span runs chronologically, except for three major scenes. Because these three episodes are out of their temporal position in the narrative, they attract particular attention. Indeed, each is especially important in the structure or theme of the novel. The first, in Chapter 7, narrates the nineteen-year-old Wilcher's first encounter with Puggy Brown. Even though he "might have been a bell tuned" to Brown's evangelical

call, Wilcher flees. This scene dramatizes in the past the conflict defined in the present action, in Chapter 5. Furthermore, it establishes Wilcher's true nature as essentially that of the "pilgrim." The second important scene, in Chapter 149, reveals the cause of Wilcher's fear of change—a childhood trauma perpetrated as a joke upon him by his brothers and sister. This scene is not presented earlier in its proper place because only after Wilcher has shed his false veneration of Lucy and Edward through the process of memory and has accepted the fact of change can he bear to think of this "torture so extreme, so fearful" that it twists his heart even sixty years later. The third scene, in Chapter 151, recounts Amy's death in the year of the great strike, 1926. Through his remembrance, Wilcher comes to admire Amy, whom he and his family customarily had ridiculed. He now sees her as truly a pilgrim spirit. Hence, his memory of her calm acceptance of death prepares him to die with equal calmness and fortitude. This attitude, of course, is part of his triumph.

The relationship of the two strata of time is a principal means by which Cary characterizes Wilcher and establishes his symbolic value. As seen in his concern for politics, religion, and social institutions in general, Wilcher is more intelligent than Sara. However, imprisoned at Tolbrook, Wilcher is confused and afraid of death. His memories become both a defense against the unpleasantness of the present and an exploratory means whereby he hopes to understand what has happened to him. But in the process of remembering, he begins to reevaluate his old conceptions and opinions. For instance, his first memory of Amy invites a new appraisal of her: "I had not before remembered Amy so well, and

I felt that I had done her great injustice in her life" (105). As he remembers and reappraises his past, he also observes the events of the present. Through this comparative process, he moves slowly toward understanding both himself and the world. By the time he reaches the last chronological memory of his past, over two years have elapsed in the present and his memories have arrived almost to where his narrative begins. However, he is still unable to accept what his mind has come to understand. Hence, after his terrible dream of Tolbrook as a coffin, he flees and attempts to find Sara, believing that he will find peace with her. When this last preconception from his past proves false, he returns to Tolbrook. There, amidst the now-ruined splendor of the Adams saloon, he at last accepts what both the past and present have revealed to him--the eternal fact of change. Thus, through the rational processes of remembrance and observation, Wilcher is able to exercise reason correctly and to fulfill his true nature. In this way Cary employs fictive time to structure the novel, characterize Wilcher, and establish him as a symbol of rational freedom.

The temporal strata in The Horse's Mouth present a particularly complex structure. In the two preceding volumes, the period during which the narrators record their stories constitutes their present time: Sara writes while in prison; Wilcher records the three-year span at Tolbrook. Such is also the case with Gulley: in the hospital as a result of his stroke and fall when The Creation was destroyed, he dictates his memoirs, apparently to Nosy. Gulley's present, therefore, consists of the period from shortly after the end of his tale until his death in 1940 (disclosed in a footnote, page 263). Yet Gulley refers to his present time only

twice, both instances in a single chapter:

If, while I am dictating this memoir, to my honorary secretary, who has got the afternoon off from the cheese counter, I may make a personal explanation, which won't be published anyhow; I never meant to be an artist.

.
Tonight it seems that I can't paint at all. . . . I wander weeping far away, until some other take me up. The police. It's quite time. I'm getting too old for this rackety life. (51, 55-56)

His ignoring the present is itself characteristic of Jimson. Although he now cannot paint, he is still a creator. Consequently, he creates with words, using the only material available to him, his recent life. If he were to dwell imaginatively in the barren present, he might fall into bitterness and despair, might indeed "wander weeping far away." Hence, he ignores the bleak present, scarcely alluding to it.

Brief though these two allusions be, they are nevertheless sufficient to establish a temporal reference point for Gulley's present. The tale he tells, in relation to this reference point, is therefore in the past. In this respect, the bulk of Gulley's narrative does not differ from the bulk of Sara's or Wilcher's; the only differences are that most of Gulley's past is more recent than theirs and that Gulley's narrative contains several strata of the past in addition to the primary time of the tale.

The primary time begins as Gulley walks by the Thames "on an autumn day" in 1938 (1, 15). Thereafter, the narrative is so swiftly paced, so filled with detail, and so richly dramatized that it seems to cover a lengthy duration. In truth, the time covered is less than a year, with two considerable compressions included—the six months in jail, which Gulley covers in exactly four and a half pages; and the month or

more in the Burlington hospital, which he deals with in less than two pages. When he returns from Burlington, he finds Coker's letter, dated 31/7/39, waiting for him (225). From this point until the destruction of The Creation, something over a month passes. The primary time, then, chronologically spans from autumn 1938 until later summer of 1939. It is thus synchronous with the later part of Wilcher's narrative.

Set within the primary narrative are further mnemonic regressions into the past. Inclusively, these span from when Gulley was a boy living with his parents in France (early 1880's) until his conversation with Wilcher, about 1932. However, these regressions are of three different kinds: the memory of his father's failure and his mother's subsequent life, remembered episodes of his own life, and memories of his sister Jenny's life. None of these regressions is extensive, the longest being only seven pages, and only those scenes in which Gulley participated are fully dramatized. Yet all of these regressions are important in understanding Gulley as both character and symbol. Each serves as counterpoint to Gulley's thoughts or to an episode in the primary narrative. For instance, when Gulley is afraid that he will be arrested for telephoning Hickson, he thinks, "Well, . . . I've filled a lot of canvases in my time. Quite enough for any man. It's time I was done for" (47). He then remembers his mother's splendid devotion to her husband's art. As a result of her example, he is then able to rally his own courage.

The episodes from his own life are similarly effective counterpoints. The first is his memory of how he became an artist (51-55). Apparently stimulated by his recollection of a dwarf whose wife had left him, "not because she didn't like Harry, but because the neighbors laughed

when they went out together" (51), Gulley then gives his own "personal explanation" of how he never wanted to be an artist but became one anyway, with disastrous consequences to his marriage and career. This juxtaposition seems to imply that Gulley could no more help being an artist—and thus fulfilling his nature—than Harry could help being a dwarf. The second episode is his remembrance of Wilcher (175-177). When Gulley first goes to obtain the painting from Sara, Wilcher's name enters the conversation. When Gulley thinks of the man whom he considers the epitome of a society hostile to art, he becomes all the more determined to get the painting from Sara. The final episode is the lengthiest—Gulley's remembrance of his affairs with Rozzie and Sara (243-249). Moved by his annual visit to Rozzie's grave and his encounter with Sara there, Gulley remembers how he had started an affair with Rozzie while also living with Sara, how she had borne his son, and how he had grieved at her death. Partly summarized and partly dramatized, this regression achieves two effects. First, since Gulley is not at that time involved romantically, his remembrance of his passion for both Rozzie and Sara reveals a dimension of his character not otherwise shown. Further, by delineating the nature of his earlier involvement with Sara, it makes more credible the crisis of the novel, in which Gulley deliriously imagines Sara again pleading with him to take care of himself.

Perhaps the most effective counterpoints are the five remembrances of Jenny. Collectively, these appear chronologically, from Jenny's elopement with Ranken in 1888, to her suicide sometime after the Boer War. However, Gulley's memories are interspersed throughout his narrative. When each appears, consciously summoned by Gulley, it directly

comments on the current episode or reveals Gulley's attitudes toward life. For instance, the first occurs when Gulley finds Plant living in the doss house (119-122). In an effort to counter Plant's insistence that the loss of his hand means something, Gulley tells him of Jenny's ingratitude for his protection against Ranken. Gulley intends the tale to be an example of life's essential injustice, but Plant refuses to listen to him. The next three segments appear at other appropriate moments: the second where Gulley resists Nosy's obstinate adoration of him (150-151); the third while Gulley is reduced to peddling post cards (215); the fourth when Plant thinks that he has found the meaning of life, in having power over the lavatory key (226-227). The fifth segment is particularly significant. Feeling that something unexpected will prevent his finishing his painting, Gulley remembers how Jenny had committed suicide when Ranken had left her: "I suppose, after all, she hadn't his resources. He had his new governor to think about. . . . But she'd only had Robert and when he went off, she had nothing and no idea of anything" (274). Gulley, recalling his sister's fatal despair, is thus able to continue, for he has something--The Creation.

Despite the importance of these three kinds of mnemonic regressions, however, they account for relatively little of Gulley's narrative, a total of only twenty pages out of the 289 in the volume. Thus, the primary time is by far the more prominent in the narrative. This fact in itself helps create the symbolic value of Gulley. He does not linger over the details of his long distant past, as do Sara and Wilcher; nor does he brood upon his present life, as do they. Rather, he concentrates upon that period when he was most alive and most creative. And though

he cannot now paint, he can create in words a memory and a feeling of the living eternal world. This achievement, of course, is his ultimate capability of creative freedom.

These patterns of fictive time in the separate volumes create an extremely complex temporal form in the whole sequence. This complexity stems from two facts. First, the proportions of past to present differ in each volume: the envelope structure in Herself Surprised contains less than three pages of Sara's present, to 271 pages of her past; in To Be A Pilgrim, fifty-six chapters show the present, eighty-eight record the past, and eleven deal with both; while some five sentences represent the present in The Horse's Mouth, 269 pages depict the recent past, and twenty pages reveal the more distant past. In brief, Sara's narrative is primarily about her past, with a little of her present; Wilcher's is divided between his past and present, with his past predominating; Gulley's is almost exclusively about his recent past, with portions about his earlier life contained therein.

Second, the sequence does contain some chronological progress. Some such chronological development is necessary in every sequence novel, for, as W. J. Harvey points out, "Consequences can only be analyzed in time."⁹⁶ In Cary's sequence, this progress appears to exist in the temporal relationship of each narrator's present time to the preceding narrator's present. That is, the present in Sara's narrative concludes in the autumn, possibly September, of 1936. The present in Wilcher's continues chronologically from late 1936 to September of 1939. The present in Gulley's volume then takes place after late summer of 1939. Thus, a chronological progress in the present does occur. However,

in fact, this progress is at best superficial. The only valid chronological development in the sequence depends not upon the moment of narration but upon the relationships of the protagonists. Thus, the development occurs not in the present but in the past of Herself Surprised, the present of To Be A Pilgrim, and the primary time—Gulley's recent past—of The Horse's Mouth.

These two facts determine the temporal pattern through which Cary achieves certain significant thematic effects. The chronological progress shapes the order of the volumes. Thus, Herself Surprised is the first on the basis of time. Sara's narrative establishes temporal reference points against which later events are measured or realized. More important, her narrative establishes the principal relationships which are developed subsequently in the sequence—not only her unions with Wilcher and Gulley, but also the antagonism between Robert and Wilcher, a major conflict in To Be A Pilgrim, and the attraction between Rozzie and Gulley, an important aspect of The Horse's Mouth. The chronological development also permits the culmination of these relationships. In Herself Surprised, Sara becomes Gulley's "wife" in 1919, lives with him until 1925, becomes Wilcher's housekeeper in 1925 and his mistress in 1932, and goes to prison about September of 1936. In her supposed life thereafter, she serves eighteen months, until approximately February of 1938, and then sets up housekeeping with Fred Robins. In To Be A Pilgrim, Wilcher goes to see Sara in the spring of 1939. She betrays him to Robert and Ann, and he dies after September of 1939. In The Horse's Mouth, Gulley and Coker visit Sara in the fall of 1938, and he accidentally kills her in late summer of 1939. Shortly thereafter,

he falls and then dies early in 1940. Thus, the order of the volumes is fixed by this development in time. The importance of this fact lies in the thematic progress of the symbolic inclusive structure. In order for Cary to emphasize man's expanding capabilities for freedom, the proper sequence of reading must be insured, and he insures this sequence through the development of character relationships on the level of time and action.

However, the real thematic significance of the First Trilogy lies not in this development of relationships but primarily in the whole worlds, past and present, of the protagonists. Cary's intention in the three volumes is "to show three people, living each in his own world by his own ideas, and relating his own life and struggles, his triumphs and miseries in that world" (ET, ix). Consequently, the "three parts cover the same period of history" (ET, ix). Sara's narrative incorporates an entire time span from her first taking service in 1897 to her imprisonment in 1936. Wilcher's contains a span from when he was about five, in 1873, until September of 1939. Gulley's includes a span from his early youth in France, in the early 1860's, until early 1940. Hence, each volume contains a period of forty or more years.

The time sphere of any volume of fiction necessarily includes all of the fictive time in which any significant action occurs. In a synchronous sequence novel, these time spheres need not be in absolutely exact chronological register. Indeed, they probably cannot be, due to the need for some chronological development by which consequences may be analyzed. In that the three volumes in Cary's sequence do "cover the same period of history," they are therefore essentially synchronous.

Through this synchronous presentation of time spheres, Cary achieves two effects necessary to his basic theme. First, the separate presentations allow him to show the protagonists developing through a period of time. According to his nature, each protagonist makes important decisions or choices which shape his world and thereby reveal his character. For instance, Sara impulsively accepts Monday's proposal, Wilcher flees from Brown and later from Lucy, and Gulley abandons his business career for a life of creative artistry. The consequences of these choices, observable only after a passage of time, constitute the action through which Cary presents his general theme. Second, the synchronous presentations allow Cary to show his protagonists' characteristic responses to society and its temporal changes. Sara's responses to social change are typically domestic. For instance, when the countryside around the Monday villa is developed into a suburb of ugly cottages, Sara views the change as "something you could not stop like mold in a bread bin" (HS, 39). Wilcher's fear of social change is an important aspect of his character. Thus, Cary shows Wilcher's fear of the political turmoil in 1899, of the atmosphere of rebellion in 1906 and 1910, of the swift class and moral decay after World War I, of the labor unrest in the 1920's, and of the economic upheaval in the 1930's. Wilcher's long history of fear of change thus gives point to his acceptance of change as an eternal fact of life at the end of his narrative. Gulley's world is centered around art. Thus, Cary shows Gulley's consciousness of society's changing taste in art, not only through his father's failure from not keeping up with the times but also through Gulley's own economic failure from moving ahead of the current taste. Hence, the synchronous time spheres which

constitute his sequence pattern enable Cary to show each character and his world and to establish his theme in terms of the conflict of each character with society.

Much of the preceding discussion has already indicated the function and nature of the point of view in the First Trilogy: isolated in his own world, each protagonist narrates his own tale in the first person. Cary was acutely aware of the limitations of each kind of narrative technique:

Every single method has its own advantages and its own limitations. The first person has great narrative force, but is exceedingly limited in scope and content. The third, in its classic form, is immensely flexible and revealing, but by the very fact that it allows a writer to be everywhere, to see everything, it loses conviction and force.⁹⁷

Nevertheless, because it best supported his general theme of the individual's isolation, Cary chose the first person for his sequence:

We are all alone in our own worlds.

We can sympathize with each other, be fond of each other, but we can never completely understand each other. We are not only different in character and mind, we don't know how far the difference goes.

That's why each of my three chief characters had to write in the first person and reveal his own world in his own style.

(FT, x)

Thus, the point of view concretely dramatizes Cary's world view and his theme of individual isolation.

Yet from the very nature of Cary's world view and technique arises a perplexing problem—the reliability of the narrators. Because each individual is alone in his own "world," he can never completely know another individual nor fully appreciate his values. His view of everyone else is colored by his own nature and the nature of his "world." Hence, because he is limited by his own individualisms, the narrator is necessarily

unreliable.

Numerous instances in the First Trilogy illustrate that each narrator is unreliable in certain points of detail, understanding, and evaluation. Discrepancies in detail occur between the volumes. For instance, Sara says that Gulley is the "son of a doctor" (HS, 79); Gulley, on the other hand, reveals that his father was an artist (THM, 47). Similarly, Sara remarks that Robert had not gone to Oxford because neither Wilcher nor Puggy Brown would pay his fees (HS, 216, 220). However, Wilcher says that Lucy had left sufficient money for Robert's education (TBAP, 297), but that Robert had lost all of his inheritance in bad speculations (10).

In a more important manner of unreliability, the narrators fail to understand other characters. Sara, for example, believes that Rozzie is a strong-willed woman who can withstand any man's seductive blandishments (HS, 12, 97, 105). Gulley, however, discovers that Rozzie is "all bark and no bite" (THM, 243), that she is, in fact, a yielding and compliant woman. Similarly, Sara looks upon the young Robert as a "good young soul" whose roughness is only misguided kindness (HS, 188); consequently, she mothers him. Wilcher, on the other hand, sees the boy as obstinate, noisy, dirty, and insubordinate (TBAP, 317); therefore, he often quarrels with him.

The most important area of unreliability, however, is each narrator's evaluation of the other protagonists. Because each sees the others from only his own biased perspective, his presentation of them is only fragmentary.⁹⁸ Sara sees Gulley and Wilcher each in turn as a "poor manny" who needs comforting and encouraging; her view is colored by her

nature as nest-maker and her need to establish domestic relationships. Wilcher sees Sara as a true pilgrim with a strong, deeply religious spirit (TBAP, 8, 320). He hardly mentions Gulley, a fact which indicates that he places no value at all upon the inpecunious artist. His view is determined by his troubled nature as pilgrim/conservator, by his desire for the peace that he believes Sara can give him, and by his antipathy of instability and modernity. Gulley sees Sara as a hypocrite who can "commit adultery at one end and weep for her sins at the other, and enjoy both operations at once" (THM, 22) and as a "tyrant who tried to put [him] in a bottle and cork [him] up into a woman's cup of tea" (THM, 244). Yet he also values Sara for her vitality, zest for living, and essential femininity: "When you know Sara, you know womankind" (THM, 246). He views Wilcher as one "all eaten up with lawfulness and rage, ready to bite himself for being so respectable" (THM, 175) and as an abstract rationalist ready to commit murder or rape on principle. His view, of course, is determined by his nature as creator, by his need to remain free, and by his hostility to institutionalized society. Thus, each protagonist values the others according to the needs or antipathies which spring from his own particular nature. Therefore, the view that each gives is, by itself, unreliable evidence in determining the reality of any other given character. As Cary remarks, "All the ideas of the three about each other are right from their own point of view" (FT, xiv).

If, however, each narrator presents an unreliable view of the other characters, how can a reader ascertain the truth about them? The answer, of course, lies in the form of the sequence novel. Cary provides a clue in his discussion of a novel as a total symbol:

The form of a book, page by page, is not the book, the work of art. All these separate pages and chapters, like the movements of a symphony, do not have a complete significance until the whole work is known. They are, so to speak, partly in suspension, until at the end of the last movement, the last chapter, they suddenly fall into their place. This is only to say again that the separate forms do not possess their whole content until the work is complete. That's why I call the book a total symbol. It is both richer than its parts and actually different from them.⁹⁹

Though Cary here speaks only of a single novel, his concept holds especially true in the larger scale of the sequence novel. Any one of the narrators' views is "partly in suspension" until the sequence is concluded, and, during the process of conclusion, that view is modified or corrected by the other perspectives in the sequence. The first volume reveals Sara's nature and gives her necessarily biased perspective of Wilcher and Gulley. At this point the reader has a one-dimensional view of the three protagonists. The second volume reveals Wilcher's nature and modifies the reader's understanding of both Wilcher and Sara. However, because Wilcher scarcely mentions Gulley, the reader's impression of him remains essentially Sara's view. The final volume fully reveals Gulley and provides his view of Sara and Wilcher. Consequently, at the end of the sequence, the reader has a three-dimensional view of each character: Sara and Wilcher (by inference) on Gulley, Gulley and Sara on Wilcher, and Gulley and Wilcher on Sara. From these cross perspectives emerges the knowable truth about each protagonist. Thus, the total view which the reader gains corrects the individual unreliability. The whole of the sequence, therefore, is "both richer than its parts and actually different from them."

In summary, Cary's First Trilogy contains three separate volumes

which constitute a united whole. From this whole structure emerges the general theme: each individual creates his own "world" according to his own nature and achieves triumph or suffers tragedy according to the relationship of that "world" with the rest of society. Within the sequence, the arrangement of the synchronous time spheres provides both a chronological development, necessary for a culmination of the personal relationships, and a concentration upon the characters' separate "worlds," necessary for the expression of the theme. The first person point of view both dramatizes the essential isolation of each narrator and, in combination, corrects the narrators' individual unreliability. Time and point of view thus create the sequence form through which Cary conveys his general theme.

FOOTNOTES: CHAPTER III

¹The Craft of Fiction, p. 14.

²Form in Literature, p. 246.

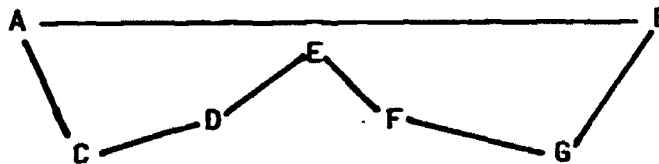
³Ibid., pp. 16-17.

⁴The Technique of the Novel, p. 320.

⁵Op. Cit., p. 68.

⁶The following analysis is a synthesis of the discussion of plot found in cited works of Eastman, Grabo, Lubbock, Muir, Scholes and Kellogg, and Weston.

⁷Weston conceives of all narratives as being motivated by the Intention of the protagonist, all plot as being the action by which the protagonist achieves or fails to achieve his intention, and form, diagrammatically depicted, as approximating a W:



AB = The Line of Intention

AC = The barrier to the Intention

CD = The Reversal of the Barrier

DE = The Crisis

EF = The Reversal of the Crisis

FG = The Catastrophe

GB = The Denouement

Weston's Form in Literature is an explanation and illustration of this theory; however, Chapter One, "Outline of Form," pp. 15-37, contains the basic theory and definitions.

⁸Eastman, op. cit., p. 10.

⁹Crane, op. cit., p. 68.

¹⁰See Crane's definition of these terms, p. 37, fn. 21, above.

¹¹John Galsworthy, "Author's Preface," The Forsyte Saga (Memorial Edition; New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1940), pp. xii, xiii. All subsequent page citations from this sequence refer to this edition.

¹²Of use to me in my analysis of The Forsyte Saga was Earl E. Stevens' unpublished dissertation, "A Study of the Structure of John Galsworthy's The Forsyte Saga" (Department of English, University of North Carolina, 1963). However, I disagree with several of Dr. Stevens' conclusions, particularly his contention that the old Jolyon story is the main plot and the Soames-Irene-Bosinney story is a subplot. Dr. Stevens bases this contention primarily upon the notions that only in

old Jolyon do we see the marked character change which is necessary in a main plot and that upon old Jolyon do we most clearly see the disturbing effects of Beauty and Passion. In contrast, I maintain that Soames' character does change, for he grows more obdurate in his possessiveness, a change perfectly suited to Galsworthy's satiric attitude and purpose. Moreover, Soames, being the "man of property," more clearly represents the sense of possession than does old Jolyon; and Irene, whom Galsworthy called "a concretion of disturbing Beauty," (xii) appears only tangentially in the old Jolyon plot but is, of course, a central character in the Soames story. Logically, Galsworthy would more probably present the major figures of his thematic conflict in his main plot than in a subplot. Furthermore, the Soames plot develops the theme in greater detail: of the thirty-two chapters in The Man of Property, eighteen deal primarily with the Soames plot, eight concern the old Jolyon story, and six present either both or other matters. Therefore, I maintain that not the old Jolyon but the Soames story is the main plot.

¹³Each volume of The Forsyte Saga is divided into three parts, and each part starts chapter enumeration anew. However, for clarity in indicating the proximity of one event to another, I shall simply enumerate the chapters consecutively within each volume.

¹⁴Again I must disagree with Dr. Stevens, who says, "Soames' rape of Irene, although significant, is not in terms of structure, one of the pivotal major events upon which the subplot turns." (op. cit., 223). Dr. Stevens bases this contention upon two premises: that the event is not causally significant and that it is not dramatically presented within the novel. I maintain that the event is indeed a major turning point. First, it signals a marked change in Soames' behavior. Moving from cajolery to threats, Soames—usually governed by cold reason—finally resorts to a passion-driven assertion of his "property rights" over Irene. Second, the event constitutes the decisive turning point in their relationship: after this, either Irene must submit to his claims of property, as Soames hopes; or else she must actively forsake her marriage, as she does. Third, the rape is directly the cause of Bosinney's wrath and, indirectly, of his death; it also directly causes Irene's flight from Soames' house, the resolution of the plot. The event would thus certainly be causally and structurally significant. It is not, however, dramatically presented. In one sense, Galsworthy's technique is roughly analogous to the decorum of Greek drama in which hideous events occur offstage. More precisely, however, the narrative is governed by Galsworthy's point of view, which never enters Irene's thoughts. Consequently, rather than risk an ineffective scene or violate his whole pattern of point of view, Galsworthy reflects the scene through Soames' consciousness. This point will be discussed more amply later, but one can see, I believe, that the significance of the event is not diminished by Galsworthy's method of indirect presentation.

¹⁵"Introduction" to The Man of Property (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1949), p. xiv.

¹⁶"The Forsytes," Yale Review, XIX (March, 1930), 54'.

¹⁷Time and the Novel, p. 76.

¹⁸"Introduction," p. xii.

¹⁹Time and the Novel, p. 73.

²⁰Quoted in Marrot, op. cit., p. 193.

²¹Ibid., p. 687.

²²Ibid., p. 603.

²³Ibid.

²⁴Ibid., p. 688.

²⁵Ibid., p. 720.

²⁶Ibid., p. 688.

²⁷Rhetoric of Fiction, p. 158.

²⁸Ibid., pp. 67-89.

²⁹Ibid., pp. 155-159.

³⁰Stevenson, "Introduction," pp. x-xi; Walter Cohen, Jan Struther, and Lyman Bryson, "John Galsworthy: The Forsyte Saga," Invitation to Learning, II (Spring, 1952), p. 30; David Daiches, The Novel and the Modern World, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1939), p. 39.

³¹Sherston's Progress, p. 245.

³²The following method of showing the plot pattern in Sassoon's sequence necessarily differs from the method used for Galsworthy's sequence: because it must not only show the primary actions but also explain the reasons (George's beliefs and emotional states) for the actions, the analysis is somewhat more detailed.

³³Crane, op. cit., p. 67.

³⁴This statement does not imply that no other pattern could achieve these purposes or convey this theme, only that Sassoon manifestly considered it more effective than any other.

³⁵The Rhetoric of Fiction, p. 155.

³⁶In 1919, Bennett published a novel, The Roll Call, which narrates

the experiences of George Edwin (Cannon) Clayhanger during World War I. Some critics consider it to be the fourth part of the sequence. However, Bennett's own journals make it clear that he planned only three volumes: "Noted, for third novel in trilogy, scene in train. . . ." (entry for December 1, 1909; The Journal of Arnold Bennett, 3 vols. [New York: Viking, 1932], 1, 347). The Roll Call is essentially a propaganda piece which Bennett hastily wrote to encourage Britons to greater efforts during the War; beyond the figure of George Clayhanger, it has no connection with the trilogy, either thematically or structurally.

³⁷New York: Doubleday, Doran and Company, 1939. Originally published in 1910.

³⁸New York: E. P. Dutton, 1911.

³⁹New York: George H. Doran Company, 1915.

⁴⁰Four Contemporary Novelists (New York: Macmillan, 1930), p. 90.

⁴¹James Hall points out one minor limitation of point of view: Bennett "abandons all attempt . . . to enter into Darius' mind," after the old man's initial stroke. (Arnold Bennett: Primitivism and Taste [Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1959], p. 104. Through this limitation, Bennett diminishes the forcefulness of Darius' character and emphasizes that of Edwin.

⁴²Joyce Cary, First Trilogy (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1958). Subsequent references are to this one-volume edition; however, since each novel is paginated separately, individual titles will be used where pertinent.

⁴³Joyce Cary, Art and Reality (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1958), p. 158. Also see Lord David Cecil, "The Novelist At Work," Adam International Review, XVIII (November-December, 1950), 18.

⁴⁴Art and Reality, p. 112. See also Malcolm Cowley (ed.), Writers at Work (New York: Viking Press, 1958), p. 58.

⁴⁵Art and Reality, p. 9.

⁴⁶Joyce Cary, "The Way a Novel Gets Written," Harper's Magazine, CC (February, 1950), 91.

⁴⁷Cecil, p. 18.

⁴⁸Art and Reality, p. 8.

⁴⁹Ibid., p. 138.

⁵⁰Ibid., pp. 6, 138, 155.

⁵¹ibid., pp. 5-6.

⁵²ibid., p. 148. Also see Cecil, p. 18.

⁵³Art and Reality, p. 29.

⁵⁴ibid., pp. 9, 28. Also see Cecil, p. 18.

⁵⁵Art and Reality, pp. 151, 153.

⁵⁶ibid., p. 157.

⁵⁷ibid., p. 13. However, Cary also says, "Reason is used only to satisfy feelings, to build up a world in which feelings can be gratified, ambition realized. . . ." Art and Reality, p. 24.

⁵⁸ibid., p. 14.

⁵⁹ibid., pp. 11-13, 31.

⁶⁰Cowley, pp. 61-62.

⁶¹Art and Reality, p. 157.

⁶²ibid., p. 147.

⁶³See Cary's extended discussion of this idea in "The Way a Novel Gets Written," pp. 91-92.

⁶⁴Art and Reality, pp. 155-156.

⁶⁵"Preface" to Herself Surprised (Carfax Edition; London: Michael Joseph, 1960), p. 7.

⁶⁶Cowley, p. 63; Cecil, p. 24; see especially Cary's narration of this method in action in Art and Reality, pp. 127-132.

⁶⁷"The Way a Novel Gets Written," p. 88.

⁶⁸Art and Reality, p. 99.

⁶⁹"The Way a Novel Gets Written," p. 92.

⁷⁰Art and Reality, p. 98.

⁷¹"Preface" to Prisoner of Grace (Carfax Edition; London: Michael Joseph, 1954), p. 7.

⁷²Art and Reality, p. 100.

⁷³ibid.

74 ibid., pp. 149-150.

75 "The Way A Novel Gets Written," pp. 91-92.

76 ibid.

77 The reason for Wilcher's fear of change--a childhood trauma--is not revealed until near the end of the volume, in Chapter 149. However, this fear governs much of Wilcher's behavior throughout his life.

78 First Trilogy, p. ix.

79 ibid.

80 Cowley, Writers at Work, p. 55.

81 The most extensive study of this facet of the sequence is that of Glenn Hatfield, "Form and Character in the Sequence Novels of Joyce Cary" (unpublished Master's thesis, Ohio State University, 1956).

82 First Trilogy, pp. xiii-xiv.

83 Several critics have examined this aspect of Cary's sequence. Among the most useful are the studies of Glenn Hatfield, op. cit.; Hazard Adams, "Joyce Cary's Three Speakers," MFS, V (Summer, 1959), 108-120; Charles G. Hoffman, Joyce Cary: The Comedy of Freedom (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1964), pp. 67-98; and Fred Stockholder, "The Triple Vision in Joyce Cary's First Trilogy," MFS, IX (Autumn, 1963), 231-244. One of the principal flaws of the sequence, as Hatfield points out (pp. 23-24), is that Wilcher scarcely mentions Gulley in his narrative. However, as Adams remarks, Wilcher does not mention Gulley because, "to think of Jimson, perhaps, is to think of Sara in a way which prevents him from seeing her as a symbol of his release" (118).

84 First Trilogy, p. xiii.

85 Joyce Cary: A Preface to His Novels (London: Chatto and Windus, 1958), pp. 72-106.

86 Joyce Cary: The Developing Style (New York: New York University Press, 1968), pp. 38, 41.

87 Stockholder, 237.

88 "Blake and Gulley Jimson: English Symbolists," Critique, III (Spring-Fall, 1959), 3-14.

89 Stockholder, 238.

⁹⁰Cecil, "The Novelist at Work," 18-19.

⁹¹Art and Reality, p. 29.

⁹²For Cary's brief analysis of Keats' dictum on beauty and truth, see Art and Reality, p. 138.

⁹³This sequence does not imply that rational freedom must be the antecedent of moral freedom. Quite the reverse is true. Wilcher, however, first suppresses his true nature and then defends his suppression with false reasoning. Therefore, he must first exercise rational freedom before he can truly fulfill himself.

⁹⁴This idea is also suggested by Giles Mitchell in "The Art Theme in Joyce Cary's First Trilogy" (unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Oklahoma, 1965), pp. 181-182. However, Mitchell's idea appears in a different context and is not fully developed.

⁹⁵Cowley, Writers at Work, p. 62.

⁹⁶Character and the Novel, p. 119.

⁹⁷"The Way a Novel Gets Written," 92.

⁹⁸For an extended discussion of this point, see Adams, "Joyce Cary's Three Speakers."

⁹⁹Art and Reality, p. 103.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION

From the preceding chapters, one can see, I believe, that a sequence novel is not merely a quantitative amplification of an ordinary novel, but a different genre with advantages, limitations, and formal characteristics of its own. That such major novelists as Trollope, Zola, Proust, Galsworthy, Ford, Faulkner, Waugh, and Cary have employed it indicates its prominence in the history of fiction. That contemporary writers such as Snow, Powell, and Durrell still use the sequence novel shows its continued importance. However, possibly due to the confusing plethora of critical designations and the resultant failure to recognize it as a distinct genre, a method of formal analysis for the sequence novel yet remains to be concisely articulated. Perhaps the following questions and discussion may provide a basis for such a method and for subsequent studies.

Does the sequence possess an essential unity? Is this unity achieved from volume to volume by continuity of plot, of character, of setting, or of theme? These elements may appear with varying degrees of importance, according to the author's need, but of especial importance is the presence of a single, major theme. If the demands of the theme require the author to forgo continuity of plot, as a sequence such as Cary's may do, does the author achieve unity among the volumes in other

ways, perhaps by repetition or increment of structural patterns?

Does the sequence achieve unity of effect? It perhaps is a measure of the failure of a sequence novel if readers can isolate one volume and say that it alone is worth reading, as some do with Galsworthy's The Man of Property or White's The Sword in the Stone. If, on the other hand, the sequence achieves a unity of effect, through which each single part is properly subordinate to the whole and the whole seems richer and more significant than any part, then the sequence can be considered an artistic and formal success.

Does the sequence contain a viable inclusive structure? Is the structure based upon plot or upon an increment of symbolic significances? Whatever the basis, the inclusive structure must move from beginning through a middle to an end. The author must insure--whether by chronology or other means--that the proper order of reading is followed. The first volume in a sequence provides the basis from which subsequent volumes proceed; it strikes the thematic note and establishes the basic conflicts which following volumes modulate or continue. The whole work, if successful, then becomes a harmonious progress toward resolution.

If the structure is based upon plot, is the plot one of action, character, or thought? It is possible, as Durrell proves in the Alexandria Quartet, for one volume to have a plot of action, another to have a plot of character, and the whole inclusive plot to be one of thought. Hence, are the plots of the separate volumes similar in nature and, if not, what effect do the variations have upon the whole?

What is the relationship between the size of the sequence and the arrangement of primary structural elements within the whole? The

preceding essays examine the shortest possible kind of sequence novel. In them, major incidents in the separate volumes constitute primary structural elements in the whole sequence. For instance, the crisis of The Man of Property is also the definition of the inclusive structure in The Forsyte Saga. But just as structural elements in a regular novel are likely to be more detailed and hence longer than those in a short story, so structural elements in a long sequence will probably be more expansive than those in a short sequence. Thus, in an extremely long sequence such as Williamson's thirteen-volume A Chronicle of Ancient Sunlight or Richardson's twelve-volume Pilgrimage, structural elements might well be not incidents but entire volumes.

Is the sequence open or closed? Does it reach a proper resolution of plot and ultimate revelation of theme? Some sequences, such as Lewis' intended Childermass tetralogy, are open because the author died before its completion; others, such as Powell's Dance to the Music of Time, are open simply because the author has not yet finished writing it. Though the question may seem obvious, one must nevertheless ask it: since what exists is an unfinished work, does it possess sufficient merit to outweigh its incompleteness?

Does the author carry his sequence too far? Some critics insist that Galsworthy's pursuit of characters into a second and third trilogy beyond The Forsyte Saga dilutes the strength of the first. Similarly, some contend that The Last Post, the final volume of Ford's Parade's End, is an excrescence warranted neither by theme nor plot requirements. One problem of any novelist is to draw the circumference of his work precisely—neither to omit important matters nor to admit irrelevancies. A sequence novelist, especially, must make certain that the "relations

[that] stop nowhere" indeed appear to do so. Fulfillment of plot and theme requirements would here be the criteria for judgment.

How do the major formal determinants--fictive time and point of view--function? In general, the two principal variations of each of these permit certain important effects in a sequence novel. A sequence in the third person permits an author to focus upon many characters and to follow them through several or all volumes, with equal intensity. Moreover, it allows him to develop subplots in greater number and in greater depth. Thus, both character and events may expand in the third person. On the other hand, a sequence in the first person, particularly if the narrator also be the protagonist, permits an author to focus usually upon only one major character. It also limits the development of subplots. In that the narrator is restricted by the demands of verisimilitude to reporting only what he observes, hears, or experiences, then character and events contract. However, the first person often can more powerfully convey a story than the third person.

In a chronological sequence, events may be presented at great length. An author may chronicle several generations of a family through whole historical eras, or may analyze in detail a single character in a sequence of events; in either case, the chronological arrangement allows a density of texture not ordinarily obtainable in a single novel. The chronological pattern thus gains an intensification of plausibility from carrying the same characters through several volumes. In a synchronous sequence, events are segmented. The same events or different ones are presented, all occurring, by definition, in the same general period of time. The synchronous time spheres need not, however, be in absolute

temporal register. Indeed, in order to facilitate a plot resolution or thematic culmination, some chronological development is usually necessary. But in that the time spheres do overlap, a synchronous sequence permits an author to emphasize the simultaneity and multiplexity of man's existence.

From these variations of time and point of view emerge the formal pattern of the entire sequence: third-person chronological, first-person chronological, third-person synchronous, first-person synchronous, or a modification thereof.

Thus, although they are important in any piece of fiction, time and point of view become the cardinal concerns of a critic of the sequence novel, for they create the form through which the author conveys his general theme.

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