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# "Time is One:" The Temporal Aspect of The Hopi Language And Its Experimental Application in Postmodernist Novels

(TITLE)

BY

Peter Buru

## THESIS

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF

Master of Arts in English

IN THE GRADUATE SCHOOL, EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY
CHARLESTON, ILLINOIS

1997

YEAR

I HEREBY RECOMMEND THIS THESIS BE ACCEPTED AS FULFILLING
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# Abstract

My thesis examines the relationship between the temporal aspects of the language of the Hopi Indians, based on Benjamin Lee Whorf's linguistic analyses, and postmodernist narrative theory. Within postmodernism itself, the study focuses on the narratives' handling of time and space, as illustrated by the following novels: Sexing the Cherry by Jeanette Winterson; Time's Arrow by Martin Amis; Slaughterhouse-Five by Kurt Vonnegut, Jr.; and Almanac of the Dead by Leslie Marmon Silko.

The study investigates how these postmodernist novels experiment with the application of a timeless temporal scheme. This scheme originates from what I refer to as Benjamin Lee Whorf's romantic notions of Hopi temporality. He claimed that this language is a "timeless" one, and its vision of temporality is characterized by an underlying metaphysics, rather than a tripartite grammatical division, as is the case with the Standard Average European languages. Besides the linguistic description of Hopi, a brief description of Hopi cosmology is included which sheds light on their view of the world, time and causality, which in turn have reference points in the novels I have chosen.

By applying the Whorfian time, these postmodernist narratives suggest answers to the following ontological questions, i.e. ones bearing on human existence:

- 1. How can the narrative handle the timeless existence of an individual, who, despite inhabiting our universe, could detach him- or herself from the fetters of the most fundamental and universal human experiences on this planet, i.e. the passage of TIME?
- 2. How would the narrative handle parallel universes within our universe? How could the relationship between the two be characterized in the linear written language?
- 3. How would the fictional universe governed by the Whorfian atemporality behave in contrast to our temporal universe?
- 4. Whorf claimed--and later he was partially justified in his claim by, among others, Voegelin, et al.--that the present and past formed a "oneness." How would that atemporal experience of time restructure the before and after for this (or these) individual(s)? In other words, what would happen to causality as we know it?
- 5. In light of the discussion of altered causality, how could history be redefined? How would the "oneness" of past and present influence, or alter, the narrative's handling of history, both documented and on the personal level?

The influence of the Whorfian hypothesis about the Hopi manifests itself explicitly in Winterson's Sexing the Cherry, which contains references to Whorf's statements about Hopi in the epigraph as well as within the body of the text. The novel's structure, as a result, emulates a possible world which reflects the way of thinking induced by a "timeless" language and existence. Time's Arrow and Slaughterhouse-Five do not contain direct references to the Hopi or the Whorfian theories; however, they do display a manipulated and much altered flow of time, as well as deconstruction of space, and thereby raise the very issues that Sexing the Cherry does and which are the central piece of my study: "time," that is, human existence, is "one" (Sexing the Cherry 154). As a consequence, space is warped by deconstructed time flows, thus ceasing to be a point of reference; causality, as a result, becomes reversed or altogether revoked, since what happens becomes detached from time and becomes part of the "one" time. Almanac of the Dead, written by Leslie Marmon Silko, a native American, applies a narrative technique which is rooted in her Pueblo heritage and is best suited to her doomsday prophecy, "eco-feminist" political message and the use of the Whorfian romantic Hopi time.

For the postmodernist narrative theories I draw on the works of Brian McHale, Ihab Hassan and Linda Hutcheon as the main sources.

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# "Time is One:" The Temporal Aspect of the Hopi Language and Its Experimental Application in Postmodernist Novels

## 1. Introduction

Upon planning our summer trip to the Southwest of the United States, our friend in Arizona warned me and my wife about the peculiarities of the landscape and the climate of the region. He said scorching heat, barren rocks, reddish sand, and scarce vegetation on a parched soil would await us. "Pay attention to the sun and the heat--you should drink at least a gallon of liquid every day to avoid dehydration," came the warning immediately, "but the scenery is gorgeous, and will make up for the inconveniences once you get used to it." Having seen quite a number of photo albums on Arizona I could imagine what he had in mind when preparing us for the adventure. "I'm not going to sugarcoat it, it is going to be *hot* in August"--and the otherwise soft and playful voice had a serious tone to it.

Despite his forewarning, driving through the desert in Northern-Arizona itself induced ambivalent feelings in me. The landscape was indeed unusual, reminding us of the moon. And yes, of course, it was hot, very hot. The sun blazed down at what seemed a perfect 90-degree angle, offering us an otherwordly play of shadows and lights, grayness and colors. The constantly blowing wind brought absolutely no relief from the heat. Since we had no air-conditioning in the car, the windows had to be rolled down in order to avoid suffocation on the hot, dry air. With the windows down, the wind swept the fine-grained red sand directly into our faces, filling nostrils, mouths and eyes, making every move an energy-consuming effort. "Scarce vegetation" I found to be a bold exaggeration: small, insignificant-looking thorny bushes were interspersed among the pieces of rocks. I could not grasp how the few animals of burden scavenging by the side of the road were able to find anything to graze on.

I interpreted all these phenomena as an omen: in a seeming attempt to deter us, the forces of nature rose up against us, ignorant intruders, and our puny vehicle, the tiny red car, which somehow continued to defy their powers.

Still, the mesas and the mountain ridges in the distance kept beckoning to us, and signaled that we should go on. They "knew," better than we did, how to defy the destruction brought on by nature's arsenal. They have battered the wind, sun, rain, snow, heat and frost for timeless eons, and their stern looks concealed a secret world that I was soon to discover.

We frequently stopped at service stations to fill our water bottles and to try to break the crust of desert sand covering us. One of these service stations was located at the foot of a mountain of rock, and we ventured outside of the shelter of the gas station to take a closer look at it. Previous readings in history books and tourist brochures came to mind about the Pueblo Indians living in that area, the Hopi Indians among them. Despite the sand and the depressing heat, the rocks and the proximity of this ancient culture moved me to a rather lengthy lecture to my wife about these people. I rambled on about the Hopi being referred to the "Peaceful People," and their peculiar language system, with Benjamin Whorf's discoveries on my mind. "Did you know," I began to test her, "that the Hopi language does not make the grammatical distinction between past, present and future? That it is basically a timeless language?" "Judging only by this magnificent but harsh landscape, the Hopi *themselves* have to be timeless," my wife replied, "otherwise they could not have endured under these harsh conditions. The wind would have swept them from the surface of those preposterously narrow mesas, or the sun would have vaporized them into hot air."

Indeed, they seemed timeless, and not only in their language, but also in their existence in the desert that almost contradicted common sense. The Hopi culture itself have held out for centuries; one of their villages, Oraivi, is the oldest inhabited community in the United States. Their religious rituals have provided them with enough sustenance from nature and providence from their deities to secure their survival. The perpetual intervening of the spirit beings, or *Katsinas*, on behalf of their living Hopi brothers and sisters has granted them a state of grace that has lasted for countless centuries.

Standing underneath one of those unwelcoming rock formations that these people call their own land filled me with awe and respect for these people. I decided, then and there, that I should devote a large project to the Hopi, their culture and their language. At that moment it was quite unclear how this Pueblo nation in the Southwest could be incorporated into any literary projects, but I was firm in my decision to do just that.

Upon returning to Academia the research began, and as the project developed in time, it began to shape itself. It almost took on a life of its own, as if someone else, not I, had been in charge. The new pieces that research added to this great puzzle redirected and refocused my attention virtually day by day, as did the various inspiring and insightful conversations with my professors. All throughout this phase, as well as the various stages of completion of this thesis, however, I felt some sort of a reassurance that I believe came from a higher level. Maybe the spirit beings intervened at Taiowa, the Creator in Hopi cosmology, on behalf of this project. I made all the effort so as not to let them down lest they should lose their faith in me. In exchange, I never lost my faith in them.

That reassuring higher voice continuously suggested one idea: experiment. Somehow it did not seem to fit in this Hopi puzzle of mine, until almost all the pieces about these people and the postmodernist novels have come together. Therefore, in honor of that moment of revelation this present study focuses on the theme of experimenting. I have striven to explore how the Hopi, their culture, cosmology and religion, as well as Benjamin Whorf's analysis of their language, inspired, directly or indirectly, the artists mentioned in the study to experiment with the Hopi world within the world of their fiction.

Besides the spirit beings, I owe my gratitude to everyone who has helped with this project. First and foremost to my readers, Dr. Rosemary Buck, without whose insights the section on Hopi linguistics could not have been completed; and Dr. Michael Loudon, who took on this project despite his injury. I owe heartfelt thanks to Dr. Stephen Swords, my thesis director, who trusted me, and acted as a spirit being *and* a spiritual being, keeping the project on the right track, and always encouraging me to heed the spirit voices. And of course, thanks to Dr. Alice Smart as well, *sine qua non*.

## 1.1. Objectives and Methods

The principal objective of this thesis is to explore how selected postmodernist novels experiment with a concept of time, which, paradoxically, is characterized by the lack of time. This concept is derived from Benjamin Lee Whorf's descriptions of the linguistic characteristics of the Hopi Pueblo Indian nation. Chapter 1.2. expands on Whorf's findings at Hopi, and establishes the grammatical and metaphysical background to a "timeless" temporal notion.

Since the understanding of the main argument of this study depends on a full picture of the Hopi Indians, a brief description of their culture and cosmology is provided in Chapter 1.3. Thus the postmodernist texts are analyzed in light of the Hopi culture, which will be juxtaposed to key points in the texts to highlight relevant parallels.

The main theme of this study, as indicated earlier, is experimenting with a concept that seems rather impertinent to a contemporary literary movement. However, under a closer scrutiny of these texts one can find the overlapping points between the Hopi and postmodernism. Sexing the Cherry by Jeanette Winterson offers a direct reference to Benjamin Whorf's ideas about the Hopi language, and Winterson employs them in an adventure to create a universe on the verge of magic and historical reality. In Slaughterhouse-Five by Kurt Vonnegut, Jr., Whorf's temporal concept underlies the narrator's explicitly therapeutic purpose to face the events from the past. Time's Arrow by Martin

Amis combines the above mentioned therapeutic purpose with an adventure into the past. The past contains a message to the human race in general that is best revealed and planted in the reader's consciousness by applying Whorf's ideas. Almanac of the Dead by Leslie Silko, the fourth novel to be included in this study, also addresses mankind with a political agenda, intertwining it, among others, with a contemporary political cause, the lore and the legends of a race. The Whorfian concepts then are featured in creating and projecting an image of a (possible) future catastrophe.

As with all treatises, this thesis is not without its limitations. The most major concern of these is the intuitive basis of the parallels between the Hopi and these literary texts that I present. This study contains the subjective readings of these novels; therefore their contextualization in the Hopi material is subjective. There is little, or even no evidence at all, that Kurt Vonnegut or Martin Amis were aware and consciously intended to make use of Benjamin Whorf's theories (although I believe that this possibility cannot be excluded). Jeanette Winterson does refer to his ideas; Leslie Silko has her roots in that very culture, though not in Whorf's "science-fiction notions" (Ekkehart Malotki, 1978, ix). However, this study has discovered, and will display, hopefully, enough proof and evidence to convince the reader that Whorf's ideas and the Hopi parallels are very much at work in all four novels. Even if an overt indication lacks in the texts, then these concepts are covertly placed in alien disguise (cf. Tralfamadorians), or in the extratextuality of the reader's consciousness (Time's Arrow).

The scope and the main focus of this thesis have made it impossible to include a more detailed discussion of the hotly debated Linguistic Relativity Principle, or the true nature of the Hopi temporal concepts. Fascinating though these topics are, their treatment here is limited only to what pertains to the subject of this thesis. Similarly, not all aspects of the literary texts can be discussed, since it would not have served the elaboration of the main theme. Naturally, it is not to imply that justice was not done to these works and their authors-experimenters. I dare hope that their greatness can be ascertained from this study.

May now the experiment begin!

## 1.2. Benjamin Lee Whorf's "Hopi Time"

In a manuscript written probably in 1936 but found and published only posthumously, American ethno-linguist Benjamin Lee Whorf made a rather bold-sounding statement:

> After long and careful study and analysis, the Hopi language is seen to contain no words, grammatical forms, constructions or expressions that refer directly to what we call "time," or to past, present or future, or to enduring or lasting. . . or that even refer to space in such a way as to exclude that element of extension or existence that we call "time." . . . Hence, the Hopi language contains no reference to "time," either explicit or implicit (Carroll 1956, 57-8).

As a result, postulated Whorf, "[a Hopi] has no general notion or intuition of TIME as a smooth flowing continuum in which everything in the universe proceeds at an equal rate, out of a future, through a present, into a past; or . . . to reverse the picture . . . from a past into the future" (Carroll 1956, 57).

Whorf's theses understandably evoked a great deal of speculations, since he seemed to have found a culture whose linguistic system appeared detached from our fundamental experience of time and space. The Hopi life experience would be absolutely alien from the experience of the speakers of the Whorfian "Standard Average European" languages, which consisted of the

Indo-European, the Balto-Slavic and the Finno-Ugric languages. The grammatical systems of these languages were equipped with a tripartite tense division that allowed for a tripartite view of time. Time past was expressed by the past tense(s); time present expressed by the present tense(s); and time future contained in the future tense(s). This linguistic system, argued Whorf, had created the linear perspective of time that is characteristic of Western-type cultures.

The assumed atemporality of the Hopi linguistic system, and the worldview it induced, prompted Whorf to start the investigation into the relationship of *Weltanschauung*, or worldview, and the linguistic characteristics of a language. As part of his investigation, Whorf set out to take the following questions under scrutiny:

> 1. Are our [i.e. Western] concepts of 'time,' 'space,' and 'matter' given in substantially the same form by experience to all men, or are they . . . conditioned by the structure of particular languages?
> 2. Are there traceable affinities between *a*. cultural and behavioral norms and *b*. large-scale linguistic patterns? (Carroll 1956, 138).

In his essay "The Relation of Habitual thought and Behavior to Language," Whorf quotes his former teacher, Dr. Edward Sapir, on the subject of interdependency of language structure and worldview. Dr. Sapir emphasized that humans do not just inhabit an "objective world alone," but are "at the mercy" of their particular mother tongues in perceiving that world. As a consequence, the "real world is . . . unconsciously built up on the language habits of the group" (Carroll 1956, 134). Supported by Sapir's views and his own observations about the Hopi Whorf came to the conclusion that "[u]sers of markedly different grammars are pointed by their grammars toward different types of observations and different evaluations of externally similar acts of observation, and hence . . . must arrive at somewhat different views of the world" (Carroll 1956, 221). Whorf based this hypothesis, later to be termed the Linguistic Relativity Principle, on the deterministic relationship between Hopi grammar and the Hopi *Weltanschauung*. This theory contends that the structure of any language reflects perception structures that the speakers of that language hold. Consequently, the world view and the notion of time of the Hopi Indians would be determined by the atemporal grammatical structure of their language.

Whorf's findings about the atemporality of Hopi caused him to further speculate on the view of the world of this people. Given that no other language described so far had such an atemporal grammar and a worldview that lacked time, the Hopi experience should be quite different from the view of any other linguistic community. Namely, the atemporal grammar structure of the Hopi would enable this Pueblo people in the Southwestern part of the United States to detach themselves from all universal influences. This would include a detachment from the movement of the Sun and other celestial bodies, the cyclicity of which signifies the flow of time for other nature-bound tribes, and also serves as a basis for the Western-type reckoning of time. However, Whorf hastened to concede that despite their lack of our fundamental sense of "flowing of 'time,'" the Hopi *were* capable of correctly observing and describing those universal influences in "a pragmatic and operational sense" (Carroll 1956, 58). In order to grasp and approximate the Hopi view of the universe to the Western notions, one has to resort to the Hopi grammar as the system that implicitly contains the "psychological or even mystical" terms of abstractions needed for these studies. As the Linguistic Relativity Principle professes, these linguistic abstractions manifest in an explicit manner in the culture and the behavioral patterns of the Hopi.

Besides an atemporal grammatical structure, the Hopi language and culture featured some sort of a "METAPHYSICS," an observation which Whorf deemed so crucial in conceiving of the Hopi *Weltanschauung* that he spelled this word all capitalized. "In this Hopi view, time disappears and space is altered," he maintained, rendering our Western intuition of temporality and the classical Newtonian theses about mechanics "invalid" (Carroll 1956, 59).

The best model we could devise of Hopi metaphysics, Whorf suggested, was to conceive of it as a twofold system that on one hand comprised of the "MANIFESTED" or the "objective;" and the "MANIFESTING" or the "subjective" on the other (Carroll 1956, 59). The "MANIFESTED" or objective principle basically contains the describable physical universe in its past and present state, "with no attempt to distinguish between present and past but excluding everything that we call future" (Carroll 1956, 59). The "MANIFESTING" or subjective category comprises the future in our sense, and more. It includes "all that we call mental," i.e. what is in the Hopi mind, or rather, the Hopi "HEART," and in the pantheistic notion of "heart" of all living beings. And although the subjective corresponds to our notion of future, relating to what is yet to be manifested, Whorf described this category as being "in a dynamic state, yet not a state of motion--it is not advancing toward us out of a future, but ALREADY WITH US in vital and mental form" (Carroll 1956, 60). This idea of the future is based on the Hopi religious beliefs and legends which, as Edward Kennard describes in his article, proclaim that "everything is predetermined as in agreement with Masawu [i.e. the owner of this world in the Hopi legends]" ("Metaphor and Magic," 1972, 469).

In Hopi, Whorf contended, predestination manifested itself on the linguistic level by referring to the "entities in the process of causation" with the phrases they "will come," or that the "Hopi 'will come to them'" (Carroll 1956, 60). Thus is the predetermined nature of the Hopi world revealed within the language. On the level of the religious beliefs and ceremonies, points out Kennard, one has to note that the "ritual acts symbolize in acts what is symbolized . . . in words" ("Metaphor and Magic," 1972, 469). The mutuality of rituals and language pertaining to the issue of predestination is no doubt a chicken-and-egg debate, where arguments can be marshaled on either side, depending on the arguer's acceptance or rejection of Whorf's Linguistic Relativity Principle. Since this study has its focus elsewhere, no attempt shall be made to give either language or religion the priority. The importance of predetermined future, however, shall be discussed later on in connection to the literary works selected for this project.

Whorf argued that the Hopi concept of time is all the more difficult to understand for us, non-Hopi, since "[t]he three-tense system of SAE [i.e. Standard Average European languages] verbs colors all our thinking about time" (Carroll 1956, 143). Speakers of SAE cannot disassociate their mental, or *subjective*, concept of time from their language systems because those systems are well-equipped to *objectify* "the subjective experience of duration" of temporality. As a result, our subjective concept of time as an imaginary continuum that constantly proceeds forward from time past towards time future, has been objectified through, and with the help of, our language systems. Therefore, with the help of numerals and nominalization of temporal phenomena into discreet countable units we can "stand time units in a row" (Carroll 1956, 143)--as in "two days, three months, four weeks," etc.--in accordance with, or predetermined by, our system of objectification, grammar.

The grammar systems of SAE languages are in sharp contrast to Hopi grammar which, contended Whorf, cannot "cloak" the subjective essence of time, i.e. the "perpetual becoming later" (Carroll 1956, 139), with an objectified systematization. As a result, the Hopi language has not lexicalized the word that would correspond to SAE's "formless item," i.e. the word that denotes *time*.

Despite the tripartite tense system that characterizes Standard Average European languages, Whorf argued that a twofold system would better model the individual's experience of temporal duration: an "earlier," harking back to the category of "MANIFESTED" in Hopi metaphysics; and a "later," corresponding to the category of "MANIFESTING." The way that Hopi deals with the experience of "getting later and later," asserted Whorf, is best described by the phrase: "Everything is in consciousness and everything in consciousness IS, and is together" (Carroll 1956, 143-4). Time, he reasoned, is not a "motion," i.e. it does not progress from the past toward the future, or vice-versa; instead, it is "getting later" in an unvarying repetitive fashion. The present is contained in the "sensuous," i.e. what is accessible to the senses. The past is the realm of memory (the "nonsensuous"); whereas the future comprises belief, intuition and uncertainty. However, these three categories ("sensation, memory and foresight") are all contained in "consciousness together", and with "real time . . . all this [i.e. the above-mentioned three categories] in consciousness is 'getting later,' changing certain relations in an irreversible manner" (Carroll 1956, 144). I shall point out the significance of the "constant latering" when discussing Jeanette Winterson's novel, Sexing the Cherry, in Chapter 2.1.

According to Whorf, the Hopi language does not make the tripartite tense distinction according to our temporality--in fact, it has few tense markers but numerous aspect markers at its disposal. This means that little attention is paid to distributing the action along the time continuum, as tenses in SAE languages do, but views actions from the standpoint of momentariness vs. duration (as indicated by the distinction between the simple and the progressive forms in English). Instead of the misnomer "tense" in Hopi, Whorf applied the term "validity forms" or "assertions," since these do not denote time and duration (Carroll 1956, 113). These "validity forms" suggest whether the speaker "reports the situation," which is the rough equivalent of our past-present concept; or that the speaker "expects" the event to happen, thus creating the equivalent of our future tense concept. One can also report general truths or "nomic [sic!] statements" that correspond to the gnomic present tense in the English language. Accordingly, the tripartite division of "assertions" in Hopi follows the metaphysical division of manifestation, described above.

However, Whorf contradicted his statement cited above on the non-existence of tenses in Hopi in another essay with the title "The Punctual and Segmentative Aspects of Verbs in Hopi" (Carroll 1956, 51). In this essay, Whorf asserted that "Hopi also has three tenses" (Carroll 1956, 51), which corresponded in usage and in form to what he later called "assertions" (see above). Whorf termed the first of the three "tenses" or "assertions" as "past (i.e. past up to and including present)," with the additional note that he "shall translate the Hopi past tense [sic!] by the English present," because of the "inceptive aspect" he assigned to it (Carroll 1956, 103). The second "tense" or "assertion" contains the future; while the third one refers to what he termed "generalized (that which is generally, universally, or timelessly true)" (Carroll 1956, 103) or "nomic" [sic!] (144). The past-present dual tense would correspond to the category of "MANIFESTED" in Hopi metaphysics; whereas the future contains the category of the "MANIFESTING."

Due to his untimely death in 1941 Whorf never had the opportunity to follow up on his research work among the Hopi, and to gather a large enough corpus for his linguistic analyses. His hypothesis, the Linguistic Relativity Principle, divided the academic and scholarly community. It evoked various interpretations of his findings by passionate followers, and also by sworn critics who, in the past fifty years, have outdone themselves to prove Whorf wrong.

Following the publication of Whorf's essays on language and thought in connection to the Hopi, prominent linguists have set themselves the task of augmenting Whorf's research findings and to amend his statements about the Hopi in general. Several publications pointed out the inconsistencies and the misconceptions in Whorf's argument, among them Thomas McElwain's "Seneca Iroquois Concepts of Time," (1987), and "Hopi Semantics" by Voegelin, C.F., et al. (1979), just to name a few. Whorf's assertions about atemporality in the Hopi language have been shown by scholars to be flawed (Gipper 1972; Malotki 1979; and Malotki 1983). The major concern of Whorf's opponents has been the lack of satisfying linguistic evidence from Hopi, as pointed out earlier. Ekkehart Malotki, the German linguist and the most renown authority on Hopi linguistics, labeled Whorf's postulations about the atemporal Hopi language as follows: "I must confess that, at the start, [Whorf's] *science-fiction notion* of a people endowed with a timeless language was fascinating both to me and my Hopi teacher, Herschel Talashoma" (1978, ix, italics mine).

It is not the objective of this study to either examine the true Hopi temporal concepts according to Malotki's analysis, or to describe the details of the debate about the Linguistic Relativity Principle. It has never been an objective of mine to falsify or augment Whorf's postulations about the Hopi within the framework of this study. Much rather, I employ these "science-fiction notions" of atemporality, complemented by some additional information about the Hopi from other sources, in order to examine the postmodernist experiments with the dismantling of linear temporal structuring.

In the next subchapter I will highlight statements by various scholars that confirm, contextualize, explain or harmonize with some of Whorf's ideas, and construct a case of them for my study. The additional information are included in order to supplement Whorf's hypotheses with missing pieces about the Hopi language and culture. However, most importantly, they will illuminate the Hopi *Weltanschauung* and cosmology since these are essential to the understanding of this study.

## 1.3. The "Real Hopi"--A Supplement to Whorf's Findings

Both Helmut Gipper (1972 and 1979) and Ekkehart Malotki (1983), as well as anthropologists Frank Waters (1963), Edward Kennard (1972) and C.F. Voegelin, et al. (1979), agree on the premise that Benjamin Lee Whorf established in his essay "An American Indian Model of the Universe" (Carroll 1956, 57-64): that the Hopi world view as well as time view is ruled by a duality which manifests on various levels. There exists a grammatical duality in the concept of Hopi time, which manifests itself also on the level of temporal organization and religious beliefs and rituals. This is complemented by the duality of worlds, i.e. the Hopi view of the universe as consisting of an upper world and an underworld. We shall review these dualities in turn.

### 1.3.1. Grammatical Duality

In his article, "Is There a Linguistic Relativity Principle?", Helmut Gipper mentions that although Hopi linguistic evidence indicates the existence of grammatical means for the expression of past, present and future, still, "Hopi thinking seems to be governed by a bipartition of time" grammatically (1979, 7). Despite the innate paradox of this statement, Gipper found that even the division of tenses corresponds to Whorf's description: the present is coupled grammatically to the past, while the future forms a separate tense. The actual division between the relation of a past event and a present happening, or even a future one, can be achieved with the employment of certain particles, e.g. *yaw* (7), termed "quotative modality" by Whorf (Carroll 1956, 119). The meaning of this particle can be approximated to "then" or "after that," and its presence indicates the past-ness of the event reported ("Is There a Linguistic Relativity Principle?" 1979, 7). These temporality markers and particles amount to a large number (Malotki lists more than twenty of them), and place reported events and happenings in the appropriate time frame. Gipper, as we have seen, still sustains the basic duality of temporal division of grammatical tenses in Hopi.

### 1.3.2. Temporal Duality Within The Hopi Religious Context

Voegelin, et al., point to the anthropological aspect of "dual organization of time" at Hopi, claiming that this duality builds the basis for the Hopi religious beliefs and ritual actions, as well as the ritual calendar (1979, 579). Helmut Gipper emphasizes that in order to describe the religious beliefs and rituals and their temporal distribution, one has to be aware of the interrelated relationship among the fundamental concepts of space, time, language and the cultural context of these, as well as the geographical location of Hopi country ("Is There a Linguistic Relativity Principle?" 1979, 11).

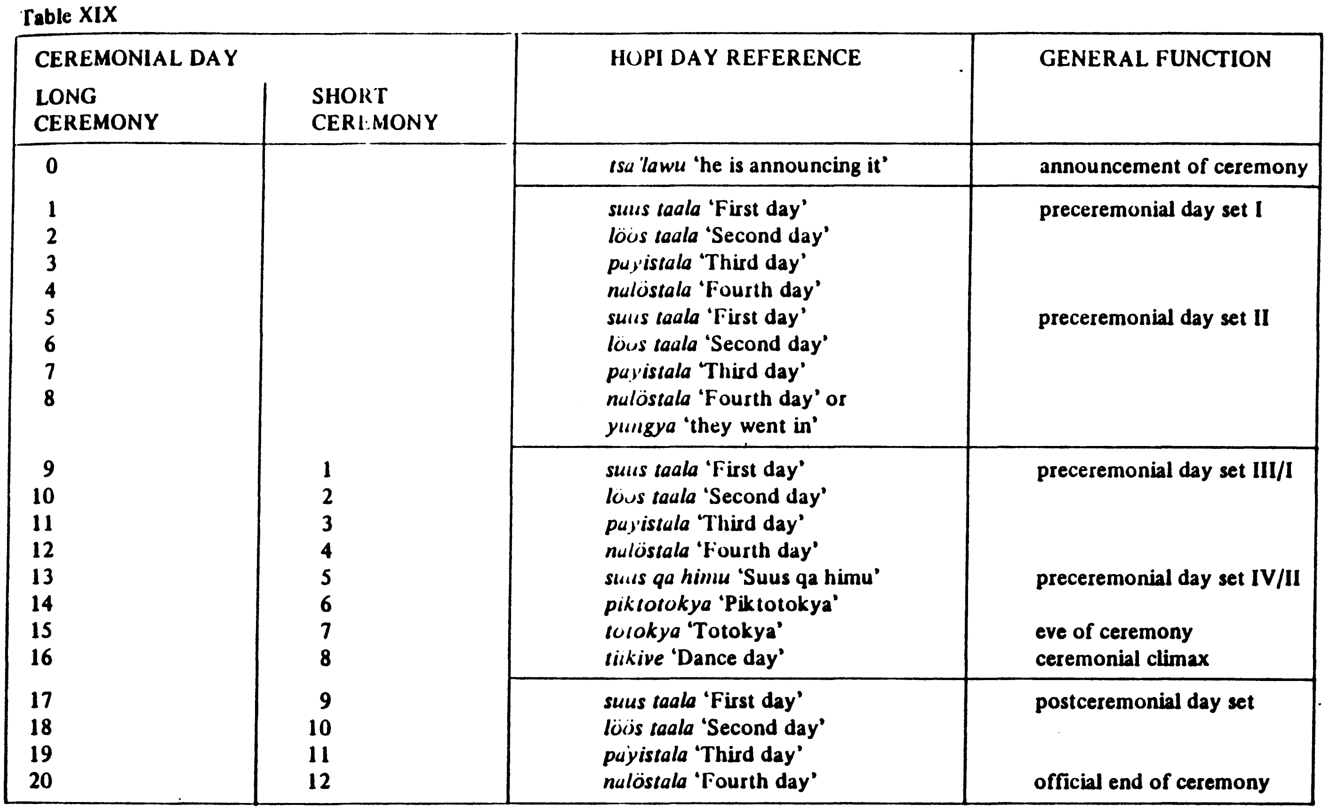
The Hopi "calendar," which shows only few similarities to our Western calendars, is governed by the Sun and its cyclical movement on the canopy of the sky. The time units of primary importance, as a consequence, that the Hopi use in their temporal reckoning pattern are day, month, and seasons. These items, along with the units of secondary importance (night, and year, this latter through the influence of the English language), are lexicalized: *taala* stands for day; *muya* for month; *yaasangw* for year (Malotki 1983). However, since the passing of seasons is not accumulated in the Hopi temporal pattern into years, a Hopi experiences the repetitive nature of passing events and seasons, similarly to the Whorfian descriptions of a "perpetual getting later" (Carroll 1956, 143-44). This experience is summed up beautifully by Gipper: "[The Hopi] live in time, but not apart from it" ("Is There a Linguistic Relativity Principle?" 1979, 11). Nevertheless, concludes Gipper, despite being "bound" by time, the Hopi lack an "objectivized physical time" ("Is There a Linguistic Relativity Principle?" 1979, 11). These statements are very much in unison with Whorf's ideas as outlined earlier, and are verified by Don Talayesva, the Hopi author of the autobiography Sun Chief (ed. by Simmons, 1942). Talayesva writes that the "exact date of my birth was not remembered" in the absence of the Gregorian calendar at the Hopi, and therefore he never celebrated them (Sun Chief 26).

Since the Sun was the provider of the primary lexical units for time-reckoning in the Hopi language, its observation also took on paramount importance. Along with noted anthropologists and researchers of the Hopi lore such as Curtis, Fewkes and Titiev, Malotki also mentions that this duty was entrusted to the *kikmongvi* or village chief at Oraibi, and to the "Crier Chief" at other villages. The village of Songoopavi had a separate officer, *tawaat* *wiikiy'maqa*, or sunwatcher, appointed to this duty (Hopi Time 1983, 492). When the Sun had reached certain points on its path, these officers announced that "the time was ripe" for a certain activity, ritual or agricultural (e.g. corn planting). Don Talayesva calls sunwatching "an important business," used mainly "to keep track of the time or the seasons of the year by watching the points on the horizon when the sun rose and set each day" (Sun Chief 58-9). In Talayesva's autobiography we find hints that sunwatching was also done by the common man, and used in the timing of everyday chores since there was a proper time to carry out each activity. For instance: "When the sun lifted itself from the 'melon-planting point' in May, I had taken seeds to a sandy field, planted them . . ." (Sun Chief 231).

All the evidence listed above shows that cyclicity ruled the Hopi time reckoning, as it does and has in the past almost all nature-bound societies. Quite naturally, the emphasis was placed on the present moment (with time being ripe for a given activity) rather than on the intention of placing events on an imaginary time line which proceeds from the past towards the future. This very same idea will reappear in the statement, "Sacred time is always in the Present," in Almanac of the Dead by Leslie Silko (136, see below, in Chapter 2.4.).

There are occasions in Hopi life, however, when time and its passage in a sequence gains on importance, and quite interestingly this is the case with religious and secular rituals. Time reckoning, while still subordinate to cyclicity, is suddenly recognized in quantity and sequence during these ritual ceremonies, much the same way it is in our Gregorian calendar, and "is given a fourfold expression" (Voegelin, et al., 1979, 579). The days of the rituals, celebrations, dances, etc., are patterned in sets of four days: the regular length of ceremonies is eight days, while the abbreviated version consists of only four, and the extended version of sixteen days (Malotki, Hopi Time 244). The ritual following a childbirth is the longest with its twenty days. These ceremonial periods involve the preparatory period, the actual ceremony itself. The ritual is expanded by a set of postceremonial days designated for abstinence and meditation, in order to ensure the success of the ceremony itself. The days of the actual ceremony are lexicalized; and the designations for the preparatory and final days, since featuring the same structure, show a mirrored lexicon. The following table is Ekkehart Malotki's compilation of Hopi ceremonial day nomenclature:

Table XIX



| CEREMONIAL DAY | | HOPI DAY REFERENCE | GENERAL FUNCTION |
|---|---|---|---|
| LONG CEREMONY | SHORT CEREMONY | | |
| 0 | | *tsa'lawu* 'he is announcing it' | announcement of ceremony |
| 1 | | *suus taala* 'First day' | preceremonial day set I |
| 2 | | *löös taala* 'Second day' | |
| 3 | | *payistala* 'Third day' | |
| 4 | | *nalöstala* 'Fourth day' | |
| 5 | | *suus taala* 'First day' | preceremonial day set II |
| 6 | | *löös taala* 'Second day' | |
| 7 | | *payistala* 'Third day' | |
| 8 | | *nalöstala* 'Fourth day' or<br>*yungya* 'they went in' | |
| 9 | 1 | *suus taala* 'First day' | preceremonial day set III/I |
| 10 | 2 | *löös taala* 'Second day' | |
| 11 | 3 | *payistala* 'Third day' | |
| 12 | 4 | *nalöstala* 'Fourth day' | |
| 13 | 5 | *suus qa himu* 'Suus qa himu' | preceremonial day set IV/II |
| 14 | 6 | *piktotokya* 'Piktotokya' | |
| 15 | 7 | *totokya* 'Totokya' | eve of ceremony |
| 16 | 8 | *tiikive* 'Dance day' | ceremonial climax |
| 17 | 9 | *suus taala* 'First day' | postceremonial day set |
| 18 | 10 | *löös taala* 'Second day' | |
| 19 | 11 | *payistala* 'Third day' | |
| 20 | 12 | *nalöstala* 'Fourth day' | official end of ceremony |

Figure 1
(from: Hopi Time 480)

The similar structure in the lexicalization of the preparatory (preceremonial) and the postceremonial days indicates a pattern of cyclicity within a period reckoned in a sequence, or linear pattern. Even though temporal linearity is a feature of the Hopi thinking as in the ceremonial day nomenclature, it is superseded by the larger-scale thought pattern of cyclicity, creating a strange sense of duality, as pointed out by Gipper, Malotki and Whorf.

### 1.3.3. Duality of Worlds

The months containing the ceremonies are sharply divided by the "empty" ones, i.e. the months that do not feature ritual ceremonies. This division is closely linked to the Hopi belief system about the upper world, the one designated for the living, and the underworld, inhabited by the spirits of the dead. The two worlds, despite the obvious separation along the line "alive-dead," do not exist completely independently from each other. During the ceremonial months, the *Katsinas* or *Kachinas* return into the villages in human shape in order to participate in ceremonies that ensure the survival of the Hopi people. As Malotki explains, *Katsinas* "represent a cross-section of reality" (1978, 204) within the duality of words by embodying various dualities themselves, and thus establishing a stronger link between the upper and the lower world. These costumed characters assume the identities of the flora and fauna, "the world of objects and of cosmic forces," as well as the spiritual "essences" of individuals and communities, whether dead or living (Malotki 1978, 204).

The word Kachina or Katsina, in Frank Waters' explanation, is a compound word made up of *ka* (respect), and *tsina* (spirit), and denotes the "spirit people," i.e. deceased Hopis (Book of the Hopi 1963, 167). Malotki, on the other hand, argues that this interpretation fails, based on the phoneticphonemic analysis of the word. He contributes these words to foreign influence on the Hopi, and insists on the obscurity of their etymology (1978, 203-4). Instead, he suggests focusing on the activities and tasks of these spirit beings, and the meaning of the name shall be derived from their function.

The Katsinas spend six months of every year in the underworld, and the other six months in the upper world. During their visit to the world of the living, the Katsinas perform the ancient rituals that have been handed down from generation to generation. While in the lower world, Katsinas continue to intercede at the deities of rain and prosperity on behalf of the living.

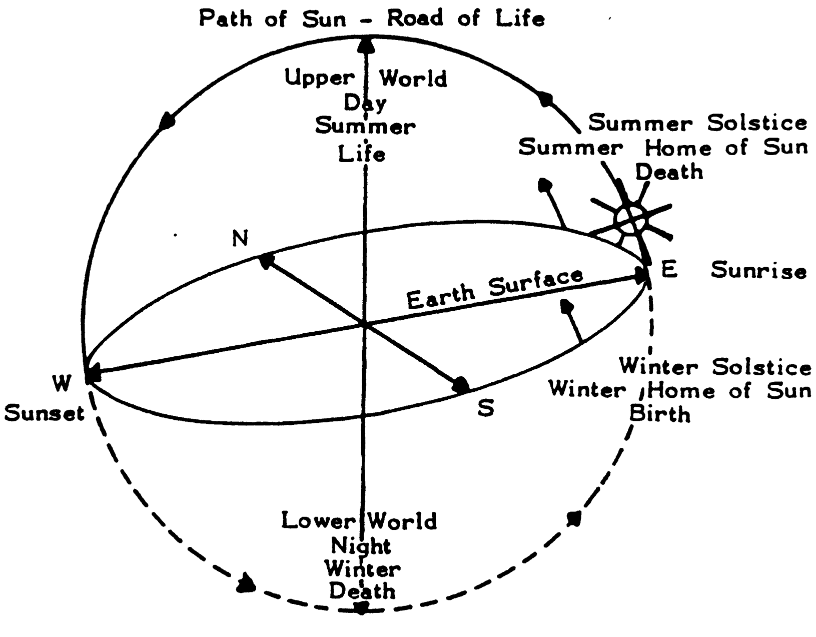
However, according to Hopi legends and beliefs, the two worlds are on a mirrored temporal *and* ritual schedule: when it is spring and summer in the upper world, it is autumn and winter in the underworld, and vice-versa. Also, the exact same four sacred *Powamu* rituals take place simultaneously in the upper world *and* the underworld. As a result, indicates Waters, this four-month period repeats itself twice annually (Book of the Hopi 1963, 190), in wintertime *and* summertime, therefore one Hopi name has two approximate Western equivalents:

| Hopi name of month: | Its approximate Western equivalents: | |
|---|---|---|
| *Kelemuya* | November | June |
| *Kamuya* | December | July |
| *Pamuya* | January | August |
| *Powamuya* | February | September |

Figure 2

(from: Waters, Frank. Book of the Hopi 1963, 190)

Thus this aspect of duality becomes unified: the two worlds are not mere mirrors of each other, but, more precisely, they complement each other. This duality can even be reduced to the microlevel of the individual as well. The upper world, that is, summer, symbolizes life, and the advancement of the Sun on its path symbolizes aging, while the lower world stands for wintertime and death. The "rebirth" of the Sun every year at its Winter Solstice point and the beginning of a new cycle of life represent rebirth for mankind and the completion of the cycle of life. Figure 3 depicts these beliefs very suggestively:


Path of Sun - Road of Life
Upper World
Day
Summer
Life
Summer Solstice
Summer Home of Sun
Death
N
Earth Surface
E Sunrise
Winter Solstice
Winter Home of Sun
Birth
W
Sunset
S
Lower World
Night
Winter
Death

The Hopi World View (10)

Figure 3
(from: Gipper, Helmut. "Is There a Linguistic Relativity Principle?" 1979, 11)

Death, however, brings about only the decay of the physical body, and the spirit, after arriving at the House of the Dead (Talayesva 1942, 167), remains active, striving for the welfare of the Hopi people with contributions in form of rituals. On the macro-level, i.e. that of the community, the society in the underworld aids the society in the upper world by performing the rituals and sending enough moisture for next year (Waters 1963, 190).

These rituals and ceremonial contributions to the survival and success of the community in general raise an important philosophical issue: the conflict between the Hopi belief in predestination, a cornerstone of the Hopi cosmology, and the necessity to perform the religious acts. Edward Kennard maintains that according to the Hopi myths of emergence, "everything is predetermined," and the "divine plan" is still "unfolding generation by generation" ("Metaphor and Magic" 1972, 469). All this happens just as Masawu, the mythological owner of this world promised upon the arrival of the Hopi in this world. Nonetheless, emphasizes Kennard, ritual ceremonies do have the significance of achieving the desired prosperity and success for the forthcoming year and the next generation. The rituals have to make sure that the predetermined future events do come at the appropriate time of year ("Metaphor and Magic" 1972, 469). This very philosophy manifests in the Hopi linguistic view of the future as expounded by Whorf (see above): "the future . . . is ALREADY WITH US in vital and mental form" (Carroll 1956, 60). We will find the reflection of this philosophy in the universe that Jeanette Winterson constructs in Sexing the Cherry. In that text, it will result in enabling the synchronous existence of various time levels (cf. Chapter 2.1.).

Despite divine foreknowledge the individual shares the responsibility for his own welfare. As Don Talayesva admits to grasping the significance of rituals and predestination in his autobiography: "I had learned a great lesson and now knew that the ceremonies handed down by our fathers mean life and security, both now and hereafter" (Sun Chief 78).

Anthropologist William Quinn, Jr., in his article "Something Old, Something True," quotes Mircea Eliade who points out the significance of return and rebirth, predestination and prophecies, cosmology and rituals. The unceasing "regeneration" of man and universe, Eliade suggests, annuls the past and cleanses mankind of accumulated sin (Quinn 1983, 46). History, in this context, continues Eliade, is also abolished "by a continuous return *in illo tempore*" (Quinn 1983, 46, original italics), and present time and present actions take on the role of determining the fate of an individual or the group. Cyclicity and causality thus cause "the repetition of timeless beginnings" (Quinn 1983, 47). We will see this very idea repeated in the postmodernist works, especially in Slaughterhouse-Five by Kurt Vonnegut, and in Time's Arrow by Martin Amis, to analyzed later on.

Since divine plans and predetermination are pivotal in the Hopi belief system, remembering and heeding the divine prophecies has been of paramount importance for the "Peaceful People" throughout the centuries. In the Book of the Hopi, Frank Waters describes the nine most important Hopi prophecies derived from the Creator's parting message with the Hopi when their existence in the first world began. The prophecies include the emergence of the Hopi people through the three previous worlds into the present one, and foretell the three worlds yet to emerge. Certain ritual songs and the appearance of a certain *Katsina* will herald the forthcoming destruction before the advent of future worlds, including the worlds of Taiowa or the Creator, and Sotuknang, his nephew, the Creator of all Ceremonies (Book of the Hopi 1963, 333-4). A rather peculiar interpretation and implementation of the divine prophecies and of the predetermined future will appear in the doomsday prophecy of Leslie Marmon Silko's Almanac of the Dead in Chapter 2.4. of this study.

In this subchapter I supplemented the Whorfian description of the Hopi in order to obtain a clearer picture of it for its forthcoming juxtaposition with the postmodernist literary works. I have reviewed the pattern of duality that is omnipresent in Hopi language and culture. It can be observed on the primary, linguistic level, in the tense division (with one formal category for past and present; and a separate one for the future), as well as on secondary level, i.e. within the temporal organization of ceremonies. It has been demonstrated how the reckoning of temporality changes into a quantifiable sequence of duplicates of four days during ceremonies, while time in general still obeys the overall principle of cyclicity. I have discussed the significance of the Sun as the primary source for temporal division, and the connection between its path and the Path of Life of the individual. The Path of Life clearly demonstrated interconnectedness of the worlds, consisting of an upper world for the living and an underworld for the spirits of the dead. The circle of life, as a result, becomes complete through the unifying view of duality of these two worlds.

## 1.4. Postmodernism and The Hopi--Is There A Possible Connection?

In an attempt to investigate the Linguistic Relativity Principle, a theory that postulates the direct influence of the grammatical system of a given language on the thought and world view of its speakers, ethno-linguist Benjamin Lee Whorf discussed the Hopi language and its grammar as possible verification for his theory. Whorf asserted that the Hopi language featured not only an atemporal grammatical structure, but also lacked all reference to the abstract of *time*, be that lexical, grammatical or morphological (Carroll 1956, 57-8). Whorf's Hopi time denotes a concept which, paradoxically, is characterized first and foremost by atemporality, i.e. the lack of clear-cut division of time frames and corresponding tenses. Second, it is shaped by the idea that all things temporal are simultaneously contained in "consciousness" (Carroll 1956, 144).

Accordingly, the Hopi worldview, as the Linguistic Relativity Principle postulates, is quite alien from that of the speakers of what he termed the Standard Average European languages. Since the Hopi language features an atemporal grammar that shapes their thought patterns, Whorf insisted, the Hopi *Weltanschauung*, or worldview, is also subordinated to atemporality.

Some of Whorf's arguments and findings about the Hopi time concept were soon criticized by fellow linguists as a notion founded on insufficient evidence. Quite a few publications expounded the true Hopi notion of time, dismissing Whorf's ideas as romantic or science-fiction. Although this Whorfian romantic Hopi time does not hold ground, it certainly is a fascinating concept. The postmodernist movement in literature, one of the most current and most experimental movements of our time, does seem to show explicit signs of fascination with the idea of timelessness of a language and culture, and the resulting synchronicity of existence. The Whorfian description of the Hopi language, regardless of the flaws in his argumentation, has inspired, directly or indirectly, a number of literary artists. Their experiments with Whorf's Hopi time in the narrative involved the deconstruction of time, space, causality, and history, focusing on a series of philosophical and ontological questions that are pivotal in postmodern poetics. These questions are outlined as follows:

1. How can the narrative handle the timeless existence of an individual, who, despite inhabiting our universe, could detach him- or herself from the fetters of the most fundamental and universal human experiences on this planet, i.e. the passage of TIME?

2. How would the narrative handle parallel universes within our universe? How could the relationship between the two be characterized in the linear written language?

3. How would the fictional universe governed by the Whorfian atemporality behave in contrast to our temporal universe?

4. Whorf claimed--and later he was partially justified in his claim by, among others, Voegelin, et al.--that the present and past formed a "oneness." How would that atemporal experience of time restructure the *before* and *after*

for this (or these) individual(s)? In other words, what would happen to causality as we know it?

5. In light of the discussion of altered causality, how could history be redefined? How would the "oneness" of past and present influence, or alter, the narrative's handling of history, both documented and on the personal level?

Once our basic time concept as Earthlings is deconstructed, it is not only our human existence that can be viewed from a different angle. Human potentials, possibilities and responsibilities, meanings and quests gain a different perspective. Most importantly of all, however, the narrative techniques and the structuring of these literary works have to undergo rethinking in order to accommodate the new perspectives. These very issues, along with the ones outlined above, find reflection in the texts selected. These books make an attempt to suggest answers to these questions, as I shall discuss them in the following chapters.

# 2. Postmodernism and Whorf's Hopi Time

## 2.1. The "One" Time and "A" Universe: Sexing the Cherry by Jeanette Winterson

> "The Hopi, an Indian tribe, have a language as sophisticated as ours, but no tenses for past, present and future. The division does not exist. What does this say about time?" (Sexing the Cherry, epigraph)

> "There are other worlds than this one of ours. There is an infinity of worlds. And spirit, which is God, inhabits the infinity" (Giordano Bruno, cited by Frank Waters in Book of the Hopi, 166)

Brian McHale, the author of the critical work Postmodernist Fiction argues that the "dominant [i.e. the philosophical emphasis] of postmodernist fiction is *ontological*" (10), i.e. these texts focus on issues of existence, identity and subjectivity. McHale derives his definition of ontology from Thomas Pavel's, asserting that "an ontology is a description of *a* universe, not of *the* universe" (27), and puts the emphasis on the indefinite article. This is in sharp contrast to modernism. As McHale insists, modernist poetics focuses on describing *the* one world surrounding us based on an epistemological, or cognitive, dominant, and puts the emphasis on the definite article. The epistemological dominant results in the Modernist attempt to make sense of human existence and map the limits of human knowledge within this one given system. Postmodernism, on the other hand, describes "some" universe, and not necessarily "*the* universe" or a "*plurality* of universes" (27). McHale suggests that postmodernist fiction seems to propound the following questions: "Which world is this? What is to be done in it?" (10). Different worlds can be explored, even in confrontation with each other, but the exploration of the "violation between boundaries" can be done without the objective to find "grounding" for our own universe. Since existence cannot be limited to one specific world any more, postmodernist fiction describes certain "modes of existence," found in the text as well as in the world(s) it constructs.

Beyond the Foucaldian "heterocosm" (McHale 1987, 27) that these texts occupy, a corresponding issue is to be raised, insists McHale: the issue of the human self. Very much like the universes that the characters move in, the self does not just exist in singularity in its interaction with the outward plurality of worlds. Therefore, the issue "[w]hich of my selves is to do [what has to be done]?" (McHale 1987, 10) is to be examined by postmodernist fiction.

Jeanette Winterson's Sexing the Cherry describes *a possible*, or more precisely, *an experimental* universe. As Alison Lee states in her article "Bending the Arrow of Time: The Continuing Postmodern Present," the novel "explores the notion of time as a culturally or imaginatively constructed field in which past, present and future can exist simultaneously" (Lee 1994, 222). Lee's words about the "culturally . . . constructed field" of all times living in one conglomerate reiterate Benjamin Whorf's tenets of the romantic Hopi time: all things temporal are simultaneously contained in "consciousness" (Carroll 1956, 144).

Winterson's universe can also be described with Michel Foucault's terms as a *heterotopia* which is but "a kind of disorder" comprising of "a large number of possible orders" (quoted in McHale 1987, 44). These orders, however, suggests Foucault, do not possess "law or geometry," and thus lack a "*common locus*" or common underlying system of references. The application of Lee's, Whorf's and Foucault's words suggest the possible Wintersonian subversion of Einstein's Relativity Theory. She disrupts the space and time continuum and replaces it by an arbitrary "mode of existence" (McHale 1987, 10) for the magic realism of her fiction.

The Wintersonian *heterotopia* in Sexing the Cherry features the duality of the worlds of the two narrators, Jordan, the traveler-explorer, and Dog-Woman, who anchors the plot on the time-space continuum. Just as the two worlds are depicted in confrontation with each other, the two characters represent different temporal aspects and views. Dog-Woman's world conforms to the description of the conventional view: it is definable within our space and time concept (seventeenth-century London in the years leading up to, during and after the Revolution of 1649). Dog-Woman herself, an otherwise nameless dog-breeder blessed with huge corporal proportions, is anchored in the linear, spatial-temporal frame of reference.

The two can also be distributed along Einstein's formula, $E=mc^2$. Dog-Woman represents the right-hand side of the equation (in which $m$, ironically, can also represent her own corporal *mass*). Specific dates and historical events are keyed into her narration and existence, and only into hers, since she is the person who "imagines" her life on a past-present-future continuum. Her life is governed by the calendar, while "time moves through" her (Sexing the Cherry 100), e.g.: "On September the second, in the year of Our Lord, sixteen-hundred and sixty-six, a fire broke out in a baker's yard in Pudding Lane" (165). She witnesses documented history in 1649 while being present at the execution of King Charles, then living through the Restoration, the plague and the ensuing great fire of London.

Jordan, her adopted son, moves with confidence in both worlds just as he "moves through time" (Sexing the Cherry 100). He never uses the time(s) and dates of his adoptive mother's world for a frame of reference. His existence alternates between the Western linear idea and the Whorfian Hopi view. Not anchored by the material and temporal world, he represents the left-hand side of Einstein's formula, *E*, that is energy.

Defying the material world, Jordan embarks on journeys combining voyages both in the spatial sense of Dog-Woman's world, and explorations not in the conventional sense, which involve his transcendence into some other world:

> Every journey conceals another journey within its lines: the path not taken and the forgotten angle. These are the journeys I wish to record. Not the ones I made but the ones I might have made, or *perhaps did make in some other place or time* (2, my italics).

Jordan learns to detach himself from the restraints of time and space, and establishes the other--his own?--world the reader might deem as magic, or even downright impossible, e.g.: "To escape from the weight of the world, I leave my body where it is, in conversation or at dinner" (11). By doing so he subverts the very notion of matter from Einstein's formula. He leaves Dog-Woman's world almost as unnoticeably as the trace of the invisible ink, once used by the Greeks to record "hidden life" (2), leaves behind on papyrus. On these magic and mystic journeys he encounters among others a house in which gravity does not apply according to the will of the inhabitants; and finds himself in a city without love. Jordan falls in love with Fortunata, an ethereal dancer who teaches dancers how to become "points of lights" (87) and thus subvert matter. She becomes the ultimate quest of his journeys, and Jordan's mission to find her also includes his metaphysical quest in an attempt to harmonize the spatial-temporal and matter-related realities of the two worlds. Eventually, with her help, his quests bring the desired result, and he unites the two worlds in becoming "light" which, as science tells us, can behave as particle, i.e. matter, and as photons, i.e. non-matter.

Jordan's concept of time and space is established in the epigraph, a direct reference to Whorf's romantic description of Hopi time itself, as well as by his personal experience about the Hopi Indians. "The Hopi, an Indian tribe, have a language as sophisticated as ours, but no tenses for past, present and future. The division does not exist. What does this say about time?" (Sexing the Cherry, epigraph). He learns about the Hopi time through an informant who reiterates the Whorfian ideas and tells him that the Hopi do not have "tenses for past, present and future. . . . For them, *time is one*" (Sexing the Cherry 155, my italics). By trying to harmonize what he has discovered, Jordan experiences the quandary of being on the sometimes overlapping boundaries of several universes. One universe, "our outward" life (99) is regulated by the sense of time as being "flat, moving in a more or less straight line from one point to another" (98). The other universe, by comparison, as formulated by Alison Lee, "encompasses the simultaneity of all space-time" ("Bending the Arrow of Time," 222) in the mental or "inward" realm. In Jordan's words:

> our inward lives are governed . . . by an imaginative impulse cutting through the dictates of time, and leaving us free to ignore the boundaries of here and now and pass . . . along the coil of pure time, that is, the circle of the universe and whatever it does or does not contain (Sexing the Cherry 99).

The duality of "outward" and "inward" lives reflects the contrast between experiencing and perceiving time. Experiencing it equals to the "outward" sense, with time moving through us, like it does through Dog-Woman. The "inward" involves reflecting upon time mentally, that is, moving through it like Jordan does (cf. Lee, "Bending the Arrow of Time" 221).

This duality also represents the confrontation of the Western ("outward") notion of temporality and the Whorfian romantic description of the Hopi time notion ("inward"). Nonetheless, it is dissolved by Winterson's treatment of time as "one" in this experimental universe. This experimental universe in Sexing the

Cherry functions according to the Whorfian tenet which professes that for the Hopi, all events, past, present and future exist in "consciousness together" (Carroll 1956, 144). Winterson extends this further and creates a zone where "all space-time can exist simultaneously" (Lee, "Bending the Arrow of Time" 223). Time then, becomes a mere mental construct that allows for manipulation at will: "The future and the present and the past exist only in our minds, and from a distance the borders of each shrink and fade . . ." concludes Jordan (Sexing the Cherry 167).

Whorf's romantic Hopi time also becomes the metaphysical basis for the ontological view of this (im)possible Wintersonian universe. Jordan's journeys involve simultaneous physical journeys through space and time (e.g. sea voyages and discoveries with Tradescant, the royal gardener), as well as spiritual journeys through various co-existing worlds (the world of the twelve dancing princesses juxtaposed to Dog-Woman's documented England of the Revolution).

Even the documented reality is submitted to the simultaneous existence within the "one time." The setting in seventeenth-century England alternates with twentieth-century London, both scenes involving the *alter-egos* of the same characters, Jordan and Dog-Woman. What is more surprising, however, is that hardly any change can be observed in those characters, as if the passage of time has rendered them unaltered. The word *alter-ego* is all the more justified because of the lack of observable changes in these characters. They are not different people; much rather, they appear as duplicates. Nick Jordan of the late 1980s, after three centuries still driven by a love for sailing and an admiration for such historical figures as Sir Francis Drake and Admiral Nelson, joins the Royal Navy. Dog-Woman's modern-day *alter-ego* still has no name and companions but seems to have vague memories of her previous self from what she pins down as the past. Subconsciously she appears to grasp the idea of the "continuing present" that the Whorfian Hopi time and its application by Winterson creates (and which is also the subtitle to Alison Lee's article):

> I don't know if other worlds exist in space or time. Perhaps this is the only one and the rest is just imaginings. Either way it doesn't matter. We have to protect both possibilities. They seem to be interdependent (Sexing the Cherry 145).

According to Winterson's novel, other worlds do exist, and they exist simultaneously. It is exactly the coexistence of past and present that enables those inhabiting both to remain unchanged through time, as Jordan and Dog-Woman do. If this coexistence is just "imaginings"--and it has to be, since this is a book of fiction--then the Whorfian romantic thesis, which professes all things temporal to be contained simultaneously in consciousness, is justified by Winterson's *imaginary* universe in Sexing the Cherry. And it does so even if Whorf's and Winterson's assertions contradict our Newtonian theories of science. Consequently, the passage of time as it would be observable on a calendar becomes irrelevant in Sexing the Cherry, similarly to the Hopi view, since all temporal is contained in consciousness, allowing the continuing present to persist (cf. "Bending the Arrow of Time" by Alison Lee, 1994).

However, in the Whorfian description, even with time being "one" and, according to Winterson, being only a figment of the mental realm, aging does occur due to the phenomenon of "perpetual becoming later" (Carroll 1956, 139). Whorf asserted that "all [things temporal] in consciousness is getting later, changing certain relations in an *irreversible* manner," and deemed the "future" inevitable (Carroll 1956, 144 and 60, resp.)."Becoming later" is necessitated by the movement of the Sun and the Moon on their paths and the cyclicity of seasons (cf. also in Helmut Gipper "Is There A Linguistic Relativity Principle?" 11). In Winterson's universe this manifests in the seventeenth century becoming the twentieth, because the "perpetual becoming later," that is, "time," as a concept of a series of irreversible changes, as Alison Lee points out, "cannot be stopped" ("Bending the Arrow of Time" 223).

In accordance with the notion of unstoppable aging, Winterson introduces the section of the novel set in the twentieth century with the words "Sometime Later" (Sexing the Cherry 125), creating a palpable, but for the reader an understandable, paradox in the application of the Hopi romantic view of time. The reader does not share the experience of Jordan and the Wintersonian-Whorfian Hopi notion of time, but is used to operate on the "outward" (see earlier) or Western notion of linear temporality. Due to this fact, and due to the limitations of the linear nature of narration, especially written one, Winterson has to resort to linguistic means such as the above quote that comply with the reader's and written language's standards of the "outward" time.

Since time and space are inseparable in Einstein's Relativity Theory, the dismantling of spatiality is inherent in the Wintersonian deconstruction of temporality. Brian McHale mentions in his book that the notion of space, being a "construct" of fiction, is subject to simultaneous construction and "*deconstruction*" (1987, 45, original emphasis) in many a postmodernist text of fiction. The various devices that McHale mentions in connection with deconstruction of space are "*juxtaposition, superimposition, interpolation and misattribution*" (1987, 45, original emphasis). Oddly enough, McHale's words find resonance in Benjamin Whorf's definition of Hopi space, which asserts that space for the Hopi is the "subject of the mental realm" (Carroll 1956, 60). As a result, the mental lacks space in the objective sense. In the Whorf-Wintersonian joint description of the universe, the mental realm houses both the temporal and the spatial aspects of existence. Therefore, both time and space can undergo simultaneous "construction and deconstruction" if we apply McHale's suggestions to Sexing the Cherry. This allows existence to become synchronous, both in time and space, and this is also the main reason why these characters manifest hardly any change at these different levels of existence.

Nevertheless, one spatial-temporal level, usually the past, becomes the main focus of events in the novel, and that level is superimposed on the future. Jordan, for instance, upon waking from a slumber finds himself on his old ship next to Tradescant, the King's gardener, three hundred years earlier: "I felt I was falling falling into a black hole with no stars . . . Then a man's voice said, 'They are burying the King at Windsor today.' . . . And his clothes . . . nobody wears clothes like that any more. . . ." (Sexing the Cherry 137). However, synchronicity of temporal existence can hardly allow for *superimposition* of one temporal level on the other--much rather it calls for *juxtaposition* (McHale 1987, 45): while the narrative focuses on one level of existence (e.g. the twentieth century), existence on other levels continues uninterrupted, but out of focus for the reader. Winterson herself describes this concept of time(s) and (parallel) existence(s) in the text in form of "LIES" in Sexing the Cherry, refuting the principles of Newtonian world view:

> LIES 3: The difference between the past and the future is that one has happened while the other has not.
>
> LIES 4: We can only be in one place at a time.
>
> LIES 6: Reality is something which can be agreed upon (90).

These authorial intrusions establish the "presence of the creator" of this universe, and constantly remind the reader of Winterson's very own temporal environment outside her novel, as well as the reader's own temporal level of existence. This is set in opposition to the fact that characters in books resist aging despite the Whorfian "perpetual becoming later" of the material of the book itself (Lee, "Bending the Arrow of Time" 224). The real paradox, however, to which Alison Lee calls our attention is the fact that while the reader is reading "forward" as necessitated by the "arrow of time," s/he obtains a retrospective look at the past, and all this is set in the continuous present

("Bending the Arrow of Time" 224). The book in its material form perpetuates the constant present time frame by its being read and reread.

The linear environment of the written language, nevertheless, fortifies the above mentioned lies, and renders their refutation and the written presentation thereof impossible. In his essays, Whorf condemned written language as a culprit in forming our "objectified" view of time (Carroll 1956, 153), which in Sexing the Cherry is described by Jordan as our "outward" experience of it (99). Whorf's theory boldly suggests that the Newtonian tenets of space, time and matter "are recepts from culture and *language*" (Carroll 1956, 153, my italics), and Newton "got them" directly from language. Refuting them within language, the very same medium from which they originate, is at best impossible. Winterson cannot overcome these obstacles, either; therefore she employs language in "*juxtaposing*" and "*interpolating*" (McHale 1987, 45, original emphasis) the various levels of reality.

* * *

Despite the limitations of linearity of the written language, Winterson creates a possible postmodernist universe based, on the one hand, on the very tenets that are expounded in Brian McHale's book on postmodernist fiction, and intertwines these tenets with Benjamin Lee Whorf's romantic notion of Hopi time. By adopting the Hopi view, Winterson creates in Sexing the Cherry the postmodernist experience described by Ihab Hassan as "a stage on the road to the spiritual unification of humankind" (quoted in McHale 1987, 4). In the closing words of the novel Winterson creates the harmony between the "inward" and the "outward" notions of time, matter and non-matter, as well as the left- and right-hand side of Einstein's formula $E=mc^2$. She does that through Jordan's magic transformation into the only perfect form that combines these characteristics in itself, i.e. light: "And even the most solid of all things and the most real, the best-loved and the well-known, are only hand-shadows on the wall. Empty space and *points of light*" (Sexing the Cherry 167, my italics).

## 2.2. Atemporal Deconstruction in Circular Narration: Slaughterhouse-Five by Kurt Vonnegut, Jr.

"I saw what the past had been like, according to the Ford Motor Car Company and Walt Disney, saw what the future would be like, according to General Motors. And I asked myself about the present: how wide it was, how deep it was, how much was mine to keep." (Slaughterhouse-Five, 16)

"Now who says history doesn't go in circles?" (Graham Swift. Waterland, 180)

"Time is a circle." (Friedrich Nietzsche, quoted by Wayne McGinnis)

In Sexing the Cherry, Jeanette Winterson creates an experimental universe in which various levels of time can exist simultaneously with timeless worlds. Winterson's purpose with her experiment is to explore human existence in linear time *and* in light of the Whorfian notion of Hopi time, i.e. in quasi timelessness. The only character of the novel to transgress the boundaries between the two worldviews is Jordan, who, by transforming his material body into non-matter, is able to achieve a harmonious synthesis of time and timelessness.

Kurt Vonnegut, Jr., also invites the reader to witness and participate in an experiment in his novel Slaughterhouse-Five. In his experiment, Vonnegut juxtaposes the linear concept of time and history in the Western cultures with the Whorfian Hopi time of Billy Pilgrim, his protagonist, and the alien people from Tralfamador. In doing so Vonnegut intends to "produce an image of life that is beautiful and surprising and deep" (Slaughterhouse-Five 76), and thus to create the "dynamic tension between the two worlds," as indicated by John Somer (Klinkowitz-Somer 1973, 245).

Still, Vonnegut's purpose with the thought experiment in Slaughterhouse-Five differs from Winterson's experiments with time. Vonnegut sets out to explore history and its timelessness in finally producing his "famous Dresden book" (3) amidst the greatest agonies. History, or more precisely, the one particular event of Dresden's immolation by the Allied Forces in 1945, has to be explored because of its *timelessness*: it will not fade from Vonnegut's memory, from those that survived it, and it will not let that some 130,000 civilians fade that fell victim to that bombing attack (Allen 1991, 78). As a result, Vonnegut's recording history and writing about history is inevitable. However, despite the grandness of these arguments, this attempt at the "Dresden book" lacks the apotheosis of the work of art into an overt manifesto against war and violence. Instead, it is a report on the human condition, one that sheds light on the inability of man to learn from experience and history.

The above-mentioned timelessness of the Dresden memory prompts the adoption of the Whorfian oneness of time. Vonnegut invents the very same idea under the concept of the extraterrestrial Tralfamadorian time concept, which is just as alien from the temporal notion of the Earthlings as Whorf's "science-fiction" Hopi temporality, as indicated in Chapter 1.1. Unlike Sexing the Cherry, Vonnegut's novel does not offer explicit references to Whorf and his ideas. But because the Tralfamadorian concept is almost completely identical with Whorf's, and also for practical purposes, I will use Vonnegut's term in the analysis.

As Benjamin Whorf himself dwelt upon in his essay "The Relation of Habitual Thought and Behavior To Language" that while the objectified view of time of Western civilizations and SAE languages, as well as the linearity of their writing, serves history and its recording very well in such documentations as "records, diaries, . . . calendars, *chronology*, . . . *annals*, *histories*," etc. (Carroll 1956, 153, my italics), the Hopi view of time does not favor such institutions. In Whorf's analysis, the Hopi time view appears not only "too subtle" and "complex" for such limiting ordering of previous and later events, but it is also in the state of constant development. The atemporal grammatical equipment of the Hopi is enhanced by a mental concept which propounds that for them, "everything is in consciousness and everything in consciousness IS, and is together," as Whorf emphasized (Carroll 1956, 143-4; see above in Chapter 1.1.). As a result, past and present exist simultaneously in consciousness, and what Western cultures call "past" does not wake any interest to be studied. The perpetual present demands "preparation" rather than recording: "When it is implicit that everything that ever happened still is, but is in a necessarily different form from what memory or record reports, there is less incentive to study the past" (Carroll 1956, 153).

Contrary to the Hopi, the Western world is very much intent on studying the written recordings of historical events, or on recording history itself. Benjamin Whorf indicated that for our cultures, time is conceived of as "a motion on a space," and although we too sense a continual "latering" of events similarly to the Hopi, this "repetition seems to scatter its force along . . . that space, and be wasted" (Carroll 1956, 151). Recording of events and happenings before they are "wasted" is of paramount interest for Western cultures, and it is done quite frequently from memory. Memory does retain events and happenings, but it can easily suffer from blocks when called to help interpret the past and present, and causes and effects.

As a consequence of the above-mentioned factors, Dresden's annihilation has to be explored in a setting of unified time. This notion proclaims that in this "one" time all things past-present-future are present simultaneously in consciousness. The living proof that they are indeed present in consciousness is Vonnegut himself, who casts himself in Slaughterhouse-Five, his own novel, both as the author of the text and as a participant-sufferer of the bombing. And it is precisely this being together in consciousness of past-present-future that evoke much of the agony. Writing the novel in 1968 was painful, and so was recording the history of the Dresden cataclysm. It is equally painful for Vonnegut to realize that despite his and other Cassandra-letters to the world, the present time duplicates the past in its happenings: the closing chapter of Slaughterhouse-Five draws the parallel between World War II and the war in Vietnam, as well as the shooting of Edgar Derby with the shooting of Robert Kennedy. And as usually done throughout the book, the senselessness of the events of the late 1960s are subtly highlighted with the ever-recurring death chant "So it goes."

Jerome Klinkowitz also explores the painful genesis of Slaughterhouse-Five in his analysis of the text. He maintains that even though Vonnegut addresses the issue of senseless destruction caused by war, which, in itself, is a "universally recognizable content," the bringing forth of his subject matter is "blocked by the unbridgeable gap between word and thing" (Klinkowitz 1990, 7). Writing his novel becomes an excruciating experience, an attempt "to speak the unspeakable" (Allen 1991, 77), a slow giving birth to what has been torturing the author while eluding words. Vonnegut himself introduces these problems to the reader by appearing as the author of his own novel. In turn, the reader becomes actively engaged in the creation of Slaughterhouse-Five *and* in Vonnegut's thought experiment with the novel as literary form. The bond will also be formed in the re-living and the making sense of the cataclysm of the air raid over Dresden. In Vonnegut's own words:

> I would hate to tell you what this lousy little book cost me in money and anxiety and time. . . . I think of how useless the Dresden part of my memory has been, and yet how tempting Dresden has been to write about (Slaughterhouse-Five 2).

Despite the "categorical imperative" that compelled Vonnegut to write about the Dresden bombing, he found that "[t]here is nothing intelligent to say about a massacre" (Vonnegut quoted in Allen 1991, 77). As a result, contrary to the Modernist belief about an epistemological Cassandra-letter to the world, Postmodernism points to the futility of any such attempt, which leads us to Seldan and Widdowson's statement about the postmodern sensibility: "Human shock in face of the unimaginable (pollution, holocaust, the death of the 'subject') results in a loss of fixed points of reference. Neither the world nor the self any longer possesses unity, coherence, or meaning. They are radically 'decentered'" (1993, 178). All this is accompanied by "a profound sense of *ontological uncertainty*" (1993, 178), say Seldan and Widdowson, thus taking a step further from Brian McHale's analysis of postmodernism and its relation to ontology. In Vonnegut's world(s), the noble artistic effort with Cassandra-ic intentions is superimposed by the futile Sysyphusian quest and the resignation expounded by the existentialist philosophy. In Slaughterhouse-Five, this philosophy is reiterated by the chant "So it goes" some one hundred times over *death*. In addition, "a loss of fixed points of reference" is explicitly present in this novel, both in its abolishing the spatial-temporal constraints of a conventional novel, and in its treatment of the structuring of the text according to chronology. These issues will be expanded upon in detail later on.

The deliberate ordering of *creation*, *experimentation*, and *re-living* and *making sense* in the sentence above on the previous page must be noted. In order to *re-live* and *assess* the Dresden experience Vonnegut has to "modify, overturn and discard every familiar convention of the novel" (Klinkowitz 1990, 8). These modifications and reinventions include the subversion of the concept of time, and with it, the concept of space, as well as the re-structuring of the narrative. Temporality and the spatial aspect are disintegrated along the lines of the concepts from Tralfamador, the alien planet, with the adaptation of the Wintersonian concept of "oneness" of time. The subversion of time and space, then, will inevitably result in adapting what Vonnegut termed the Tralfamadorian novel, i.e. a narrative structure of circular nature, to be examined below.

### 2.2.1. Subversion of Time and Space

Similarly to Jeanette Winterson's narrative device in Sexing the Cherry, Vonnegut reorders temporality in Slaughterhouse-Five. Vonnegut too creates a "continuous" or "continual" present (Alison Lee and Jerome Klinkowitz, respectively), as based on the Wintersonian-Whorfian "'one' time." The continuous present is complemented by the deconstruction of the spatial structuring of the novel, which leads to the disintegration of history and the historical events into sizeable chunks. This way, and only this way, can the history of Dresden become available for rethinking and re-evaluation by those who lived through them.

Whorf's unified time appears in Chapter 1 and 10, the authorial framework to Slaughterhouse-Five, in the form of Vonnegut's personal experience. Whereas Winterson uses her authorial presence in Sexing the Cherry to "discuss" the issues of human existence and her experimental use of the Hopi time (see the "LIES" in Sexing the Cherry 90), she does not incorporate any personal experiences within that realm. Vonnegut does just that in his narrative structuring and by being present in person within the novel. In addition, he also includes two small episodes that involve altered time and space experience. Jerome Klinkowitz insists that Vonnegut uses the framework and these personal experiences in Chapter 1 to "train the reader" in his experiments with the continuous present time, altered spatiality, and the novel as a literary form in general (Klinkowitz 1990, 22).

The most important factor in creating the continuous present time frame within the narrative is the "immediate present act of writing" of this very novel (Klinkowitz 1990, 22). Due to Vonnegut's authorial presence in the first chapter and his relating the pains of writing the Dresden book the reader is compelled to take part in both the writing and the continual present of the writing process itself *by reading* Slaughterhouse-Five. This immediacy of writing and, as a matter of fact, that of the book itself, restructures and redefines the notion of *present time* as such. The book will always occupy *a* continuous present time frame for the reader, as Alison Lee points to it in her article "Bending the Arrow of Time: Continuing Postmodern Present" (1994, 224). The reader will always be involved in *another* continuous present-time while writing the book along with

Kurt Vonnegut (and, of course, reading it). Nevertheless, the present of the immediate writing process can be interrupted by turning the pages back and forth (Klinkowitz 1990, 42), but the continuous present time frame of the book will always persist (Lee 1994, 224). Lee sees the real paradox of atemporality in the fact that while the reader is reading "forward" as necessitated by the "arrow of time" and the nature of written language, s/he obtains a retrospective look at the past. However, both are set in the continuous present (""Bending the Arrow of Time" 1994, 224, as mentioned in connection to Sexing the Cherry in Chapter 2.1.). Through the interwovenness of these various aspects of the present a strange synthesis of various present times is achieved, which, in turn, evokes timelessness not only within the book, but also for the reader. The understanding of these concepts on the reader's part induces, in the reader's consciousness, the fusion of all present times into one moment of the reading process. Thus is the Whorfian-Wintersonian "one time" created in the otherwise linear environment of written language.

Vonnegut establishes his own reordered time and space by including two episodes of his personal experience in Chapter One. In the first episode, he creates the "continual present" in the nocturnal setting of the "outward" world (Sexing the Cherry 99). While others are asleep and lose their sense of time *that way*, he stays up through what Klinkowitz sums up as "the timeless condition of late-night randomness" (1990, 32), listening to radio shows, talking to his dog, and making long-distance phone calls. The "continual present" is achieved by large quantities of alcohol, for one. More importantly, however, with the help of

Vonnegut's mental "associations among his interests" that establish the link among past, present and future (Klinkowitz 1990, 32). Vonnegut's "associations among his interests" include, from the past, "old girl friends" (Slaughterhouse-Five 6), war-time memories and the Dresden experience; the present-time babbling of talk shows and the mellowness after drinking; and the future as (pre-)determined by the "constant latering" of events (see Chapter 1.1. and 1.2.): "Sooner or later I go to bed, and my wife asks me what time it is. She always has to know the time. . . . I don't know and I say, "Search *me*" (7, original italics).

These mental associations work as triggers for other associations, and by creating the link among past, present and future, they establish the *continual present* or, Whorf's unified time. And that they do exactly because they are contained in consciousness (Carroll 1956, 143-4). At the same time, Klinkowitz emphasizes, these associations help the author reorder spatiality by allowing his mind to roam, bringing his interests to Vonnegut's own spatial location and eliminating the need for his spatial mobility (1990, 32). By doing so, Vonnegut creates a unity of time *and* space along the dimensions of the "one" time. He also verifies H.G. Wells' thesis about space, time and time traveling, as professed by his time traveler in The Time Machine: "There is no difference between time and space except that our consciousness moves along time" (quoted in Bergson 1965, 148-9).

The pact of mutual understanding between reader and author is tested one more time during another episode that involves the halted flow of time. This incident describes Vonnegut's personal experience at the airport in Boston, en route to Germany. Vonnegut finds himself in a Bergsonian subjective time-warp of some kind, with clocks slowing down, people losing their identities and the order of the world revoked:

> The time would not pass. Somebody was playing with the clocks, and not only with the electronic clocks, but the wind-up kind, too. The second hand on my watch would twitch once, and a year would pass, and then it would twitch again. . . . And I became a non-person in the Boston fog, and Lufthansa put me in a limousine with some other non-persons and sent us to a motel for a non-night (18).

Vonnegut suspects the interference of "somebody" human with the clocks, indicating that his subjective reckoning of temporality has been playing tricks on his objective perception of it. The interpretation of this "accident" evokes the same duality of concepts as Jordan's description of the "outward" and "inward" lives in Sexing the Cherry (99). The "inward" life, an atemporal aspect of the human psyche, frees the self of the bounds of time and space, as illustrated by Jordan's travels in Sexing the Cherry (Chapter 2.1. above). The "outward" life, however, being bound by a linear concept of time, space and causality, determines the identity of the self in Western cultures. It tells the self where it is coming from and where it could be going along that linear continuum. Consequently, losing the "outward" time means a loss of identity, as if the person were hovering in a void bereft of direction markers.

Unlike his protagonist Billy Pilgrim, Vonnegut admits that "[a]s an Earthling, I had to believe whatever clocks said--and calendars" (18). This episode adumbrates the central idea of time and history for the novel and Billy Pilgrim. Billy's frequent becoming "unstuck in time" (20) makes him a time-traveler, who ends up at various points of the Earth and our linear time continuum. Billy is an Earthling, "an actual living person" (Klinkowitz 1990, 31), but within the bounds of the author's fictional rendering of our universe he does not have to obey clocks and calendars. Although Vonnegut the writer still retains his omniscience as the creator of Billy's fictional universe, with regards to omniscience within his life Billy becomes superior to Vonnegut the man present in his own book. Not only can Billy time-travel, but he knows his past, present, and future, and possesses the Hopi continuous present time with "everything in consciousness" (Carroll 1956, 143-4, see above). He "swings" through all of his life, into death, then back to pre-birth (in fact, he does that many times), obtaining a mosaic of pictures at every age. Thus, states Donald Morse in his essay "Overcoming Time," Billy conquers "the limits of a human life lived in time" and achieves "a godlike or Tralfamadorian perspective" of life (1995, 205).

There are things, however, that Billy cannot control and change, despite "knowing" and "seeing" his life clearly in time as "one," and "among [them] were the past, present, and the future" (Slaughterhouse-Five 52). He might possess a continuous present at various time points on our time continuum, but he is not in the position to change his own fate or change the outcome of events knowing where they will lead to. As a result, Vonnegut describes him as "unenthusiastic about living" (52), and, as the Tralfamadorians inform him, the continuous present time can deprive one of escapes: "Well, here we are, Mr. Pilgrim, trapped in the amber of this moment" (66).

Billy Pilgrim is a strange case of predestination, indeed, knowing one's past, present and future, but not being able or not trying to change anything about them. Vonnegut echoes the Tralfamadorians who proclaim that "[a]ll time is all time. It doesn't change" (74). And since "[o]nly on Earth is there any talk of free will" (74), nowhere else, the Tralfamadorian view of time does not allow even the time-savvy Billy to change anything in the past or present or future. "[W]e are all . . . bugs in amber," says the Tralfamadorian. All Billy, and any Earthling, for that matter, could say to that would be "so it goes."

Billy finds absolute consolation in the fact that in death, "everything was beautiful and nothing hurt" (106)--not that he was ever intent on a Shakespearean speculation about taking up a sword against one's fate. When, for instance, his father teaches him how to swim by throwing him into the pool, Billy simply sinks to the bottom without fighting for his life, and resents his being saved from drowning. Not even the end of the Universe evokes more than stoic acceptance in the Tralfamadorians because that "moment is structured that way" (101)--always has been and always will. Instead of looking ahead in the "all time" and being stoic about the structuring of a "later" moment, a strong focus on the continuous, never-ceasing present time and on the immediate moment is suggested by the aliens.

A similar idea about concentrating on the present moment is echoed in Hopi mythology, although they approach the idea of Tralfamadorian predestination from a different angle. The Hopi Indians believe that the future, which has been predestined for them by the divine beings, is only secured by concentrating on the continuous present and by carrying out the prescribed sacred rituals (as described earlier in Chapter 1.2.2.). According to the Hopi myths of emergence, "everything is predetermined," and this divine plan is still "unfolding generation by generation" (Kennard, 1972, 469). This very philosophy manifests in the Hopi linguistic view of the future as expounded by Whorf (also see earlier in 1.2.2.): "the future . . . is ALREADY WITH US in vital and mental form" (Carroll 1956, 60), but it must be "made to happen" by performing the rituals. Billy Pilgrim in Slaughterhouse-Five, by adopting the Tralfamadorian view of time and trying to proselytize it (dispensing "corrective glasses" to every Earthling), also adopts the Hopi belief that the unceasing "regeneration" of man and universe annuls the past and cleanses mankind of accumulated sin (Mircea Eliade cited in Quinn 1983, 46, as referred to in Chapter 1.2.2.).

As with the Hopi, cyclicity and causality thus engender "the repetition of timeless beginnings" (Quinn 1983, 47), and make way for a new beginning after the cataclysm of World War Two. Vonnegut, the ultimate author of Slaughterhouse-Five sees the motivation for rebirth after each fatality, despite his Dresden experience which deprived him of Billy's optimism, replacing it with "ontological uncertainty" (Seldan-Widdowson 1993, 178). Paradoxically enough, for Vonnegut death is the primary motivator (Klinkowitz, 1990, 32) that opens up new beginnings and "keeps life in motion" (McGinnis 1994, 116). Tralfamadorians, McGinnis points out, are prompted by their temporal concept and philosophy to ignore death as "a finality" (1994, 116). On the other hand, the Hopi view death as a stage in the life of the individual, an entry to a different way and form of life, which still remains connected to life on Earth (see Chapter 1.2.). Both of these views are echoed and reinforced in the closing words of Slaughterhouse-Five. Despite the ominous "ontological uncertainty" and the "proliferation of death" (McGinnis 1994, 116), life goes on: "The trees were leafing out. There was nothing going on out there. . . . Birds were talking. One bird said to Billy Pilgrim, *'Poo-tee-weet?'*" (Slaughterhouse-Five 186).

### 2.2.2. Narrative Structure

The agonies of a persisting present time pose further problems to Vonnegut when he is trying to come up with a possible structuring of his novel. In Chapter One he relates his attempts at doing just that, and he admits that the linear outline leads nowhere because he is unable to grasp his subject, history, along the lines of sequential order of causality: "One end . . . was the beginning of the story, and the other end was the end, and then there was the middle part, which was the middle" (5). Vonnegut too seems to be "trapped in the amber," or the continuing present, of his memories, feeling unable to proceed according to the traditional narrative conventions. He feels compelled to abandon the tradition of linear structuring of his novel, replacing it by a circular narrative structure. Naturally, circularity is almost impossible to achieve due to the linearity of written language. However, a circular effect of narration is achieved by the juxtaposition of various, equally weighted events in Billy Pilgrim's life. Contrary to linear narration, there seems to be no climactic point that the novel should reach, nor a chain of events predestined by sequential causality that the text would follow.

Circularity in the narrative is made inevitable due to the circular nature of history: man's stupidity and his reluctance to learn from the past causes history to repeat itself, as Vonnegut implies in Chapter 10, the closing section of the book (as I pointed out earlier). Also, the circular nature of history is the subject of Graham Swift's novel, Waterland. Swift's protagonist, Crick, a history teacher, explains history to his students and his personal history to himself (and the reader) by emphasizing that revolutions, and through them, history itself, are but a "turning around, a completing of a cycle." Even though they inherently indicate a "progressive leap into the future," still, "almost every revolution contains . . . the idea of return. A redemption; a restoration. . . . A return to a new beginning" (1983, 119). When confronted with events from his personal and familial history and their relation to his present condition, Crick grasps their causality and circularity, and comes to the rather laconic conclusion: "Now who says history doesn't go in circles?" (1983, 180).

The notion of history in Vonnegut is similar to Graham Swift's in Waterland, although laden with more bitterness and stoicism which are overtly palpable in the recurrence of the death chant "So it goes" throughout Slaughterhouse-Five. His resignation towards history and mankind, as well as his agonies in structuring the novel, prompts Vonnegut to adopt the German cab driver's broken English phrasing that suits his purposes with the book. Vonnegut acquiesces to proceed with the circular narrative style as "the accident will" (2), letting things and events structure the novel.

Klinkowitz recognizes the significance of the credo of "the accident will" in the cooperation between the reader and the author. According to Klinkowitz's argument, through the adoption of this motto the reader is subtly requested by Vonnegut to hold his judgment about what is to appear on these pages until the whole picture emerges from the patterns (1990, 32). Let history run its circular path, and let this circularity effectuate the Whorfian Hopi timelessness in our consciousness. The application of Whorf's temporal ideas requires the adoption of the Tralfamadorian narrative structure as the only available narrative construct with perfect capabilities of conveying circularity and its full effects. That also has to be explained by Vonnegut, and the silent agreement between reader and writer can allow for the Tralfamadorian circular narrative structuring to have its full affect on the reader. As the aliens will inform Billy about Tralfamadorian fiction later on, it consists of "clumps of symbols separated by stars" (Slaughterhouse-Five 76). It also requires a unique technique in structuring and reading:

> We Tralfamadorians read [these clumps of symbols] all at once . . . There isn't any particular relationship between all the messages, except that the author has chosen them carefully, so that, when seen all at once, they produce an image of life that is beautiful and surprising and deep. There is no beginning, no end, no suspense, no moral, no causes, no effects. What we love in our books are the depths of many marvelous moments seen all at one time (76).

However, the novel's seeming aim to achieve only that beautiful and deep picture hides the "therapeutic" purpose of writing it that lets Vonnegut alleviate the tension of his Dresden experiences (McGinnis 1994, 113). Vonnegut foregoes such devices as climax and denouement that linear narrations inherently possess, and instead, moves "toward a more unresolved circular structure," which is better suited for the telling of his Dresden experience in a "'nonexplainable' work of the imagination" (McGinnis 1994, 113-4).

Circularity is apparent through a large number of devices within the text, such as the poems that can be chanted into infinity (e.g.: "My name is Yon Yonson . . .," 2), and Vonnegut's revelation of the beginning and the ending of the story before its telling has actually begun: "It begins like this. *Listen: Billy Pilgrim has come unstuck in time*. It ends like this: *Poo-tee-weet?*" (19). Another important device with a suggestion of circularity within the narration is the juxtaposition of various places in Billy's life. Wayne McGinnis states that Vonnegut employs the cinematographic technique of the Daiches-ian "time-montage" in which the subject remains fixed in space, and his consciousness is mobile, along with the "space-montage," with the time remaining fixed and the spatial element shifts alongside it (McGinnis 1994, 119). Vonnegut lets one place metamorphose into another, as if they were continuously present in Billy's mind. This also happens in accordance to Whorf's atemporal Hopi time which postulates that time is "motion on a space," as illustrated by the following excerpt: "[Billy] was simultaneously on foot in Germany in 1944 and riding his Cadillac in 1967. Germany dropped away, and 1967 became bright and clear, free of interference from any other time" (Slaughterhouse-Five 50-1). Thus, with changing the time frame on a given scene to another, the spatial surrounding will alter along with time. The reader is required to adopt the Tralfamadorian time concept in order to comprehend and see "all time" (Slaughterhouse-Five

74) at the same time, since language is unable to convey this, as McGinnis points out (1994, 119).

However, the device that most markedly echoes circularity is death and its recurrence in the novel, and Vonnegut's trademark chant "So it goes" which is recited with every fatality that gets mentioned in the text. Klinkowitz terms death the primary motivator of life (1990, 32), and indeed it is the instigator that causes life to move on. As a result, the chant "So it goes" also acts as a narrative device that contributes to the technique of circularity: as an indicator of Vonnegut's very human view of "fatalism" (McGinnis 1994, 119), this ever-repeated chant causes the novel to move on, towards the anticlimactic Dresden bombing and Edgar Derby's execution. In turn, these latter events have to become anticlimactic due to the circular narration in the first place, and due to the immunizing effect of the omnipresent "So it goes" that levels and makes equal all deaths: that of the 130,000 thousand civilians, Roland Weary, as well as Billy's wife, and Edgar Derby too. This chant is the linking device for Vonnegut between the deaths of the 1940s and of the 1960s, establishing, along with the other narrative devices, a spiraling narrative, taking us back to Graham Swift's words about the circular nature of history (cited in the epigraph to this chapter).

## 2.3. The Predestined Causality of 'After' and 'Before:' Time's Arrow by Martin Amis

"Nobody can imagine in physical terms the act of reversing the order of time. Time is not reversible" (Vladimir Nabokov, quoted by Maya Slater, 1993, 141)

"Oh no, but then . . ." (Time's Arrow, 165)

In his epilogue to Time's Arrow, Martin Amis includes a long list of people and texts that were instrumental in his conceiving of his novel. Among these, we can find a carefully worded hint at a passage in a text that is of importance to this study: "At the back of mind I also had . . . a certain paragraph--a famous one--by Kurt Vonnegut" (Time's Arrow 168). Anyone who is familiar with both Time's Arrow and Kurt Vonnegut's Slaughterhouse-Five can immediately identify the passage: this is the scene where Billy Pilgrim watches old war movies--backwards. The significance of this passage for this present study is twofold. For one, Billy Pilgrims creates an intriguing juxtaposition of the unified time, and of the everyday linear temporality. In other words, Billy reverses the linear chronology of the movies while he remains within the environment of the forward-flowing Western time concept. He juxtaposes all three time frames: the *past* of World War Two in the movies, as well as in Billy's and Vonnegut's memories; the time moving ahead while the movies run backwards ticks away the *present*; Billy's memories and his knowledge of what is coming towards him during his "becoming unstuck in time" are the *future*. Through the fusion of these temporal aspects into one, Billy establishes a "continuous" or "continual" present time mode (Alison Lee, 1994, and Jerome Klinkowitz, 1990, resp.) of what I termed the Whorfian Hopi time. Within this the linear temporal concept of the Western cultures does exist, and it represents what Benjamin Whorf termed the state of constant "latering" or development of events. Billy himself represents the embodiment of the atemporal grammatical equipment of the Hopi as described by Benjamin Whorf (cf. Chapter 1.1.). In itself a unique feature, the atemporal Hopi grammar is enhanced by a mental concept which propounds that for the Hopi--and, since he shares this, for Billy--, "everything is in consciousness and everything in consciousness IS, and is together" (Benjamin Whorf in Carroll 143-4; and see earlier in Chapter 1.1.). Billy is able to move along the time line and to retain everything in the "continuous present," i.e. his consciousness. As a result, past, present and future can exist simultaneously in Billy's consciousness, regardless of the different directions of time flows on the screen (backwards) and in the living room or in other people's lives (forward or "latering").

The further significance of the passage is that Martin Amis takes this scene and the above-mentioned synthesis of the two time concepts, the Whorfian constant present and the Western forward-flowing linearity, and invites the reader to a different kind of thought experiment: Time's Arrow experiments with temporality, predestination and history. By employing a synthesis and juxtaposition of Whorf's and the Western time concepts, Amis tackles the most horrible crime in human history: the Holocaust. Following Billy Pilgrim's example, Amis reverses the linear time flow on the film that contains the protagonist's life in Time's Arrow in order to reveal, through imagination, a past that the protagonist intends and, to a certain degree, manages, to conceal.

Amis' narrative challenges and defies Vladimir Nabokov's *ex catedra* claim (see the epigraph to this Chapter). Time's Arrow, on one level, does just that. With the help of the reversed order of time and through imagination a past is exposed. On another level, however, which goes beyond the *l'art pour l'art* merits for the bravura with reversed time, Amis sends a lasting message concerning the need for a "continuous present" of the memory of the Holocaust.

In his article "Overcoming Time," Donald Morse quotes from the renown historian Hayden White, who argued that the task of historiography and fiction is that "both in consciousness and discourse humans must represent the past 'in an imaginary way,'" since imagination can "reconstruct historical reality in consciousness" (quoted in Morse, "Overcoming Time" 1995, 219). As far as Time's Arrow is concerned, within the re-reversed time flow "the *historical reality* is brought back to consciousness through 'imagination'" by the reader ("Overcoming Time" 1995, 217, italics mine). Morse concludes that the reader's active involvement in deciphering Amis' narrative and within that, the backward movement of time, contributes to the reconstruction and "unmasking" of the evil of Nazism (Morse 1995, 217): The re-enactment of the unspeakable horrors committed in concentration camps and of the Holocaust in general. In his argument Morse carries this thought further by claiming that reversing the past in Amis "also testifies to the importance of keeping the past in the present through memory" ("Overcoming Time" 1995, 218-9).

Amis' intentions are similar to Vonnegut's in that they are both intent on keeping the past in the present through writing these novels (see earlier in Chapter 2.2.). In order to achieve that, both writers employ a timelessness which contains all points of time in consciousness, and thereby lets the authors manipulate time, knowledge and foreknowledge. These Whorfian notions also contribute to not letting past deeds be relegated to oblivion. As Amis notes in the afterword to Time's Arrow, the memory of the Holocaust--which Amis here characterizes as a "combination of the atavistic and the modern" in the style of its execution--, and the memory of its victims as well, should remain as indelible as the *Reichsautobahnen*, the highways of the Third Reich: upon their construction these were intended to "endure for a thousand years" (168). So must these memories endure, and not for thousand, but an infinite number of years. These are the very reasons why Amis lets time run backwards, into Odilo's past, revealing what he attempted to forget or "unlearn" (Time's Arrow 80). And as Donald Morse emphasizes, these are also the reason for Amis to choose a different perspective from Vonnegut's text. Instead of showing the sufferers, as Slaughterhouse-Five does, Amis depicts the cause of the sufferings, and thus fortifies the dramatic effect of the inhumanities on the reader.

Nonetheless, Donald Morse is right in his observation that the backward flowing time also "yields irony and comedy and confronting the horror of the a-human" ("Overcoming Time" 1995, 213). In order to appreciate this irony, he contends, the reader has to "re-reverse" the flow of time, readjusting it to the forward flow that the reader is experiencing. Thus, when the stunned narrator observes Odilo ruin a beautifully kept garden over the years by unearthing the tulips and the roses and "screwing" various sorts of weeds into the soil, he deducts that "Destruction--is difficult. Destruction is slow," whereas "Creation . . . is no trouble at all" (Time's Arrow 18-9). The reader, through imagination, reconstructs reality, and by reconstructing the flow of time the irony of Amis' world is exposed.

The novel is centered around two characters, Odilo Unverdorben, a medical doctor, and the narrating voice, whose identity, despite his residing within Odilo, is debatable. Due to the "close connection" between Odilo and the narrator, the statement "two characters" may appear erroneous. Amis' separating Odilo from the narrating voice can be explained by Linda Hutcheon's remark about the deliberate disintegration of narrating personae. Hutcheon points out that "postmodernism establishes, differentiates, and then disperses stable narrative voices (and bodies) that use memory to try to make sense of the past. It both installs and then subverts traditional concepts of subjectivity" (A Poetics of Postmodernism: History, Theory, Fiction 1988, 117-8).

The narrator, who at times calls himself "the soul" (74), "passenger or parasite" (8 and 63), and whom the reader may feel inclined to categorize as "conscience," "spirit" or "chronicler of Odilo's life," constantly merges with, and distances himself from, Odilo. His references to himself with the personal pronoun "I" are in sharp contrast to his references with the first name to the protagonist, as if he were trying to keep an ironic distance from him and his doings: "Each day when Tod [one of Odilo's many aliases] and I are done with the *Gazette* . . ." (8). At certain points, however, the two personae merge under the first-person singular pronoun "I," instead of the previous ironic "we," as if the narrator now identified himself with the protagonist: "There is another language, a second language, here in Tod's head. *We* sometimes dream in that language too" (7, italics mine).

The two characters take a survey of Odilo's life projected backwards at the moment of his death, peeling off layer by layer the masks and aliases that Odilo donned throughout his medical career. The revelations continue until Odilo's true self as a concentration camp monster is exposed, only to be safely dissolved in his parents' bodies, in what one might ironically call the "due course of backward-moving time of the narrative." Similarly to the war movies that Billy Pilgrim is watching in Slaughterhouse-Five, for the narrator, Odilo's life is just a projected flow of images on a screen. These images simultaneously provide the narrator with the possibility to learn about Odilo's personality since, as the narrator mentions, "I have no access to his thoughts" (7). For instance:

> I can't tell--and I need to know--whether Tod [Odilo's name at that point of time] is kind. Or how unkind. He takes toys from children, on the street. . . . The kid will be standing there . . . Tod'll come up. The toy, a squeaky duck or whatever, will be offered to him by the smiling child. Tod takes it. And backs away . . . (15).

Despite his living inside Odilo, for the narrator, these are the only sources of information about Odilo. Therefore, his being Odilo's "spirit" or higher self is quite questionable.

More importantly for this study, however, the two characters also represent various time concepts. The protagonist, Odilo Unverdorben, partakes of the backward moving linear time that contains the film of his life when on his deathbed. In turn, his backward moving life creates the experience of Hopi atemporality and continuous present *outside* the world of the text, i.e. in the consciousness of the reader. The reader has to synthesize through his/her imagination the continual present of the reading of the text and of the knowledge about the Holocaust as part of human history. By the end of the narrative, the reader will gradually have attained the Whorfian Hopi timelessness by learning all the details and the reversed causality of Odilo's life. That way, the reader will have all the time levels of Odilo's life within his/her consciousness.

The other main character, the narrating voice, thinks in the terms of linear temporality, but is seemingly ignorant of its backward direction: "What . .

. is the sequence of the journey I'm on?" (Time's Arrow 6). While Odilo reviews his own life, the narrating soul-parasite creature is looking on, baffled. He seems to believe the backward movement of time to be the proper direction: "When people move--when they travel--they look where they've come from, not where they're going. Is this what human beings always do?" (22). Despite the frequent mergers with his "partner in crime," the narrator is troubled by brief bright periods of clairvoyance. During these, ironically, he recognizes that something has gone--backwards:

> But wait a minute. The baby *is* crawling, only one or two inches at a time--but crawling *forward*. And the mother . . . she is reading . . . *forward*. Hey! Christ, how long has it been since I . . .? Anyhow, it's soon over, this lucid interval. The mother is reading backward again . . . I've got to get over it. I keep expecting the world to make sense. It doesn't. It won't. Ever (82).

Maya Slater also notices these seeming contradictions within the narrator's persona. She mentions that Amis creates a narrator whose task is to explain Odilo's backward world to the reader. However, this task is rendered comical by his linear, *forward* moving thinking within time and by his resulting bewilderment. As Slater points out, "[i]n a sense, then, the world of this novel is not truly reversed--it is a backward world seen through forward-looking eyes" (1993, 145). And even though the reader also reads the text with "forward-looking eyes," he or she is endowed with the "imagination" that Hayden White claims to restore reality within the consciousness of the reader (quoted in Donald Morse 1995, 217).

The reader's gradual attainment of the Whorfian concept of Hopi atemporality becomes obvious during the first few pages of the novel. These passages describe Odilo's moment of death, and the way the review of his life begins: "Time now passed untrackably, for it was given over to struggle . . . Then I must have blacked out" (Time's Arrow 5-6). Again, the narrator becomes puzzled over the direction of time ("Why am I walking *backward* into the house? . . . Where am I heading?" 6). Nevertheless, for the reader, who obeys the Whorfian principles of Hopi time while reading the text and reversing it in his/her mind, which will contain "everything . . . in consciousness and everything in consciousness IS, and is together" (Whorf in Carroll 1956, 143-4), all this unfolds along the dimensions of Whorf's description of Hopi metaphysics.

Whorf insisted that "[i]n this Hopi view, time disappears and space is altered," (Carroll 1956, 59, cf. Chapter 1.1.). Therefore, all events can be categorized according to their nature of having "MANIFESTED," i.e. what Western cultures refer to as past and present; or "MANIFESTING," that is, the Western notion of the future (Carroll 1956, 59). However, as Whorf interpreted the Hopi way of thinking, this future "is ALREADY with us in vital and mental form" (Carroll 1956, 60). Since in Time's Arrow time runs backwards, the coexistence of "MANIFESTED," or past-present, and the "MANIFESTING," or future, becomes doubly true. The reader becomes immediately aware of this, and watches Odilo on a collision course to follow a path that leads him back to the point of his obliteration. While he is on this path--revisiting his deeds at the point of his death--, being subject to the reversed Whorfian Hopi metaphysics, he finds himself in a strange predicament involving *predestination*.

Billy Pilgrim, the time-traveler in Slaughterhouse-Five, is predestined to live through a life about which he learns all the details during his becoming "unstuck in time" (Slaughterhouse-Five 20). Although Odilo Unverdorben in Time's Arrow is forced to relive and revisit his lifetime, his situation is somewhat different from Billy's. Billy might have the chance to change forthcoming or "later" events on the Western-type linear time continuum if Vonnegut did not deprive him of that chance: Billy cannot control or alter certain things, "among [these] . . . the past, present, and the future" (Slaughterhouse-Five 52, see above in Chapter 2.2.1.) because Vonnegut the author/creator denies him this possibility. By contrast, Odilo is rendered incapable of changing his own past due to the backward motion of the linear time continuum which has his deeds trapped, like bugs in amber.

Not only does causality become reversed in this real-life horror movie that Odilo is watching backwards, but the *after* and the *before* will exclude the possibility of both knowledge and freedom for Odilo. He is left without any choice, as Morse indicates ("Overcoming Time," 1995, 210 and 214). Consequently, no advent of any event can be avoided. While the images are running backwards before our eyes, Odilo himself seems to know where he is coming from and where he is heading, as if he were aware of his predicament:

> all the people tended to gather at the sharp end of the ship, looking at where they are coming from, as people do. Only John [i.e. Odilo] is invariably found on the stern, looking at where we are headed. . . . we leave no mark on the ocean, as if we are successfully covering our tracks (99).

His memories about the *after*, i.e. what is closer to the reader's present time, are being erased as he proceeds from the *after* towards the *before*, i.e. what the reader terms past. Odilo leaves New York to return to Europe, which is about to be "constructed" by the to-be revived Nazi troops ("This war will start at an appointed time," 99). At the same time, he seems to have full knowledge about the *before* that he will face soon. He has "memories" and dreams of what is coming up in the *before*: "So the dream must be about what Tod will evetually do," (39), concludes the narrator after one of Odilo's nightmares. Thus, in Odilo's case, the future replaces the past and vice-versa, the past--his past in the reader's re-reversed time--becomes the future which Odilo cannot alter, since it is his past at the same time.

Remembering and forgetting seem to be the prominent themes that underlie Amis', and therefore, Odilo's world of reversed causality. The narrator ponders on "the human talent for forgetting" (80), an "activity" that suggest involvement and dedication on behalf of all participants. This is not "erosion or waste," i.e. the natural process of obliteration. Instead, in accordance with the observations of the narrator, which proclaim "creation is no trouble at all," while "destruction is slow" (15), in a reversed time flow forgetting becomes a slow process that entails the loss of awareness of the *before*. Remembrance for Odilo entails the sudden grasping of what is now the *after*, without ever attaining the ability to alter either the cause or the effect, since there can be no such attempt within the backwards time.

While the reader realizes that very early on when reading the text, and "participates in the backwards running world" by reconstructing backward-written conversations and deciphering Odilo (Morse 1995, 209), the narrator still fosters illusions about the protagonist whom he has sworn to escort. Morse points out that the moment of truth "arrives" for the narrator, however, when he comprehends at the end of the text what the true direction of time is: "When Odilo closes his eyes, I see an arrow fly--but wrongly. Point first" (Time's Arrow 165). That moment of revelation fuses all his knowledge about Odilo, his personality, his life and the monstrous deeds he committed, into one single instant of understanding about the continuous present time of all times, recreated within the Whorfian timelessness. But since he is quasi "time-impaired," to put it that way, he is unable to give voice to his realization. All he mutters is "Oh no, but then . . ." (165), and the ensuing silence speaks louder than words. Only then, and only for that climactic instant, can the narrator share with the reader the continuous present, the "one" time (J. Winterson 1989, 155) which contains all times in consciousness (cf. Whorf in Carroll 1956, 143-4).

The narrator's experiencing the Hopi timelessness or continuous present within his consciousness comes at the very end of the text. That is the moment when, as Donald Morse points out in his essay, Odilo is "close to obliteration"

(1995, 214-5) at the moment of his birth. Paradoxically, Odilo's end is his birth because that brings about his obliteration. And as Morse formulates the importance of this revelation for the narrating soul-parasite-spirit: "The truth about the direction of time and time's truth about Odilo's life also dissolve the dramatic tension between the soul--which Odilo long ago jettisoned--, longing for redemption, and the person actively choosing ruin" (215).

Despite his efforts to erase his past, Odilo fails in this attempt because Amis coerces him to relive what he has concealed. Only when Odilo's "very life is erased" at the end of Time's Arrow which is his birth simultaneously (or is that still the beginning? or *a* beginning?), can he finally lose all his memories ("Overcoming Time," 219). The combined present-past time frame of the Hopi time, which contains all previous events in consciousness, and which Odilo willingly gives up by forgetting and remembering at the same time, now holds all of Odilo's lifetime in the consciousness of the reader. Thus the reader sees achieved Amis' original intention of keeping the past, in particular, the Holocaust, alive, embedded, within the reader's consciousness, in an ever-continuous present time of Hopi timelessness.

## 2.4. The Whorfian Hopi Time in a Spider's Web: Almanac of the Dead by Leslie Marmon Silko

"The old ones did not believe the passage of years caused old age. They had not believed the passage of time at all." (Almanac of the Dead, 19-20)

"You have engraved yourself
with holy signs, encased yourself
in pumice, hammered on my bones
til you could no longer hear
the howl of missions
slipping screams through your silence,
dropping dreams from your wings."
(Wendy Rose. "To Some Hopi Ancestors")

As this study has shown, the "science-fiction" Hopi time has inspired various postmodernist artists to achieve different effects by employing it. Jeanette Winterson halts the flow of time by applying the Whorfian ideas to her worlds in Sexing the Cherry. She establishes the Hopi "oneness" of time by juxtaposing and superimposing various epochs of history and by transporting the protagonists between these time levels. Kurt Vonnegut's Slaughterhouse-Five intends to bring together past, present and future with the aid of inventing extraterrestrial timelessness. By having the protagonist attain the ability to move along the linear continuum, Vonnegut fuses the three time frames into what Alison Lee terms a "continuous present," i.e. the combination of the temporal "oneness" of the protagonist's life, his and Vonnegut's memories, and the unique, circular narrative style. In Time's Arrow, Martin Amis aims at a similar objective of bringing the past back to the present and preserve it there for all times to come. He takes a different angle than Vonnegut: the past unfolds while time moves backwards. The "oneness" of the Whorfian Hopi time is then created within the consciousness of the reader rather than within that of a character in the text. This narrative technique effectuates what Amis envisioned: the memory of the Holocaust remains indelible from the consciousness of the reader, who experiences the Whorfian Hopi time by using his or her imagination to re-reverse the time flow of the protagonist's life.

Leslie Silko's Almanac of the Dead offers a fourth perspective on unifying time levels into an undivided one, which is governed and perpetuated by the keeper of all times, i.e. consciousness. Silko, herself of Pueblo Indian descent, uses the Whorfian-Wintersonian "oneness" of time in her novel to deliver a rather powerful political message about the apocalyptic future of the various races on the American continent. The book sends a warning for all inhabitants of the Western hemisphere, predicting the demise of the Whites who have lost their "god," and the restoration of the rule of the Native Americans over the land of their ancestors. All this may happen in the not too distant future--a future that has been predestined by the past which, in turn, is very much alive in the consciousness of the Native Americans. This past is kept in consciousness so vividly that it is infused into the present time through constant recital, re-enactment and re-appearance of legends, myths and prophecies. The thus created past-present of the Hopi time, where "everything is in consciousness and everything in consciousness IS, and is together" (Benjamin Whorf in Carroll 1956, 143-4; and earlier in Chapter 1.1.), is going to bring about the future predicted earlier in the myths, legends and prophecies of the Native American tribes. Ironically, it is only a question of *time* before all this will happen: "History will catch up with the White man whether the Indians did anything or not," professes the leader of the Indian revolution (Almanac of the Dead 316). Silko lays out all the signs, and has them interpreted to the reader lest there remain any doubt about their accuracy. Thus the "one" time and the ancient prophecies are subordinated to her political agenda of the Native American movement.

The genre of this novel allows a manifold categorization, as based on the coexistence of the dominants, or focusing component, of modernist and postmodernist poetics within the text, as described by Brian McHale (Postmodernist Fiction 1987, 10). The quest of one of the principal characters, Seese, to find her kidnapped son, as well as Silko's episodic focus on the illegal drug trade along the U.S.-Mexican border and the underlying description of criminal activities may trap an unwary reader into stamping the text as a detective novel--the "epistemological genre *par excellence*," says McHale (1987, 9). Characters sifting through evidence and information, searching for the pieces of a puzzle and answers to questions create the "epistemological doubt" of the modernist code: what is in focus on this level of Almanac of the Dead is the "problem of 'unknowability' or the limits of knowledge" (McHale 1987, 8). Silko's episodic narration suits this genre and description perfectly: the reader, just as the characters, obtain one piece to the puzzle per episode. Thus are knowability and unknowability manipulated by the author, very reminiscent of crime fiction.

However, the text offers a shift in the philosophical dominant, and that is the shift towards the ontology, i.e. the focus on existence and identity, of postmodernist poetics. As McHale's analysis of postmodernism indicates, Silko explores the juxtaposition and interactions of various worlds in the Americas, while foregrounding the conflicts of identity of Native Americans, Hispanics, and Whites, reflected in the character of Sterling, a Pueblo Indian, and in the mixed-blood sisters Lecha and Zeta. Through these characters, and by drawing upon her Pueblo Indian origins, Silko also explores the ontological "marginality and ex-centricity" (Hutcheon 1989, 62) of the underprivileged races in a world of White dominance. The result is a combination of Marxist and feminist political agenda that has been foregrounded in postmodernist poetics since the 1960s (Hutcheon 1989, 62).

Furthermore, by setting her novel in the indeterminably near future which, according to Benjamin Whorf, could easily be "ALREADY with us," Silko creates the ontological dominant for a science-fiction novel--characterized by McHale as the "ontological genre *par excellence*" (1987, 59), the literary form of "cognitive estrangement" (Darko Suvin, quoted in McHale 1987, 59). The world described in the novel bears a strong resemblance to the world that surrounds the reader in the "outward" (Winterson 1989, 99) reality of the 1990s. This is epitomized by the Indian uprising in Chiapas, Mexico, which took place three years *after* the publication of this book. The reader is left to ponder: is it mere coincidence? could Silko have foreseen that event? can it be that the predictions of the Hopi prophecies are true? The answer cannot be ascertained. However, Silko superimposes her envisioned apocalyptic world upon the reader's reality in a way that prevents the reader from recognizing Silko's sleight of hand with shifting into a different time zone, i.e. the fictional future.

The sleight of hand with shifting time is achieved with the help of a narrative technique that bears similarity to Kurt Vonnegut's circular technique, both in its approach and in its effect on the temporal scheme, as well as on the reader's reception of the narrative. The episodic structuring that works its way, like the completion of a mosaic, towards providing the full picture only when finished, resembles what Silko herself referred to as a "spider's web" (see below). Alanna Brown quotes Leslie Silko's very own words which illuminate the origins of her narrative style:

> Pueblo expression resembles something like a spider's web--with many little threads radiating from a center, criss-crossing each other. As with the web, the structure will emerge as it is made and you must simply listen and trust,

> as the Pueblo people do, that meaning will be made ("Pulling Silko's Threads Through Time," 1993, 171).

The weaver of the web, the spider, and its impersonator, Spider Woman, plays a very important role in Hopi mythology. She is created in order to create life in the newly established first world, and later on she is trusted with the creation of the first humans (Waters Book of the Hopi 1963, 4-6). Silko in her authorial powers reminds the reader of Spider Woman, weaving a web of existence around the characters she has created. At the same time, Silko incorporates the destructive powers of a creator when she dooms the world of her narrative--and through it, the White man's world outside the narrative--to annihilation.

Silko achieves with her cob-web fashioned narration a very similar effect that Vonnegut's Slaughterhouse-Five and Pueblo oral tradition do. The slow elaboration of each thread provides the reader with one piece to the mosaic, while a subtle request is sent to the reader to hold his/her judgment about the text until the narration has been completed (Jerome Klinkowitz 1990, 32). Just like in Vonnegut, the spider's web technique lets Silko's history run its circular path, tying her envisioned future to the past of the prophecies handed down through centuries, and let the complete circle of past-present-future effectuate the Hopi timelessness in the reader's consciousness: "Those past times [of ancient Indian history] were not lost. The days, months, and years were living beings who roamed the starry universe until they came around again" (Almanac of the Dead 313). Even if in the fictional--although fact-based--universe of Silko's book, the times do come back, having competed the full cycle, both in human history, since time is "one," and within the narrative of the spider's web.

The application of the Whorfian temporality requires the invention and adoption of the Tralfamadorian narrative structure in Vonnegut, and the cobweb in Silko, as the only available narrative constructs with perfect capabilities of conveying circularity and its full effects. It also reflects a rejection of viewing linear time of the Western cultures as a factor in the life of the narration or, its antecedent, the oral tradition. "Sacred time is always in the Present," proclaims one of Silko's characters (136), and the narrative style of the spider web emphasizes just that. While listening to or reading a story the recipient's consciousness will be ruled by a "oneness" of time which, in turn, is created by the narration itself. Upon completion, the web, reminiscent of Vonnegut's extraterrestrial narrative, "produce[s] an image of life that is beautiful and surprising and deep" (Slaughterhouse-Five 76). All the temporal components of this surprising and deep image are fused into one instant, which produces the "oneness" of time for text and reader alike.

Silko ties her narrative and its geographical placement to the Hopi emergence myths and the legends of their migrations. Just as those myths relate the birth of a race and its peoples, the Indians of the Americas and the Hopi Clan, so does Silko's vision describe the rebirth of this race through the re-enactment of the migrations. According to Frank Waters' The Book of the Hopi, the center of the migratory pattern was located in what is now the Hopi country in Northern Arizona, and bears the Hopi name "Túwanasavi," or the

Center of the Universe (1963, 113). The migration itself extended from this center into the four major directions, outlining an imaginary cross on the face of American continent:

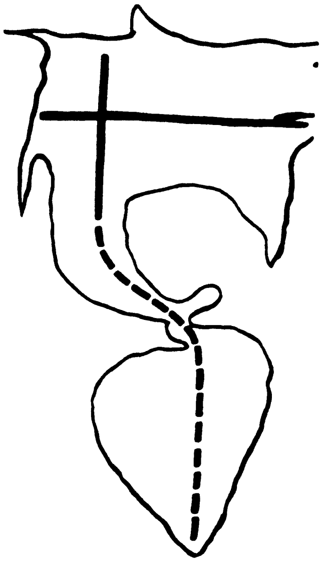
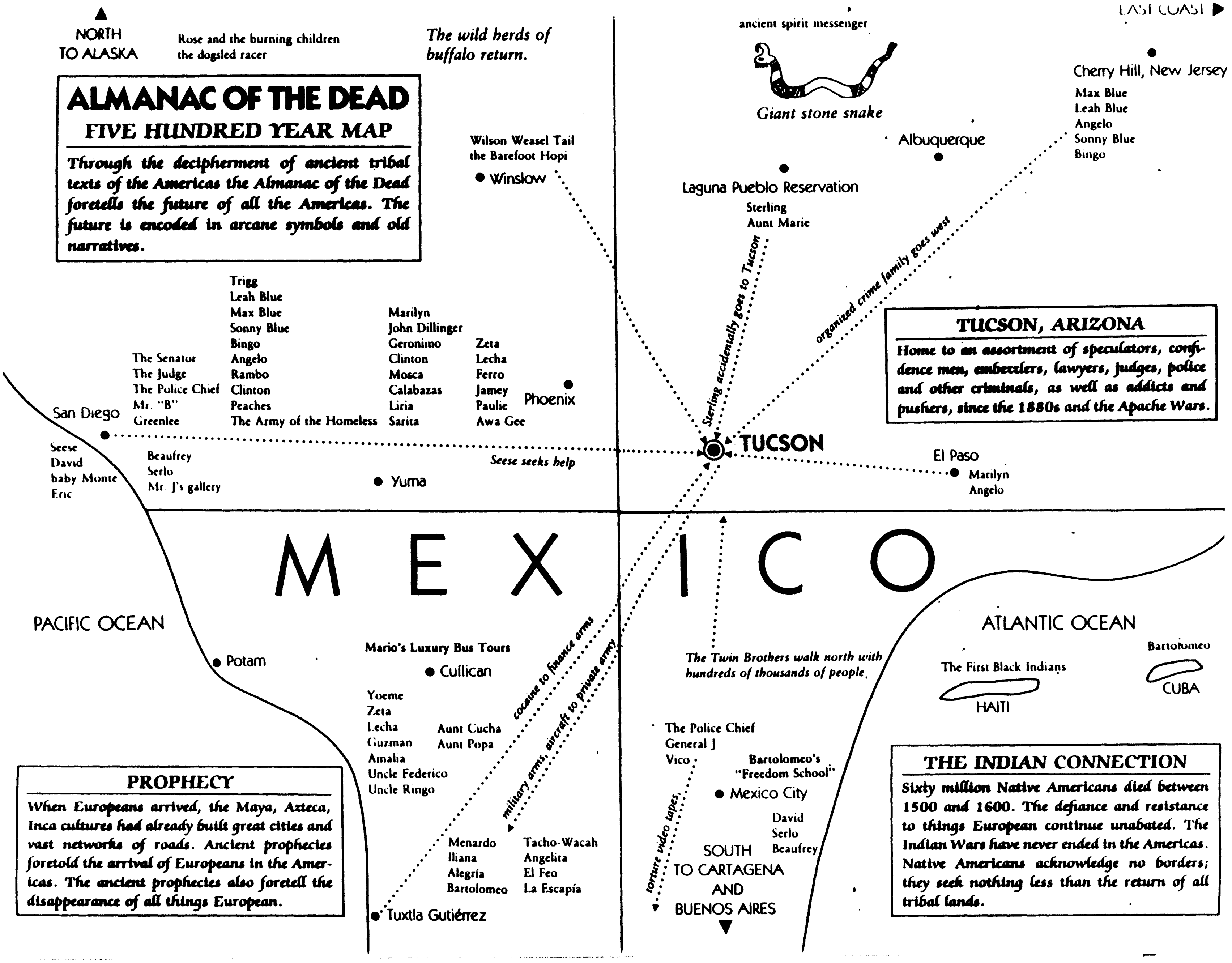


Figure 4
(Waters, Frank. Book of the Hopi, page 113).

The North-South axis stretched all the way from Alaska ("the ice-locked Back Door," Waters, 1963, 113) to Central-America, where the tribes of the Uto-Aztecan family resided. The Hopi are still considered to be related to the Mayas, Toltecs and Aztecs (Waters 1963, 115-117). The East-West axis stretched from ocean to ocean, forming a junction with the North-South arm at the above-mentioned "Center of the Universe" in Hopi country (Waters 1963, 113). The various Hopi Clans completed four migrations, one in each direction, and upon absolving this task they were allowed to settle down, "claiming the land for their people in accordance with the Creator's plan" (Waters 1963, 114).

The Almanac of the Dead reproduces the migratory pattern of the Hopi clans, only in Silko the "doomed people," the Whites, are forced to do most of the migration. Seese, in search for her baby; the Blue family, in quest for more power and money; the Mexicans, in flight from the forthcoming Indian revolt--all end up in the center of the novel, Tucson, Arizona, located just a bit farther to the South from Túwanasavi, the Hopi Center of the Universe:


NORTH
TO ALASKA
Rose and the burning children
the dogsled racer
The wild herds of buffalo return.
ancient spirit messenger
Giant stone snake
EAST COAST
Cherry Hill, New Jersey
Max Blue
Leah Blue
Angelo
Sonny Blue
Bingo
Albuquerque
Wilson Weasel Tail
the Barefoot Hopi
Winslow
Laguna Pueblo Reservation
Sterling
Aunt Marie
Sterling accidentally goes to Tucson
organized crime family goes west
Trigg
Leah Blue
Max Blue
Sonny Blue
Bingo
Angelo
Rambo
Clinton
Peaches
The Army of the Homeless
The Senator
The Judge
The Police Chief
Mr. "B"
Greenlee
Marilyn
John Dillinger
Geronimo
Clinton
Mosca
Calabazas
Liria
Sarita
Zeta
Lecha
Ferro
Jamey
Paulie
Awa Gee
Phoenix
San Diego
Seese
David
baby Monte
Eric
Beaufrey
Serlo
Mr. J's gallery
Yuma
Seese seeks help
TUCSON
El Paso
Marilyn
Angelo
MEXICO
PACIFIC OCEAN
Potam
Mario's Luxury Bus Tours
Culican
Yoeme
Zeta
Lecha
Guzman
Amalia
Uncle Federico
Uncle Ringo
Aunt Cucha
Aunt Popa
cocaine to finance arms
military arms, aircraft to private army
Menardo
Iliana
Alegría
Bartolomeo
Tacho-Wacah
Angelita
El Feo
La Escapía
Tuxtla Gutiérrez
The Twin Brothers walk north with hundreds of thousands of people.
The Police Chief
General J
Vico
Bartolomeo's "Freedom School"
Mexico City
David
Serlo
Beaufrey
torture video tapes
SOUTH
TO CARTAGENA
AND
BUENOS AIRES
ATLANTIC OCEAN
The First Black Indians
HAITI
Bartolomeo
CUBA

## ALMANAC OF THE DEAD

### FIVE HUNDRED YEAR MAP

*Through the decipherment of ancient tribal texts of the Americas the Almanac of the Dead foretells the future of all the Americas. The future is encoded in arcane symbols and old narratives.*

### TUCSON, ARIZONA

Home to an assortment of speculators, confidence men, embezzlers, lawyers, judges, police and other criminals, as well as addicts and pushers, since the 1880s and the Apache Wars.

### PROPHECY

*When Europeans arrived, the Maya, Azteca, Inca cultures had already built great cities and vast networks of roads. Ancient prophecies foretold the arrival of Europeans in the Americas. The ancient prophecies also foretell the disappearance of all things European.*

### THE INDIAN CONNECTION

Sixty million Native Americans died between 1500 and 1600. The defiance and resistance to things European continue unabated. The Indian Wars have never ended in the Americas. Native Americans acknowledge no borders; they seek nothing less than the return of all tribal lands.

Figure 5

(Silko, Leslie M. Almanac of the Dead)

And all this happens in fulfillment of the prophecy that Silko, or more precisely, her Almanac of the Dead, as well as Maasaw, the owner of this world, and the spirit beings foretold eons ago. This sense of predestination is a more obscure one than the predetermination one is confronted with in Slaughterhouse-Five or Time's Arrow. Silko's is less arbitrary, since it is backed up by the religious beliefs of her Pueblo Indian ancestors, rather than an authorial device or limitation, temporal or otherwise. Silko's predestination *is* a part of a religious belief system, similarly to the Judeo-Christian beliefs, but its (almost) holy scripture is the "Almanac of the Dead" which appears in the title of the novel itself.

The concrete link between past and future, and the foundation of all of Silko's visions within her text are provided by this "Almanac of the Dead." An ancient book of wisdoms that itself explains its own etymology: "Arabic; A.D. 1267 English from Arabic; A.D. 1505 Spanish from Arabic; a book of tables containing a calendar of months and days with astronomical data and calculations; predicts or foretells the auspicious days the ecclesiastical and other anniversaries" (Almanac 136). It even offers the connection to Vonnegut's novel Slaughterhouse-Five, although without any context or explanation: "Madrid, Paris, *Dresden*" (136). The predictions contained therein are based on natural phenomena, esoteric calculations and psychic insights, and give clues about the future. The Almanac itself also serves as the plot device for the circular, cobweb structuring: its being possessed by the psychic sisters in Tucson concentrates the attention to Silko's center of the Universe. The doom of the world, accordingly, must start out from this universal center of vibrations, and the Almanac is instrumental in achieving that.

However, this Almanac offers more than just hazy forecasts. It even lists the events of the Holocaust of the Native Americans, embedded in the political message of the author: "Here, listen to this . . . Here's what the Europeans don't want us to know or remember," says Angelita, the revolutionary "angel." There follows a long list of atrocities throughout the centuries, supplemented by the alarming figures about the headcount of the Indian Holocaust. Angelita's and Silko's political and ideological message evokes a similar intent that can be observed in Martin Amis' Time's Arrow: keeping the past alive in memory. Silko takes it further, saying that the acts in the present should draw upon the energies of the past and of the envisioned future: the driving force of liberation should be the knowledge of history and heritage, claims Clinton, the intellectual Black revolutionary in his planned incendiary radio speeches (Almanac 416-7).

Graham Swift's words in Waterland, "Now who says history doesn't go in circles?" (1983, 180), is the underlying philosophy of the Almanac itself, when auguring the evolution of the Indian cause. It predicts a cycle in the affairs of the world: the advent of the "Reign of the Dead-Eye Dog," the fall of the White man, the return of the spirit beings, and the reversal of creation, i.e. the ultimate demise of this world. Silko's philosophy is embodied by a rather strange character in the novel, the Barefoot Hopi, who, as an esoteric philosopher-shaman predicts this very circularity, embodied in the Whorfian Hopi timelessness: "The Barefoot Hopi's entire philosophy was to wait; a day would come as had not been in five thousand years. On this day, a conjunction would occur," leading to a global uprising of the underprivileged races (Almanac 617). Time, then, is solely a factor in the Whorfian sense of "constant latering" of affairs, when a constellation of all factors will occur. These "conjunctures and convergences of global proportions might require six or seven hundred years to develop," the Barefoot Hopi maintains, but since all what he is prophesying has been foretold by the Creator, Maasaw, the legends and by the spirit beings, the "latering" of time plays no role. The future, what is to manifest itself, is "ALREADY with us in vital and mental form," as the Hopi thinking is interpreted by Benjamin Whorf (Carroll 1956, 60). Again, "[h]istory will catch up with the White man whether the Indians did anything or not," (Almanac 316), and Silko lives up to this philosophy. In creating a "oneness" of time past and present, Silko renders predestination the central motif in her novel, but she never "waits" for the prophecies to manifest themselves in their entirety. The novel reports the manifestation of some early signs (e.g.: the disappearance of water in the Southwest due to eco-terrorism), and only alludes that the prophecies will run their full course: the overnight appearance of the stone snake at the bottom of the uranium mine in Hopi country symbolizes the divine powers, now present among the humans. And there is no need for Silko to complete the story as the author of this vision: in the Whorfian "oneness" of time history will run its full cycle, produce the spider's web and the "surprising and deep image." That moment will fuse all times and all knowledge into one, and her work will have been done.

Almanac of the Dead indicates the fulfillment of Hopi doomsday prophecies about the end of this fourth world and the advent of a fifth one. The Hopi divinity in charge of the destruction is the dreaded and fierce Maasaw, the owner of this fourth world. Ekkehart Malotki's detailed description of Maasaw's latter-day prophecies are reiterated in Almanac of the Dead: three wars pitting the Indian nations against one another, the arrival of the light-skinned race, the desecration of Mother Earth by mining and abusing her resources by the Whites, leading to the collapse of the Earth and the Sun (Malotki Profile of a Hopi God 1987, 250-3). Silko lets these events take place, but final destruction of this planet is not included in the narrative. She has established the causal relationship of man's deeds and the fate of this planet in her "eco-feminist" (Cochran 1995, 70) political message, and pinpointed who is responsible for the end of this world. She then abandons both this doomed world and the narrative that contains it, and allows the forces of the ancient spirits, now turned loose by mankind's actions, to take control over this world.

Silko's narrative stops just short of where Winterson ended hers: moments before the fire engulfs the entire fictional world. However, these moments are contained in the continuous present of the reading of the narrative, since the temporal layers within and without text collapse into a permanent present within the consciousness. This idea is underlined by Cochran's statement that Silko's eco-political message bears significance not just for the Pueblo people, or those living in the Southwestern United States (1995, 75). The spiritual blindness and corruption of the Whites have lead to an insurgence of the Native Americans in the narrative (and outside it, in Chiapas in 1994), and the history of the Whites precludes a radical turn-around and their spiritual healing. Despite the permanent present, apparently there is not enough time left for that.

## 3. Conclusion

> "If a referendum had been held . . . the twentieth century would have forthwith ceased to exist, the entire system of dividing up years by one hundred would have been abandoned and time, by popular consent, would have stood still." (Carter, Angela. Nights At The Circus. 1985, page 265)

As indicated in my introduction, the principal theme of this thesis is experimentation, and on the primary level, I focused on the interconnectedness of postmodernist fiction with a temporal scheme which originates from Benjamin Whorf's description of the temporal aspects of the Hopi language. However, Whorf's writings involve more than just a pure linguistic analysis of a code. By necessity, the entire philosophy of the Hopi culture, as contained in their oral tradition and their cosmology, is imbued into the language, and Whorf's linguistic description had to dwell on this aspect as well. Concepts such as predestination, man's relationship to his past, and causality, were all part of his treatise. Once complemented by the findings and analyses of various other Hopi scholars, linguists and anthropologists, the Hopi philosophy appeared in its entirety, which, in turn, I could trace in the postmodernist texts throughout the study.

Despite the lack of a direct and apparent connection between the Hopi time concept and philosophy and the postmodernist novels, the study has shown, I believe, that a closer reading of these texts reveal the interconnectedness of the two realms. And again, the link between them is experimentation, which is prompted by an ontological situation of the artist of the second half of this century.

The artists that I selected for this study show different approaches towards the ontology of man late in the twentieth century. These approaches range from the magic realism of the imaginary universe(s) of time-travelers, through the turning towards mankind's past for answers to a pattern of repeated mindless actions, up to an apocalyptic prophecy of a Pueblo visionary about the future. What is still common in these works is their relevance to the reader's continuous present time that unites all the time levels of these narratives. As a result, or I should say, because of this, these literary texts all unite the temporal levels of their plots in an ongoing present time, which contains all causes and effects, beginnings and ends, questions and answers, history and histories. In doing so, these texts put into practice Benjamin Whorf's linguistic discovery about the constant "now" of the Hopi time concept.

These books fold up into a constant "now" but all for a different reason, that is, due to different ontological aspect of human existence. Jeanette Winterson's novel, Sexing the Cherry, similarly to Angela Carter's Nights At The Circus, playfully explores the idea of stopping time, since its passage does not make any sense. Time as such is senseless, and so is history, less so on the individual's level, but more on a large-scale, documented level. The reason these texts offer to halting time is history's failure to advance mankind, and mankind's own failure to advance from its own history onto a next, more error-free level. Sexing the Cherry depicts a bleak but true picture: civil war in the seventeenth century that becomes superseded by the just as lethal pollution of rivers. Only an all-immolating fire on both these time levels can suggest a possible purification through another new beginning. This is the very same idea that the Hopi profess: the belief in the ever-unfolding of the world according to the Creator's master plans. These divine plans, implemented by sacred rituals, secure a new beginning and the purification of all sins with every sunrise. If purification and a new commencement have been rendered impossible in a world, it is destroyed, only to give way to a new one. The advent of each new worlds is heralded in by signs and the appearance of harbinger spirits, and all this happens according to the will of the Creator (cf. Franks Waters, 1963).

In spite of the fiery inferno on both time levels that ushers in the new world, Sexing the Cherry ends on a less bleak note. The time-traveler's magic transformation into light suggests the rebirth of a new consciousness through, and in the form of, the Sun, a Hopi deity.

Kurt Vonnegut's and Martin Amis' report on the human condition originate from a similar attitude towards history and its lessons mankind cannot or will not realize. The devastating global and ideological warfare of the good part of the twentieth century, supplemented and followed by the dehumanization of society in an age of mechanization, information-craving and global self-destruction, had to produce a poetics that meant to deconstruct, and not explain, the human condition. Seldan and Widdowson's previously quoted lines about postmodernism's decentering of previously meaningful and coherent units, such as "the world" or "the self" (1993, 178), underline the urgent artistic need to somehow translate these experiences into art. Kurt Vonnegut's report on this condition in Slaughterhouse-Five epitomizes this effort. In order to emphasize the pattern created by the war memories and their reappearance in what should be the "much wiser" present, a timeless setting is applied, along with a narrative structure that complies with this timelessness. The belief that if the artist sends out a message about the burning issues of his age it will be understood, reflected *and* acted upon, has vanished. Slaughterhouse-Five is not A Farewell To Arms any more. The apotheosis of a war novel into a peace manifesto is no longer possible because of the ongoing present time of the past, and this indicates that history's lessons are not heeded. Instead of a strong emotional reaction against man's self-destructive stupidity, the text contains the disillusioned chant of "So it goes" over one hundred times, indicating where the narrator stands on the issue of the importance of human existence. This is mirrored in the protagonist's futile efforts to dispense to fellow citizens "corrective lenses" that would enable them to literally "see" time along the lines of the extraterrestrial philosophy.

Since man's knowing the past still results in repetition of the very same mistakes in the present, Vonnegut robs his time-traveler protagonist of all means to change any event in his life. Thus the Hopi idea of predestination is implemented in the strictest possible form. Everything happens according to the will of the author-creator, and the ongoing present time leaves the protagonist with the only choice available to him: to know that in death, which will come at the time predicted, "nothing hurt[s]."

Martin Amis' Time's Arrow draws on the same sensibility and approach. Predestination according to the author-creator's will is applied, but the responsibility for its application lies with the protagonist: his intent on concealing his horrid past leaves the creator with the only didactic choice of making him relive every event, but this time backwards. This means that predestination is interpreted as a collision course: "Once you're here, you can't get out" (Time's Arrow, 58). Simultaneously, in the reader's consciousness this collision course creates the timeless knowledge of time that Whorf theorized existed among the Hopi. History does make sense in this novel, but only because of the reversed flow of time, and only outside of the narrative, contradicting Jacques Derrida's claim in Of Grammatology that "there is nothing beyond the text" (1976, 158). Amis proves that the only segment of reality that bears meaning and offers full comprehension of his world is "beyond the text," in the reader's consciousness. And that is exactly where this world can be de- and re-constructed with the help of Whorf's Hopi time.

Leslie Silko's report on the human existence at the end of the twentieth century differs radically from the previous three authors'. The narrative offers the perspective on existence from the Native American's point of view, and this aspect is coupled with their political agenda. The author takes on the role of the executioner of the ancient Pueblo Indian prophecies, and by summoning the forces of all spirit beings, Silko creates the very circumstances for the end of *a* world that the prophecies foretold. The indefinite article is used here in conjunction with *world* in order to indicate postmodernism's disengagement from the concept of one singular world of existence (cf. Brian McHale's analysis earlier in the study). In her universe of Almanac of the Dead, *the* current world, also *a* possible universe, is replaced by *another* world, as Maasaw, the Hopi deity in charge of this fourth world, has prophesied. The various layering of worlds feeds off of a duality of Silko's Pueblo roots and the ontology of her postmodernist fiction.

Silko's use of the continuous present in her narrative does not become apparent to the reader until he or she realizes the setting of the novel in a vision about the *future*. However, through the re-enactment of the prophecies within the narrative the past of the ancestors, the history of the White race in the New World, the political struggle of the present, and its possible outcome in the future, are all projected into one time level, without any explicit indication of its being the future, and not the present (i.e. in the sense of being "beyond the text"). Silko sends a message to the reading public not about the past and what we can learn from it, as Vonnegut and Amis do, but one about the future that came into being because of the past and the present. Her message, like the other authors', is embedded in Whorf's Hopi time concept and the Hopi philosophy of predestined existence.

Experimenting with these ideas has certainly been a challenge, if for no other reason than the rather strange coupling of ideas and cultures in postmodernism and the Hopi, and asserting it before various forums. Not only has it involved learning a tremendous amount about the fairly remote and somewhat obscure culture of this Pueblo nation, but at times researching and validating this topic by critical sources was challenging as well. What intuitively "felt" like a very strong link between the Hopi time concept and postmodern narrative had to be turned into "scientific" observations, with enough textual and critical support. I had to face the problem of translating what seemed "esoteric" into an acceptable critical analysis.

Strangely enough, the key words to surmounting this problem were "experimenting," and "esoterics." Even though Linda Hutcheon rules out any esoteric connection between the postmodern and its references or sources (Hutcheon 1988 and 1989), still, in my case the connection between the quite esoteric Hopi philosophy, as described by Frank Waters, and the subversive postmodern had to be exploited. Experimenting with esoterics has finally led to this bold topic.

Also, this study is significant *because of* the experimenters, too: the authors of the texts selected for this projected, and myself as well. The completion of this critical work means that finally I have had the chance to explore, in a literary context, the questions that have been on my mind for years after an esoteric experience of mine: what happens when time becomes a non-factor, and it disappears? What happens to time when it becomes a non-factor? What happens to the narrative if we rob it of time as its organizing principle? This series of questions has led to further questions, some of them discussed in this thesis. And even if the answer, or rather, answers, suggested by these experimenters vary from narrative to narrative, and as a result, it is debatable whether the definite article may be placed in front of the word "answer," I can find reassurance that at least, I attempted at obtaining any answer.

The main merit of this study is its experimenting with a rather odd concept of time, and its reflection in an art movement. I dare hope the study has shown that postmodernism, a long-lasting avant-garde trend, does not shy away from experimenting even with such impertinent referents as the Hopi culture in its attempt to keep the past preserved in consciousness; to present the report on the human condition, and to warn of a future fraught with danger and destruction, because of the past, present, and future—and all these three in one.

In this process the credit must be given to Benjamin Lee Whorf and his research of the Hopi Indians. His research into the language spurred a wave of Hopi studies from the nineteen-thirties onward, recording and rescuing the most significant elements of this unique Pueblo culture.

Without Whorf's misinterpretation of the Hopi linguistic corpus, however, this fascinating idea of a language on this planet without reference to time would not have been conceived. He established the esoteric connection between a Pueblo language and the ancient teachings of the Eastern metaphysics: all existence is timeless, that is, confined to a continuous present time. Our linear sense of time, along with the material world, is an illusion of the mind (cf. Frank Waters's essay, "America: A Footnote," Evans-Wentz, 1981). Whorf's recognition and description of this philosophy within the Hopi language is further validated by Frank Waters's above-mentioned essay and his Book of the Hopi, which establishes direct and well-definable links between the Hopi and their metaphysics and the great civilizations of ancient Egypt, India, Tibet, China and Mexico. In his writings did I finally find the esoteric connection I had sensed during this project, and I believe that much of what Waters expounds is subconsciously at work in the narratives analyzed in this study.

Inadvertent though it may be, but Whorf's theories, coupled with the underlying metaphysics of both the Eastern and the Hopi culture, provided a fertile ground for experimentation for the artists of the postmodern. It can be demanded, and without any sarcasm, that Whorf's name deserves to be mentioned in connection with the theoreticans of this avant-garde movement for providing it with a unique and mind-inspiring concept of atemporality.

What more suitable closing quote could stand here than St. Augustine's meditation on time:

> But what is now manifest and clear is, that neither are there future nor past things. Nor is it fitly said, 'There are three times, past, present, and future;' but perchance it might be fitly said, 'There are three times; a present of things past, a present of things present, and a present of things future.' For these three do

somehow exist in the soul, and otherwise I see them not: present of things past, memory; present of things present, sight; and present of things future, expectation (Confessions, 219. Translated by J.G. Pilkington).

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