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AN EXAMINATION OF THE USES TO WHICH TIME AS A
FORMAL PRINCIPLE IS EMPLOYED IN SELECTED
WORKS OF JOSEPH CONRAD, JAMES JOYCE AND VIRGINIA WOOLF.

Clifford S. Forde

Thesis submitted to the
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ABSTRACT

The following study examines the way in which a preoccupation with time is reflected in selected works of Conrad, Joyce and Virginia Woolf.

The first part of the Conrad section serves as an introduction to time in the narrative, by examining the assumptions underlying the time scheme of the Victorian novel. Conrad's use of the time shift and of the 'unreliable narrator' in Heart of Darkness and Lord Jim are then considered as devices for questioning those assumptions and advancing a more complex notion of the individual's sense of identity. The last part of this section examines Conrad's notion of 'destiny', particularly as it relates to his use of the time shift in Nostromo.

The study next focuses on Joyce's use of the 'epiphany' and traces its employment as an 'arrested moment' in Dubliners to its function as a moment of heightened awareness within consciousness in A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man. Then, both the Portrait and Ulysses are considered separately as manifesting a vivid sense of time through the consciousness of Bloom and Stephen Dedalus. This section concludes with the argument put forward that the relationship between Ulysses and its Homeric counterpart is to be sought in the identification of the artist with his work. Hence Ulysses is a celebration of the creative imagination throughout history.

In the Virginia Woolf section, the first part examines her atomistic notion of experience as it relates to personal identity, and sees her argument with the "materialists" enacted in Mrs. Dalloway and To the Lighthouse in the conflict of characters. The second part contrasts external representations of time in these novels with subjective time in the flux of consciousness. The last part of the section looks at the way in which certain unifying patterns in the novel are related to Virginia Woolf's "moments of being".

Finally, the Conclusion briefly examines the way in which these writers manipulate language and form in order to give the reader a more than usual awareness of the text.

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- (I) Conrad: All references are to the Collected Edition, published by J.H. Dent (London, 1946-55) in the following reprinted volumes:
- | | | | |
|--------------------------|--------|-------------------|-----------|
| <u>Heart of Darkness</u> | (1967) | abbreviated title | <u>HD</u> |
| <u>Lord Jim</u> | (1961) | " " | <u>LJ</u> |
| <u>Nostromo</u> | (1963) | " " | <u>N</u> |
- (II) Joyce: Dubliners: the corrected text by R. Scholes, (Jonathan Cape, 1967, rpt. 1975) abbreviated title D
- Stephen Hero: ed. Theodore Spencer, rev. Slocum and Cahoon (Jonathan Cape, 1964, rev. re-set 1956: abbreviated title SH
- A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man, ed. Richard Ellmann, from the definitive corrected text by Chester G. Anderson (Jonathan Cape, 1964, rpt. 1975) abbreviated title P
- Ulysses, (The Bodley Head, re-set edition : 1960, rev. 1969)
- III Virginia Woolf: All references are to be to The Works of Virginia Woolf, published by The Hogarth Press, ed. in the following reprinted volumes:
- | | | | |
|--------------------------|--------|-------------------|----------|
| Jacob's Room | (1965) | | |
| Mrs. Dalloway | (1963) | abbreviated title | <u>D</u> |
| <u>To The Lighthouse</u> | (1963) | " " | <u>L</u> |

(1) CONRAD, THE READER AND VICTORIAN LINEAR TIME

One of the most striking features of Conrad's work is his use of a time scheme that makes a particularly serious demand on the reader; and although he was generally silent in print on his own narrative practice, in a letter to a friend he referred to his technique as:

my unconventional grouping and perspective, which are purely temperamental and wherein almost all my "art" consists it is fluid, depending on grouping (sequence) which shifts, and on the changing lights giving varied effects of perspective. ¹.

Such a helpful description offers a key term for examining Conrad's representation of time in his work, and for contrasting it with the familiar time scheme of the traditional Victorian novel. That term is what he calls his "unconventional grouping" and since he paraphrases "grouping as "sequence", it is clear that, in Conrad, the expectations of a reader of the conventional narrative will be brought into question by these unconventional "shifts" in time. That predilection for a shifting time sequence was in evidence right from the start of his writing career and testifies to the fact that in Conrad it was indeed "temperamental". In Almayer's Folly, his first novel, published in 1895, the opening action soon shifts to some twenty years earlier, then comes up to the fictional present when there is a flashback to four years previously.

from Mrs. Almayer's point of view, and so on throughout the novel, before moving towards a conclusion. The problematical nature of knowing what is 'real' is no doubt raised by these contrasting perspectives, although Conrad is more concerned with the assumptions that underlie particular ways of representing time than he is in regarding time formally, as a strict philosophical concept. In this respect this study will focus on the way in which Conrad exposes not only the expectations of certain characters to conflicting modes of time but also, and by implication, the expectations of the reader. His work may, therefore, be seen as reflecting the tensions created by changing values, as embodied within the fictional world of the book and, through his formal innovations, extending beyond the work to comment on that society in which it was conceived. And, inasmuch as Conrad's method involves the reader in a radically different way of reading than previously, it is fitting for us to consider from the outset the more established, conventional time scheme of the Victorian novel, which Conrad brings into question, and to consider its implications for the reader's response.

Essentially the narrative time of the Victorian novel is that in which events are represented as being coterminous with time, as it is conceived in a public, sequential form: a notion of time, therefore, that is understood according to the commonly-accepted assumptions of a familiar chronology. The important point is that

the treatment of time in this conventional narrative is not anywhere as complex as it was to become in Conrad. In fact, time is taken for granted to the extent that our awareness of events in the Victorian novel is of their having what Gabriel Josipovici describes as a "linear timeless existence".² And this notion of time is determined primarily by the role of the author-narrator.

Now, the important point about 'linearity' in the Victorian novel is that events are to be regarded not simply as following one another in a straightforward sequence, but as connected to one another in a meaningful fashion: hence, causality is implied. And it is the assertive, controlling position of the author-narrator in Victorian fiction that conveys the sense of order and progress in such a scheme, for the 'voice' of the narrator in Dickens, George Eliot and Thackeray is that which speaks to the reader as to a confidant, representing to him life mediated by a particular view of things. In fact this 'omniscient' author serves to reflect a state of affairs in which he has provided all the time necessary for events in the novel to reach a satisfactory conclusion. Furthermore, the narrator's role in making the situation clear to the reader is calculated to inspire trust and ensure confidence in that sharing of 'omniscience'; for it is in our awareness of unexplained connections - those sudden shifts of time in Conrad - that we are drawn to a consideration of the function of time in the novel. We may take it as a principle, therefore, that generally speaking we can trust the author-narrator in the Victorian novel to make connections between

events explicit, and to account for any time gaps that might occur. In effect it is this 'public' controlling device which acts as a bulwark against the kind of 'meaningless' change suggested in Conrad, for that confident authorial figure, who is in a sense 'outside' the events of the novel, is able to assert the timelessness of certain values which an otherwise unmediated linear time scheme might bring into question.

Not all major Victorian novels, however, can be said to conform to this principle of an author-narrator who figures as a separate, controlling agent. The narrator-protagonist of the first-person novel such as Wuthering Heights and Great Expectations introduces great complexity in the manipulation of a more personal notion of time. (Indeed, Wuthering Heights is so individual in its representation of time, and its extraordinary intensity of feeling that it must stand outside any general comment on the Victorian novel.)

As early as the eighteenth century Sterne, in Tristram Shandy, played the reader's sense of time off against fictional time, although his treatment of time is presented with the air of something fantastic, calculated to divert rather than, as in Conrad, to disturb. Temporal sequence in Tristram Shandy is regarded as an interesting puzzle, and this fascination owed much no doubt to the speculations of the philosophers Locke and Berkeley on the nature of change and succession. However, it is important to stress that the absurdities that arise from Sterne's manipulation of time are dependent on the fact that the narrator invites the reader to take a 'common-sense' view

of what is going on; in effect, that any departure from the norm is to be treated as 'sport'.

Now, it is this relationship of an appeal to public values and a common-sense way of looking at things that, on the whole, still obtains even in the first-person Victorian narrative, so that the narrator-protagonist largely preserves that authority of control which owes much to the more conventional 'omniscient' author. In Dickens' Great Expectations, for instance, Pip occasionally steps outside his role in order to address the reader, as in the following extract where he explains his reluctance to accept that Estella might be married:

As the time wore on, an impression settled heavily upon me that Estella was married. Fearful of having it confirmed, though it was all but a conviction, I avoided the newspapers, and begged Herbert . . . never to speak of her to me. Why I hoarded up this last wretched little rag of the robe of hope that was rent and given to the winds, how do I know! Why did you who read this, commit that not dissimilar inconsistency of your own, last year, last month, last week?³

This direct address to the reader through the partly 'public' role of the narrator is important in establishing the sense of timelessness that is inherent in the Victorian narrative, and an important sanction for those values that can be appealed to beyond, as it were, the world of the book.

This is not to suggest that Victorian novels were unconcerned with time. Indeed, as the century progressed, many social and technological advances were calculated to deepen that sense of change. Kathleen Tillotson sets the scene thus:

As is well known, the mid-forties, years of 'railway mania' (1846-8), saw hundreds of new lines opened every month, changes in the landscape of town and country, movements of population, changes in social habits, all were abrupt, disconcerting, immediately evident.⁴

This familiar representation of time as social change is much in evidence in the novels of George Eliot, Dickens and Thackeray, but, as we have seen, there is always the assurance that the author can rely on the reader's shared involvement - a form of camaraderie that offers some consolation. Moreover, the very breadth of subject matter dealt with in such panoramic novels as Middlemarch and Vanity Fair testify to a confidenceⁱⁿ the representation of time in the novel. George Eliot's remarks in the Prelude to Middlemarch provide something of a guide:

Who that cares to know the history of man,
and how the mysterious mixtures behave under
the varying experiment of Time and History
has not dwelt, at least briefly, on the life
of Saint Theresa That Spanish woman who
lived three hundred years ago was certainly
not the last of her kind.⁵

The 'voice' here assumes an almost majestic control of its subject matter in its conventional acknowledgement of Time and History, and the reference to Saint Theresa declares her to be a symbol of the unchanging human heart. Now, it is precisely

there, in the assertion of values as impervious to change, that the writer takes her stance, confident in the timelessness of those principles which the assumed role of the narrator endorses. Notice how Thackeray expresses this authorial control at the close of Vanity Fair :

Ah! Vanitas Vanitatum! Which of us is happy in this world? Which of us has his desire? or, having it, is satisfied? - come, children, let us shut up the box and the puppets, for our play is played out.⁶

Both George Eliot and Thackeray appeal to a sense of public solidarity, however awkwardly the latter attempts to bridge the world of personal feeling with that of his fiction, and it is this public solidarity, relying as it does on a communal sense, that is also manifested within the novel in opposition to those characters who have a more 'private' or self-conscious sense of identity: characters such as Maggie Tulliver and Dorothea Brooke in George Eliot, or the 'obsessive' characters in Dickens. The 'outsider' or secret individualist is not allowed to operate without being discovered; where such secrecy exists, there is usually the nemesis of humiliation or even death. Ultimately, the happy ending, or the confident conclusion testify in an almost religious sense, that the universe is in the hands of a reasonable god. In more secular terms one can observe that the morality embodied in such a working out of the plot, according to the implied causality of a linear time scheme relates to that confidence in which:

The idea of progress had coalesced with the rational system of the Utilitarians and the evolutionists. The maxim of the greatest happiness of the greatest number not only defined a principle or an ideal, but expressed a confident hope.⁷

Such a hope in a vague yet comforting future is conventionally expressed in what Virginia Woolf sees as the characteristic ending of the Victorian novel, with :

The general tidying up of the last chapter, the marriage, the death, the statement of values so sonorously trumpeted forth.⁸

By the end of the 1880's, however, that confidence was bound to be questioned by developments in social, scientific and religious thought, for the impact of Darwin, Marx and Nietzsche, as well as the influence of foreign literature helped to encourage a more relativist viewpoint. Ruskin and Pater argued for the primacy of the individual sensibility, in their conception of time as an intensely felt experience. Henceforth the opposition between public time and the moment of personal experience was to reflect more equitably, at least in art, the conflict between personal and public obligations.

Nowhere was this conflict more evident than in the writings of Conrad, for circumstances had made him particularly responsive to the changes of the eighties, at a time when he sought the stability of his adopted country, England, with its strong sense of hierarchy and belief in traditional values. Conrad, however, was a profoundly serious individual, at

once sceptical and idealistic - traits which he had no doubt inherited from his father, whom he had accompanied into exile, and whose personal failure he had observed. From his earliest days, therefore, he was aware of the claims of the individual, such as his father, against the might of an imperial power, Russia, although a strong sense of duty towards his own people was fostered in him by his uncle, Thaddaeus.⁹ Moreover, it does seem that the paradigm for moral conduct in his work was adopted from his experiences in the British Merchant Service, with its implicit moral code, and assigned also to the stable traditions of British politics - traditions which he felt were being threatened by the "rush of social-democratic ideas".

in 1885 he wrote:

Where's the man to stop the rush of social-democratic ideas? The opportunity and the day have come and are gone! Believe me: gone for ever! For the sun is set and the last barrier removed. England was the only barrier to the pressure of infernal doctrines born in continental back-slums. Now, there is nothing! The destiny of this nation and of all the nations is to be accomplished in darkness amidst much weeping and gnashing of teeth, to pass through robbery, equality, anarchy and misery under the iron rule of a military despotism! Such is the lesson of common sense logic.¹⁰

The apocalyptic tone of the passage helps to define Conrad's passionate feeling about change in what he regarded as a stable and rationally constituted society, a preoccupation that is central to his work, for he regarded the art of

writing as an undertaking of great seriousness tantamount to that of a political undertaking. His target, as he saw it, was the crass egocentricity of the English novelist:

The national English novelist seldom regards his work - the exercise of his Art - as an achievement of active life by which he will produce certain definite effects upon the emotions of his readers, but simply as an instinctive, often unreasoned, outpouring of his own emotions. He does not go about building up his book with a precise intention and a steady mind. It never occurs to him that a book is a deed, that the writing of it is an enterprise as much as the conquest of a colony. He has no such clear conception of his craft.¹¹

There is the essence of Conrad's practice in this criticism, prescribing as it does the novelist's function in relation to the reader, and underlining the moral seriousness of the task by that obligation on him to conform to the "clear conception of his craft" : a shift of emphasis away from the 'author' of the conventional novel to the language and form that are implied in the word 'craft'. That simple and dignified appellation carries overtones of honest workmanship which can also be seen dramatized within his work under various manifestations of conduct, and are reflected in his definition of art: in the Preface to The Nigger of the "Narcissus"

... art itself may be defined as a single-minded attempt to render the highest kind of justice to the visible universe, by bringing to light the truth, manifold and one, underlying its every aspect. ¹²

The fervour for truth and justice as expressed here, and complemented by the examination of moral issues within his work claim perhaps a more traditional notion of morality than does the naturalist's creed with which he was familiar. In that sense he is closer to the mainstream, puritan, English tradition in the subject matter of his work, though, paradoxically, his exploration of time in the formal aspects of his work, a more continental concern, raises doubts about the validity of those traditional values.

Those traditional values in their simplest form may be seen in some of his early work, as there is much more than mere admiration for the integrity of a Captain McWhirr in "Typhoon", or for Singleton in "The Nigger of the 'Narcissus'" who "steered with care"¹³ - a phrase that, as Virginia Woolf says, "coming at the end of a storm, carried in it a whole morality".¹⁴ Indeed, the sea world of so many of his tales required of its inhabitants a dedication to that honest toil which would seem to support his belief that "the temporal world rests on a few very simple ideas".¹⁵ But of these 'ideas' as Virginia Woolf asks:

Where, in the world of thoughts and personal relations, are we to find them? There are no masts in drawing-rooms; the typhoon does not test the worth of politicians and business men. Seeking and not finding such supports, the world of Conrad's later period has about it an involuntary obscurity, an inconclusiveness, almost

a disillusionment which baffles and fatigues. We lay hold in the dusk only of the old nobilities and sonorities; fidelity, compassion, honour, service - beautiful always, but now a little wearily reiterated, as if times had changed. 16

For Conrad, indeed, times, as we have seen, had changed and were changing - for the worst. But if Virginia Woolf is implying that he suffered a loss of faith she is surely being sentimental, for Conrad was most concerned to adapt the form of his work to come to terms with the kind of scepticism he owned even before he took up writing. By the time he renounced the sea for a career as a writer, he was well over thirty and looking back nostalgically to the seafaring adventures and the few simple ideas that a seaman must live by - that was essentially time passing in a general sense and it is fairly near the surface in many of his stories+ but there is also a more fundamental preoccupation with time other than mere change in the private, introspective questioning of Marlow, as he attempts to hold on to the values which he feels are essential in maintaining a civilized society. With what reverence does he in Heart of Darkness, amid the horrors and corruption of colonial politics, treat a simple sea-manual that he comes across:

Its title was An Inquiry into some Points of Seamanship, by a man Towser, Towson - some such name - Master in his Majesty's Navy ... not a very enthralling book; but at first glance you could see there is a singleness of intention, an

honest concern for the right way of going to work, which made these humble pages, thought out so many years ago, luminous with another than a professional light. (p.99)

One could apply Virginia Woolf's remarks here of there being a whole morality behind the reference to "an honest toil for the right way of going to work". It is a morality endorsed by such fictional protagonists as Crusoe, Adam Bede and Gabriel Oak and the puritan tradition of good, honest toil that rests on certainties. For Conrad, however, as explored through Marlow, an examination of the first premises on which such confidence is based was inevitable with the movement away from his sea stories to what he described as his "land-entanglements".¹⁷ It was a shift away from the public world of action, with its confident assumptions, to the private operations of human consciousness - that was the heart of darkness, as yet uncharted territory, and treacherous, too, as Marlow says of Kurtz in Heart of Darkness: "... he had stepped over the edge, while I had been permitted to draw back my hesitating foot." (p.151).

Hence the obsession of the would-be simple soul, such as Marlow, with his faith in rivets and the practical manual; they distract attention from the haunting fear of some hidden truth that might conflict with the established order of things.

Conrad, however, requires Marlow to question the basis for this 'order' by identifying with such characters as Kurtz and Jim, for through them Marlow is bound to examine the conventions on which his own activity is based. Marlow is thus employed as a vehicle for exploring the reality of personal experience, by as it were, reliving past events in remembering them. In Lord Jim this exploration accounts for the remorselessness with which he pursues his own 'enquiry' - an enquiry of more importance to him than that conducted on the "Patna" incident, which he felt explained nothing, and which in fact could not discover: "the only truth worth knowing...the state of a man's soul"(p.56). For the enquiry was concerned with facts:

The facts these men were eager to know had been visible, tangible, open to the senses, occupying their place in space and time, and requiring for their existence a fourteen-hundred-ton steamer and twenty-seven minutes.

(p.30)

That is the commonsense, public world from which Jim turns. Stein, in sympathy with him, refers to it as the "destructive element" to which one must, however, "submit" (p.214). This division between private and public manifestations of human activity is, moreover, a major preoccupation in Conrad's writing, and through Marlow, who combines in his character the qualities of activity and reflection, Conrad is able to represent the struggle for individuality that is ultimately to undermine the

public confidence that we have seen associated with the narrator in the Victorian time scheme. For, despite the apparent casualness of Marlow's 'telling', the frequent time shifts and the digressions of Captain Brierley, Archie Rutheval, Chester and Brown - all suggest a breakdown in the conventional order of things. As the doctor says to Marlow with reference to the unusual hallucinations experienced by the Chief Engineer: " Good old tradition's at a discount nowadays." (p.55). And, after Jim's death, when Marlow reads a letter from Jim's father, he comments wryly:

The old chap goes on equably trusting Providence and the established order of the universe...

(p.341)

(2) TIME AND THE 'UNRELIABLE NARRATOR'

For Conrad the conflict between the public and private sense of value is explored most profoundly in his major works, notably Lord Jim, Heart of Darkness and Nostromo. These works are to be distinguished from the relatively simple tales such as "Falk", "Typhoon" and "Youth" which celebrate the virtues of fidelity, patience and courage, and in which time is, as it were, dominated by an action. In these tales where the problem to be solved is in the nature of braving a storm or rescuing a ship's crew the action delimits time, rendering it unimportant - a use of time in the narrative of a straightforward linear progression, as in conventional Victorian fiction. In the major works, however, that shaking up of chronology, that sudden break in time serves as a means of creating suspense and of presenting the scene in a different light. Nevertheless, the elements of action and adventure, most characteristic of the earlier work are significant strands that run through virtually all Conrad's best work where they are 'framed' by the time consciousness of the narrative, being re-enacted within Marlow's memory in Lord Jim and Heart of Darkness, or subject to the more impersonal force of time in Nostromo.

The connection and importance of these two facets of Conrad's oeuvre: the simple, relatively uncomplicated action, resolved through an appeal to a common code of

conduct or hierarchy, and the more involved action that searches out character and is rendered even more complex by the presence of a narrator persona who reflects on the assumptions of that action, are worth considering in relation to the following extract from "Autocracy and War" written less than a year after Nostromo:

The intellectual stage of mankind being as yet in its infancy, and States, like most individuals, having but a feeble and imperfect consciousness of the worth and force of the inner life, the need of making their existence manifest to themselves is determined in the direction of physical activity ... Action in which is to be found the illusion of a mastered destiny, can alone satisfy our uneasy vanity and lay to rest the haunting fear of the future.

18

The contrast between action and reflection is clear, together with the notion of time as a force either to be disregarded through action or faced up to in reflection. In Conrad's most serious work, then, there is a deep concern with the individual in his reflective state, although men of action such as McWhirr and Singleton - men free from moral and existential considerations - remain in the consciousness of such as Marlow, as affectionate reminders of a confident freedom from the uncertainties of time.

We can thus observe certain features of time in Conrad's work: firstly, there is the narrator's nostalgic feeling for the past, common to all who feel that times have changed; secondly, there is the dramatized enactment of the past through a consciousness that is profoundly involved in the action; finally, there is the representation of time as a form of 'destiny': a metaphysical consideration of time that finds its most disturbing expression in Nostromo. No one consideration is necessarily distinct, one from another; their interweaving in Conrad's work testifies to that brooding upon time which is characteristic of his writing in general.

One of the most innovative features in his narrative technique, however, is in the combination of Marlow and the time shift; another is his treatment of the time shift separately, as a sudden and unexplained break in the narrative. And while it must be acknowledged that the time shift can be found in virtually all Conrad's novels, this study will focus, in the first place, on Lord Jim and Heart of Darkness, as examples of his earliest major works to bring into question the role of the author-narrator in the traditional Victorian narrative, with all that we have seen such a role implies. In the second place, it will consider Nostromo, the greatest in scope of all his novels, which, with its impersonal and seemingly arbitrary manifestation of the time shift, exposes those assumptions of the confident nineteenth-century representation of historical progress.

The sudden shift in time, as we have seen, has the effect of confuting any expectation of time as orderly and progressive, thereby drawing attention to a dislocation - a sense of dramatic

involvement that is at the heart of Conrad's method. Ford Madox Ford, who often assumed the role of theorist for Conrad's work, saw the time shift in these terms:

It became very early evident to us that what was the matter with the Novel, and the British novel in particular, was that it went straight forward, whereas in your gradual making acquaintanceship with your fellows you never do go straight forward. You meet an English gentleman at your golf club ... To get such a man in fiction ... You must first get him in with a strong impression, and then work backwards and forwards over his past.¹⁹

Ford's representation of 'character' in a relevant time sequence fits Conrad's technique very well, and Marlow can be seen as Conrad's chief discovery for registering those strong impressions. The presentation of Marlow in relation to time, therefore, is on two levels: firstly, he is portrayed as a rather prosy, genial character, given to nostalgic reverie and reminiscence, so that the intention of his inquiry into Jim's and Kurtz's conduct is in the nature of an attempt to justify his own faith in traditional values; secondly, he is depicted as being faithful to his own experiences, so that he functions both as narrator and as participant.

Clearly the involvement of the reader in Marlow's experience - that re-enactment of events - creates a kind of 'dramatized present' and demands a focus of attention, at least in contrast to the conventional Victorian novel, of a wholly new kind. And it is such a notion of 'realism' that can be seen

seen as arrogating to itself the kind of seriousness of individual response that casts doubt on those assumptions which helped to form an alliance between the traditional author and his reader, in favour of a hard-won, more individual struggle for truth. As a result, the 'point of view' reading of the novel, as represented particularly in Percy Lubbock's book The Craft of Fiction, published in 1921, encouraged a critical approach that would have been quite foreign to the reader of the conventional Victorian novel. In relation to Conrad's Marlow the change is evident in the following ways: on the one hand the reader is bound by the familiar convention of sharing in the narrator's attempt at omniscience, as Marlow seeks total recall of his experiences in Heart of Darkness and Lord Jim; on the other, the reader has an over-view of Marlow as agent in the drama, as a fallible and passionate individual who is tempted to relax his hold on those principles which he would otherwise wish to espouse.

The principles that Marlow would wish to espouse, the few simple ideas such as fidelity, patience and courage, though admirable in action are clearly not sufficient to withstand the probing of more complex moral dilemmas. In Lord Jim the hero's failure of nerve is, according to Marlow, tantamount to a crime - "a breach of faith with the community of mankind" (p.157); in Heart of Darkness, Kurtz's initial "appeal to every altruistic sentiment" is undercut by a savage renunciation of humankind (p.118).

Yet Marlow is drawn to them and, through his sympathetic involvement, seems largely to share in their actions, becoming more a part of the egocentric element in human nature, for the horror of Kurtz's insights and Jim's secret ambition cut them loose from the conventions of a utilitarian morality, in favour of the exploration and assertion of self: the inevitable conflict between public action and the need for personal expression.

In Conrad, then, the narrator-agent Marlow is presented as unreliable in the sense that he is unable to reach the conclusions that his assumed omniscience and privileged position would lead the reader to expect. He is unable to find satisfaction beyond the active condition of public existence in the darker areas of human consciousness. As Marlow says wistfully about "life" :

The most you can hope from it is some knowledge of yourself - that comes too late (HD, p.150)

and on the death of Jim:

it may very well be that in the short moment of his last proud and unflinching glance, he had beheld the face of that opportunity which, like an Eastern bride, had come veiled to his side. (LJ, p.416)

The possibility of a resolution between action and reflection is not, therefore, to be entertained, as Marlow futilely attempts to wrest some meaning from the enquiry, by setting out events and following up leads

with a view to arriving at a conclusion, when in fact we see that, because his involvement is dramatic and personal, he is denied the detachment that would grant him the something final and objective that he seeks. For Jim also there is clearly a conflict between the public world of action and some private guiding force: a "directing spirit of perdition that dwelth within" (LJ,p.31) - an area of consciousness, in fact, that refuses to conform to the untidy world of contingency. Jim laments the fact that he had no time before jumping from the Patna; the truth is that it was not the kind of time that he had conceived in his imagination for realizing his 'heroic' potential. Thus he attempts to combine the two forms of life and time: the public or social, which obliges him to see the court enquiry through, and the private world of his "imaginary achievements", which "were the best parts of life, its secret truth, its hidden reality" (LJ, p.20).

Marlow clearly identifies with Jim as "one of us", not only in the obvious sense that he is identified with the brotherhood of the sea, but in a deeper spiritual way, for Marlow gradually comes to polarise within himself the man of action and the uncertain individual. Conrad presents him, therefore, as seated among his old sea-cronies as he tells his tale, yet identifying more and more with Kurtz and Jim as he drifts deeper within himself. The kind of isolation that is Marlow's is also Kurtz's in the darkness of the jungle, and Jim's in Patusan, both of which locations function as contrasts to the public, active world

'Marlow in fact reflects, as he sails out of Patusan:

I had turned away from the picture and was going back to the world where events move, men change, light flickers, life flows in a clear stream, no matter whether over mud or over stones. (p.330)

Such was the world of action for Marlow, although it offers him little comfort, since he has acknowledged certain qualities in Jim, and is bound to feel that the inner life might claim an independence of those values that are conventionally accepted. Hence this world of action and endeavour is ultimately devoid of meaning, for he can impose no finality on the past or discover any certainty in the future.

Now it will be remembered that the importance of meaning, as a sharing in common of certain values, is crucial in establishing the relationship between narrator and reader in the Victorian novel. In Conrad's Lord Jim and Heart of Darkness, however, where the search for meaning is paramount, the position of the narrator in relation to the reader is defined in quite a different way; for Marlow's role as a kind of 'tale-teller', a figure as old as folklore, is there given an unexpected twist. Through Marlow, in effect, Conrad focuses attention on language as the embodiment of meaning, and in particular on the difficulty of communicating a sense of understanding either to oneself or to anyone else. In Lord Jim the emphasis is on 'talk' as a passionate desire of Marlow's to convey his experiences; but since his involvement is so personal, 'talk is an interpretation, a view, divorced as it must be

from the reality, and doubtful in offering comfort.

In Lord Jim Conrad catches that sense of compulsiveness in Marlow's:

"Oh, yes. I attended the enquiry," he used to say, "and to this day I haven't left off wondering why I went." (p.34)

where the inconclusive phrase 'used to say' conveys a timeless state of reiteration, that is in keeping with the restlessness of his narrative, and suited to the personal inquiry that he undertakes. And since Jim is identified with Marlow his self-justification is also conveyed in the following appeal:

I don't want to excuse myself; but I would like to explain - and I would like somebody to understand - somebody - one person at least! You! Why not you? (p.81)

Thus involved, Marlow is compelled to talk to, among others, the French Lieutenant who responds thus:

Yes! Yes! One talks, one talks; this is all very fine; but at the end of the reckoning one is no cleverer than the next man - and no more brave. (p.146)

and finally, he visits Stein who, despite his oracular utterances, can offer only something 'practical', for:

"There were things, he said mournfully, that perhaps could never be told," (p.214)

This sense of purposeless talking functions as a circling about the situation in order to establish an understanding, and lends itself to being considered as a kind of homily in which the subject is redemption. The plain matter is Jim's failure and rehabilitation (as in Heart of Darkness it is Marlow's search for Kurtz), whereas the 'spiritual' matter is the nature of guilt, the narrator's involvement in it and the possibility of absolution. The compulsiveness of talk functions here both as a form of exposition as well as a confessional form of atonement. Marlow's involvement with Kurtz and Jim raises the issue of whether they are mirror images of some failure in himself, morally suspect, perhaps unregenerate. In Heart of Darkness Marlow attempts to take some comfort from the cry "The Horror!" which Kurtz had uttered at the last: "After all, this was the expression of some sort of belief." (p.151). But then he had to some extent been in alliance with him: "I found myself lumped along with Kurtz as a partisan of methods for which the time was ripe: I was unsound!" (p.138). And after Kurtz's death he tears up the incriminating 'postscriptum' and lies to Kurtz's fiancée. The story ends, finally, with the darkness settling about Marlow in an isolated and unresolved state:

Marlow ceased, and sat apart,
indistinct and silent, in the
pose of a meditating Buddha. (p.162)

There is no sense of an ending here: the darkness motif

takes us back to the beginning again, as the thinking and talking must go on. Similarly, at the end of Lord Jim Marlow raises the question of Jim's death:

Is he satisfied - quite, now, I wonder? We ought to know. He is one of us - and have I not stood up once, like an evoked ghost, to answer for his eternal constancy? Was I so very wrong after all? (p.416)

The question is directed not only to the recipient of Marlow's letter, but inevitably to the reader himself, and indicating from the shift in tense of the refrain heard throughout the novel "He was one of us." to "He is one of us." (p.416) just how far the reader is required to have become involved in the work.

There is a further dimension to be considered in that respect and it results from issues raised by the employment of Marlow and Conrad's dramatized method of 'telling'; for since Marlow has become, in his isolation, a figure concerned only with himself, he feels bound to question the objective reality of Kurtz and Jim. On Kurtz's death in Heart of Darkness:

The voice was gone. What else had been there? (p.150)

And on Lord Jim:

He existed for me, and after all it is only through me that he exists for you ... (p.224)

(But, after all, since we are so actively engaged in the work, we are reminded just how far Marlow is real for us; and as our minds do the organising now, we are bound to wonder just how far the projection has gone.

(3) DESTINY AND HISTORICAL TIME.

For Conrad, as we have seen, that preoccupation with time in Heart of Darkness and Lord Jim represents a concern with the individual's place in society; and the action of the narrator Marlow in recounting the individual destiny in the hope to generalise confidently about the human condition. Such was Marlow's personal involvement in his concern to discover whether Jim had mastered his destiny or Kurtz had gained some awful compensatory knowledge at the last; and through Marlow's involvement Conrad was pushing out towards a wider, a more embracing conception of man in time in order to examine the faith on which action is based. In this context one of his favourite terms both in his fiction and in his political comments was that of "destiny" - a word whose weightier application was bound to require the larger support of a political or historical theme. This he was to find in Nostromo.

Throughout his writing we find frequent reference to destiny as a metaphysical conception of time and Marlow's comment on life in Heart of Darkness as: "the mysterious arrangement of merciless logic for a futile purpose" has in it the suggestion of some kind of 'force' beyond the individual: a controlling power (p.150). Conrad conveys this mysterious force, with overtones of its almost daemonic presence, by emphasising the symbolic aspects of darkness. There is the 'dark' ignorance of the Congo

interior and of the historic Thames in Heart of Darkness; the static, shadowy picture of Patusan in Lord Jim; and the menacing darkness of the Placido Golfo in Nostromo. The corrosive power of darkness, in fact, always had a symbolic fascination for Conrad, not only in these stories but also in such tales as "The Secret Sharer", "The Shadow Line", and The Nigger of the Narcissus. Marlow's comment on it as a familiar antithesis to civilization is, therefore, essential Conrad:

We live in the flicker - may it last as long as the old earth keeps rolling! But darkness was here yesterday. (p.49)

This preoccupation with darkness in relation to time as history denies that confident nineteenth-century assumption of progress that was wont to be associated with the notion of destiny. In this respect, Conrad was to show his interest in historical time and inevitability in the assumptions of destiny and progress involved in such a consideration, although the possibility of employing a chronicler or 'historian' such as Marlow - someone who would provide an 'interpretation' of events - would militate against that sense of objectivity and impersonality representative of time in its most implacable form. As Carlyle, himself a critic of conventional historical narrative, says:

The most gifted man can observe, still more can record, only the series of his own impressions: his observations, therefore, to say nothing of its other imperfections, must be successive, while

the things done were often simultaneous; the things done were not a series, but a group. It is not in acted, as it is in written History: actual events are nowise so simply related to each other as parent and offspring are; every single event is the offspring not of one, but of all other events, prior or contemporaneous, and will in its turn, combine with all others to give birth to new: it is an ever-living, ever-working Chaos of Being, wherein shape after shape bodies itself forth from innumerable elements. 20.

In effect, Carlyle condemns the casualty and determinism implied in the written narrative and its simplification of actual historical events. Conrad, as we have seen, rejected this linear time scheme by his use of the time shift and the retrospective narrator; he would agree, moreover, with much of what Carlyle said, as his dramatization of actual events makes clear, although the scope of Nostromo in its historical sense of impersonality precluded the limiting and, to some extent, the comforting use of a particular narrator and guide such as Marlow. Instead, we are given, in Douglas Brown's words, "the oppressive presence of darkness or shadow through so much of the novel and no situation is perfectly clear." 21 The reader by, as it were, a naked use of the time shift is made more forcibly aware of the dislocation of a familiar chronology, so that time as history takes on a menacing aspect in its own right, and counteracts the liberal progressive notion of time conceived as a straight line.

Jocelyn Baines suggests that Conrad may have learnt something of the time shift from Balzac, although he admits that it is a common device anyway.²² And indeed, the technique of the time shift that involved withholding information from the reader of a sequence of events which led up to a predictable conclusion was familiar enough to Conrad from contemporary popular writers such as Wilkie Collins and Conan Doyle. This is the narrative time of the omniscient author more concerned with causality, with establishing links in the chain of events, than with the known outcome. E. V. Rieu considers an even more traditional example of the use of the time shift as one of the sophistications of Homer's narrative:

"The action of the Iliad covers only fifty days in a ten years' war. But by a skilful extension of the device Homer causes two shadows to add their sombre significance to every page, that of the past and that of what is yet to come.

Secondly, Homer employs the device of delayed action. His hearers know what is coming, but not how or why"²³:

In this use of the time shift, although the sense of linear continuity is still implied, the kind of perspective on the future offers powerful opportunity for the irony of comment and situation that a shared knowledge of the public terms of reference provides. In Conrad, however, particularly in Nostromo, with its lack of a controlling figure and its abrupt shifts in time, there is no comfort to

be taken from the paradigms of myth, as in Homer, yet, as in the historical epic, the gods may be half acknowledged in the suggestion of a "mysterious arrangement". Clearly the notion of progress as traditionally implying a moral and material improving state of affairs is contradicted by this new kind of impersonal and terrifying omniscience.

Conrad regarded Nostromo as an "intense creative effort on what I suppose will always remain my largest canvas";²⁴ and there is probably some justification for regarding the novel as the culmination of his achievement in presenting man in time; for this historical perspective on man as an active political animal gave Conrad the opportunity to explore those areas of individual conduct and morality which had previously been touched upon in relation to the persona of Marlow. The "canvas" was to be the Occidental state of Costaguana, though it might as easily be any emergent nation subject to the pressures and seductions of foreign capitalist powers; and the "intense creative effort" is conveyed in the rendering of a strong sense of history interacting with individual lives in both the social and political spheres. Nothing is more suited to his grand design than this counterpointing of the brief span of human life, with its ambition and expectation, set against a more ominous presentation of historical time.

Thus, a sense of man in time, though unaware of its merciless logic, is conveyed by that emphasis on activity, which

neglects what Conrad in "Autocracy and War" called "the worth and force of the inner life", since there is no reflective centre such as Marlow to register a stabilizing point of view. Instead, there is the boorish Captain Mitchell or the ultra sceptical Decoud to offer brief commentaries on events, although they, like the rest, are subordinate to the impersonal, seemingly arbitrary, operations of time. As Clifford Leech remarks:

In the concatenation of events, it is chance that operates giving indeed to the whole concept of time a new and terrifying quality. ²⁵

The very complex use of the time shifts in what is after all the fairly simple, straightforward story of Nostromo alerts the reader to the importance of time. The wider historical landmarks in the development of Sulaco, from the myth-ridden past with its gold-obsessed gringos of the Azuero, to its implied Marxist future - still preoccupied with the mystique of wealth - suggest no more development than the numerous forms of government in the history of Costaguana imply stability. Jocelyn Baines says that the effect of the time shifts is "almost to abolish time"²⁶, yet the clinical detachment with which they operate, the impersonal and ironic overview that gives the reader an involved account of the Ribierist celebrations 'after' his defeat, convey rather a sense of time that is implacable and inscrutable - the "mysterious arrangement of merciless logic".

This view of time contrasts with the traditional representation of time with its unquestioning faith in a progress that is bound up with material enterprises. The London Head of the Railway talks about Sulaco having "a future in the great world which is worth infinitely more than any amount of ecclesiastical past " (p.36); Charles Gould says "only let the material interests once get a firm footing, and they are bound to impose the conditions on which alone they can continue to exist" (p.84); while Mrs. Gould observes "a great land of plain and mountain and people, suffering and mute, waiting for the future in a pathetic immobility of patience." (p.88) These assumptions of moral and material progress, inextricably connected in the minds of the protagonists, reflect the widespread nineteenth-century view of progress. It is a confidence in a more spiritually aware future that is believed by Charles Gould from the outset, with his resolve to make the mine a "moral success" (p.66). For Avellanos it is a future with order, peace and progress (p.137); whereas Holroyd, with his puritan capitalist zeal, puts his faith in "destiny": - "We shall run the world's business whether the world likes it or not. The world can't help it - and neither can we, I guess." (p.77).

The values here espoused: the predictions about the future and the belief in destiny assume that linear progressive notion of evolutionary time, although Conrad

so shapes the narrative through his use of the time shift as to thwart their expectations, and to suggest a more imperious view of time history in which individuals are caught up in its hidden progression. Hence the action in broad outline moves from the crisis of the first day of the riots through the celebratory dinner eighteen months before, then to the death of Gould's father six years previously, and forward through the Holroyd connection to close the First Part with the defeat of Ribiera - the "Hope of honest men" (p.130). In an obvious sense this use of the time shift invites a rationalising of the chronology in favour of the conventional linear sequence, yet it would be surely wrong to do so, since it would mean adopting the time values of the protagonists in the novel, with all that that implies, instead of accepting Conrad's comment on the operations of a more imperious and inscrutable notion of time.

4. JOYCE: TIME AND REALITY IN DUBLINERS*
AND 'A PORTRAIT OF THE ARTIST AS A YOUNG MAN'

(i)

Epiphany.

The investigation of time and its relation to reality in the work of James Joyce inevitably centres on Joyce's conception of the "epiphany", for he assigned it to positions of importance not only in the aesthetic discussions in Stephen Hero and the Portrait but also touched wryly on the progress that his younger self, Stephen Dedalus, had made with it in the sixteen years or so that had elapsed since he began his "copies" of epiphanies and the publication of the Proteus episode of Ulysses in the Little review of 1918.

Remember your epiphanies on green oval leaves, deeply deep, copies to be sent if you died to all the great libraries of the world, including Alexandria? (p.50)

In fictional terms Stephen is commenting on the lapse of only a few years, since the date given to Ulysses is 1904, yet Joyce's perspective on his use of the epiphany is much longer, so that the older artist, Joyce himself, can be construed as commenting on the demise of the epiphany or rather its absorption into the elaborate and daring technique of Ulysses.

From the outset, however, Joyce's epiphany is particularly related to a significant moment when there is a

'showing forth'. Such emphasis on that which goes beyond mere appearance links Joyce to the traditional, neo-Platonic view of 'essences'. It is the view of a world more constant than that of appearances - a view that might seem to be endorsed by his application of the religious term "epiphany" as well as by Stephen's self-confessed "applied" Aquinian esthetic (P. p.214). But his was not a transcendental notion of reality at the expense of the contemporaneous; on the contrary, Joyce's great strength and achievement lie precisely in the fact that he is intensely concerned with the here-and-now, with the ordinary and ephemeral rather than with the extraordinary or fantastic. Even something as mundane as the "Clock of the Ballast Office", as Stephen remarks in Stephen Hero, is "capable of an epiphany" (p. 216). The word "capable" is judiciously employed here, arguing as it does

for the existence of the object in its own right, yet also providing for a "man of letters" (as Stephen puts it) the possible experience of an epiphany, in return for the activity of attention, bestowed upon it.

This activity is implied by Stephen at the close of the Portrait as the "reality of experience" in acknowledging as he does the substance of that which life in all its diversity offers him (p.257). His "Welcome, O life!" conveys a comprehensiveness and acceptance of all the experiences which the artist as a young man could hardly have avoided, for they are presented as the experiences of

a young man intensely conscious of his own time, both as a Dubliner, and as an artist. In Joyce, therefore, the epiphany marks the apotheosis of the artist in his encounter with life - an encounter that charges the focus of his attention with significance too, so that the epiphany represents, for Joyce, a way of looking at life, or, more precisely, a way of feeling. As Stephen puts it:

Art is not an escape from life. It's just the very opposite. Art, on the contrary, is the very central expression of life ... The artist affirms out of the fulness of his own life ... (SH, pp.90-91)

The 'fulness of ... his own life' is an amalgam of the experiences offered by what he is to characterise in Ulysses as "Dear Dirty Dublin" (p.183) - an interblending of the public and private, - and which is acknowledged by Stephen's resolve to "recreate life out of life" (p.176). This 'life' for Joyce was grounded in his experiences of time and place. The "Signatures of all things I am here to read" that Stephen reflects upon in Ulysses conveys something of Joyce's obsessive eye for detail (p.45); in particular for the detail from his own memory of what Dublin meant to him, with the result that we have a most vivid account of his experiences - perhaps the fullest expression of great naturalistic writing.

This attention to detail, with its emphasis on the contemporary, is, in large part, a concession to a commonsense notion of reality, and particularly to the

realistic tradition in writing, exemplified by such as Flaubert and his followers. Joyce, like Flaubert before him, emphasised the actuality of his material, but only inasmuch as it could be made consonant with 'spiritual' experiences of his characters; and this particular commitment to time -- the seemingly uneventful and contemporary - was the challenge that he set himself, by his use of the epiphany, for he counted on giving the ephemeral and mundane a kind of permanence. As Richard Ellman says:

The epiphany did not mean for Joyce the manifestation of godhead, the showing forth of Christ to the Magi, although it is a useful method for what he had in mind. The epiphany was the sudden 'revelation of the whatness of a thing', the moment in which 'the soul of the commonest object ... seems to us radiant'. (27)

When such 'realist' attention is accorded an object, it is fairly reasonable to regard the epiphany as a natural extension of the so-called Aquinian aesthetics attributed to Stephen in the Portrait. The 'whatness of a thing', the scholastic quidditas, is the culmination of the artist's apprehension of an object; it is the affective stage - what Joyce called, borrowing a phrase, "the enchantment of the heart". But it is resultant upon the activity of focussing the object in its 'wholeness', integritas, and observing the formal harmony in it, consonantia. In a certain way it is the labour of

representing significant detail with all the reverential attention that Joyce gives it which renders it capable of an epiphany: 'the luminous silent stasis of esthetic pleasure' - claritas. (pp. 216-217). For the reader, too, Joyce's combination of the epiphany and the realist technique is calculated to surprise him into an awareness of the significance of the ordinary; an apprehension of the objects of commonsense in their reality and uniqueness as if for the first time. This, perhaps, is what Virginia Woolf found to be the essential difference between Joyce and the 'materialist' writers such as H.G. Wells and Arnold Bennett, who, in their attention to external representation touched only the surface of things and failed to evoke the spiritual reality - the 'whatness of a thing' as Joyce would have it, for the 'spiritual' in her context refers to a quality of feeling that evokes for him 'the soul of the commonest object': a sacredness of approach that Joyce made clear to his brother Stanislaus as he was writing Dubliners:

Don't you think there is a certain resemblance between the mystery of the Mass and what I am trying to do? I mean that I am trying ... to give people some kind of intellectual pleasure or spiritual enjoyment by converting the bread of everyday life into something that has a permanent artistic life of its own. (29).

And as we have seen in the Portrait Stephen determines to 'recreate life out of life': we can now regard that to mean an acknowledgment and acceptance of the reality

of everyday life with time passing and of artistic reality, with its sense of permanence which the writer, in collaboration with his material, evokes.

This conception of 'life', then, clearly needs to be examined in relation to what Joyce described as those "most delicate and evanescent of moments"; a sense of transitoriness that needed to be recorded by "a man of letters". Richard Ellmann remarks that:

..... he began in 1900, and continued until 1903, to write a series of what, because he was following no one, he declined to call prose poems as others would have done. For these he evolved a new and more startling descriptive term, 'epiphanies'. (30)

For Joyce, however, they were not poetic in the sense that Chamber Music was; and although many of the epiphanies have the lyrical qualities that Joyce valued in poetry, particularly in those that were to find a place in the Portrait, yet their seeming lack of consequence, their manifest rejection of a 'studied' treatment in favour of the haphazard instant, snatched from time passing in its everyday consecutive sense, must have served to strengthen his belief that they owed little to a poetic tradition. On the other hand, Joyce's epiphanies most likely owed a great deal to a background of ideas that sought to place a premium on the apparently insignificant. E.R. Steinberg

relates that in the Naturalist Congress in Brussels in 1896:

a young disciple of Saint-Georges de Bouhelier declared: "a man appears on the scene - he is a mason, or a fisherman. The aim is to take him by surprise in a moment of eternity; the sublime instant when he leans forward to polish a cuirass or cast his net into the water. We know that his attitude at such a moment is in harmony with God." (31)

Clearly the significance of commonplace situations was in the air. And if one thinks of Freud's interest in the meaningfulness of apparently unimportant remarks - the so-called 'slips of the tongue' - and of Henri Bergson's attempt to give credence to instants of time, as time flowing, or pure duration,⁽³²⁾ it is hardly surprising that the young, and somewhat arrogant, Joyce should have claimed no less attention for art providing its own kind of explanation, or 'showing forth'.

But the very brevity of the epiphany, as a sudden spiritual manifestation, must have made it difficult for Joyce to find a form suitable for showing it off. Hence his half serious allusion to copies of epiphanies. It is quite likely, however, that he set out in two directions to exploit the technique: on the one hand by a kind of prolegomenon to the epiphany in Stephen Hero, and, on the other, by an unmediated presentation of it in the collection of short stores: Dubliners. As far as Stephen

Hero was concerned, the over-explicitness of technique, as indeed of the title of the work, must have conflicted with the 'highest excellence' that Joyce had accorded to Ibsen in a tribute to his 'lofty impersonal power';⁽³³⁾ hence his unwillingness to complete it in that form. The short stories Dubliners, however, offered him the range and brevity to give the epiphany depth and focus. They also provided him with the Ibsenite task of 'impersonal' comment on the contemporary scene:

I am writing a series of epicleti -
ten - for a paper. I have written one.
I call the series Dubliners to betray the
soul of that hemiplegia or paralysis
which many consider a city.⁽³⁴⁾

In relation to Dubliners, Morris Beja defines the epiphany thus, as:

a sudden spiritual manifestation, whether from some object, scene, event or memorable phrase of the mind - the manifestation being out of all proportion to the significance or strictly logical relevance of whatever produces it.⁽³⁵⁾

and sees it as an important structural device generally coming towards the end of such stories as: "An Encounter", "Araby", "A Painful Case", and "The Dead". In a way, the epiphany acts as a kind of stasis, reflecting a sense of the arrestation of the commonplace in a moment of

revelation, so that the 'paralysis' that Joyce wished to convey is encapsulated in those moments of insight that are experienced by either the protagonists of stories such as "A Painful Case" or "Araby", or by the reader himself as in "The Sisters" and "Ivy Day in the Committee Room". If we examine some of the conclusions to a number of the stories we become aware that the epiphany achieves a kind of summary effect by a significant moment in which the trivial chronicle of Dubliners that precede it is encapsulated. In "Araby" the young boy's disillusionment is transformed into a terrifying self-awareness:

Gazing up into the darkness I saw myself as a creature driven and derided by vanity; and my eyes burned with anguish and anger. (p.36)

and at the conclusion of "Ivy Day In the Committee Room" the force of ambiguous understatement is achieved by an oblique comment on a moving scene that terminates in the recitation of a sentimental poem on the death of Parnell:

What do you think of that, Crofton?
cried Mr. Henchy. Isn't that fine?
What?

Mr. Crofton said that it was a very fine piece of writing. (p.152)

The revelation achieved here, as in many of the stories, is managed partly by the conspicuous absence of comment

- the "scrupulous meanness"⁽³⁶⁾ - that Joyce described as a feature of his style in Dubliners.

But above all the epiphany manages to convey a kind of vivid inconclusiveness, particularly by avoiding the traditional fictional ending and, as we have seen, urging the reader back to the narrative through the force of its juxtaposition. In metaphorical terms the stasis of paralysis is reflected in that moment which denies freedom of action to its characters, and, noticeably, this is conveyed by a visual quality attached to the epiphany that produces a kind of frozen moment, as of a snapshot effect. Witness the number of close-up scenes: the old priest laughing in "The Sisters" (p.17; the boy's face in "Araby" (p.36); Eveline's 'white face'; (p.43); the small gold coin in "Two Gallants" (p.65); and 'the lonely churchyard on the hill where Michael Furey lay buried' in "The Dead" (p.256). Moreover, the effect of such images is not so much in their picturesqueness but rather in the dynamic quality created by the accompanying obliquity of comment, or the corresponding self-conscious vocabulary that has the ability to light up the scene, as it were, from an unexpected angle, rendering it tense in a mysterious way. This comparison between the visual and dynamic effect of the epiphany and 'Imagism' has already been noted by A. Walton Litz, particularly in relation to Ezra Pound's definition of the 'Image' as:

" ... that which presents an intellectual and emotional complex in an instant of time

It is the presentation of such a 'complex' instantaneously, which gives that sense of sudden liberation; that sense of freedom from time limits and space limits; that sense of sudden growth, which we experience in the presence of the greatest works of art." (37)

Such a sense of freedom from time, as specific chronology, has generally been accorded to poetry- particularly to the lyric poem, with its lack of specificity in time and place - and indeed Pound was thinking ^{of poetry,} in his definition ~~of poetry,~~ and in fact chose one of Joyce's poems for his Imagist Anthology of 1914 - whereas the prose narrative traditionally conforms to a development in space and time by, as it were, using up the time and space allotted to plot and character. In her essay "The Russian Point of View" Virginia Woolf comes near to describing the inconclusiveness of Joyce's epiphany in her analysis of Tchekov's technique of 'ending' a story:

But is it the end, we ask? We have rather the feeling that we have overrun our signals; or it is as if a tune had stopped short without the expected chords to close it. These stories are inconclusive, we say, and proceed to frame a criticism based upon the assumption that stories ought to conclude in a way that we recognise. (38)

The sense of an ending, at least in embryo, has now to be seen as being there all the time, yet waiting, in Joyce's term to be 'epiphanised', and Joyce's emphasis on the visual, moreover, suggests that he attempted to achieve, as in the plastic arts, instantaneity of effect. In Stephen Hero the narrator reflects on the rapport between Stephen and Ibsen:

the minds of the old Norse poet and of the perturbed young Celt met in a moment of radiant simultaneity. (SH, p.45)

and in the Portrait, we remember, Stephen urges singleness of vision as prior to the affective mode in his aesthetic theory: the "visible is presented in space You see it as one whole...integritas." (p.216). This strongly developed pictorial sense in Joyce is very much at the heart of Joyce's preoccupation with 'wholeness' of vision. The analogy with a painting would perhaps do justice to the 'complex' effect of the epiphany: the harmony of the object; the reliance of part upon part; the obvious lack of a time sense, and yet the consciousness of arrested time - a living present, or the 'radiant simultaneity': claritas. In the Portrait while Stephen is walking with Cranley, the latter comments on the song "Rosie O'Grady": -

-Do you consider that poetry? Or do you know what the words mean?

-I want to see Rosie first, said Stephen. (p.249).

Beyond the obvious irony at Cranly's expense, there is a sense in which the banality of the lyric does not have life as 'image', whereas the 'soft beauty of the Latin' - 'Mulier cantat' conjures up for him:

The figure of a woman as she appears in the liturgy of the church passed silently through the darkness: a whiterobed figure, small and slender as a boy, and with a falling girdle. Her voice, frail and high as a boy's, was heard intoning from a distant choir in the first words of a woman which pierce the gloom and clamour of the first chanting of the passion:

Et tu cum Jesu Galileo eras

And all hearts were touched and turned to her voice, shining like a young star, shining clearer as the voice intoned the paroxytone and more faintly as the cadence died. (p.248).

The strong pictorial sense of the epiphany as an arrested moment is clearly given; but it exists for Stephen alone as a transformation of the simple, 'Mulier cantat'. The privacy of interpretation in such an epiphany is reserved here for 'the man of letters', for whom the evocative nature of language is suggested as having the efficacy to call into being richness as of a painting with all the potential that is implied, say, in the title 'Mother and Child' and the accomplishment of an Italian Master in response to such a title.

This notion of time encapsulated in the epiphany as image, with an emphasis on the tense and mysterious, went some way towards imposing on Joyce the economy of expression that he boasted about in relation to the style of Dubliners. The sense of the moment also suited brevity and content. Yet Joyce's interest in the factual and contemporaneous involved, of necessity, some emphasis on the traditional notion of time as chronological. Stephen Hero with its too explicit naturalism overbore his commitment to the epiphany as an experiential 'now'. The tranche de vie approach of Dubliners, however, enabled him to express the desired revelatory sense of the moment, yet they were clearly intended to function in a much wider context, as well as part of the analysis of a civilization through a generation: childhood, adolescence, mature and public life.⁽³⁹⁾ One can appreciate that the overall plan of the stories in relation to Joyce's grander conception of time was bound to put a strain on the fragmentary nature of the epiphany. The extended work that beckoned to him was to fulfil the notion of the epiphany in its original form most closely, at least in spirit: hence the distillation of Stephen Hero and the representational aspect of Dubliners into A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man. For in the Portrait we have the artist in embryo as the 'man of letters' whom Joyce had originally conceived of as fit to record

those delicate and evanescent moments; at the same time there is an acknowledgment of the commonplace representation of time through the individual development to maturity of the 'young man': an incorporation of that wider sense of time as represented in his scheme for Dubliners.

5.

TIME AND IDENTITY IN'A PORTRAIT OF THE ARTIST AS A YOUNG MAN.'

(ii)

Epiphany and Consciousness.

The emphatic sense of time in the epiphany as "a sudden spiritual manifestation" becomes more obvious in relation to the Portrait, since the narrative of a personal history, that of Stephen Dedalus, offers a more conventional order of time to set against it and to highlight it. For Joyce, the time of the epiphany is now explored 'within' the consciousness of the individual, and hence the notion of time in its clearly defined chronological sense is subordinated to time as experienced by sensibility. The objective third person narrative of the Portrait endorses the reality of Stephen's world, but it is through his consciousness of it that we are aware that it exists as it does. Stephen is thus represented as belonging not only to a particular place and time, but also as embodying place and time, since everything is presented as a reflection of his own vivid sense of identity. In an important sense, therefore, the emphasis on consciousness as the mark of personal identity in the Portrait confers, as we shall see, significance on everything, so that the role of the epiphany tends largely to be reserved within this general consciousness for moments of super self-consciousness; such as the epiphany that Stephen hopes to experience:

He wanted to meet in the real world the unsubstantial image which his soul so constantly beheld. (p. 66)

The experience that Stephen wishes for is one which is to endorse his sense of vocation as an artist; it is also one which is to ensure his sense of individuality. Thus the parallel development of the artist as young man enabled Joyce, as it did other novelists who wrote on the development of the artist, in Harry Levin's words: "to apply the methods of realism to the subject of art."⁽⁴⁰⁾ Thematically, the Portrait enabled Joyce to explore the relationship between art and consciousness through his representation of personal identity.

In The Rise of the Novel Ian Watt argues that 'individualism' in the novel is a fairly recent phenomenon, and defines one of its principal characteristics as introspection in character - a feature he ascribes in particular to Defoe's Crusoe.⁽⁴¹⁾ This kind of privacy and individuality in characterization, however, was hardly advanced with any thoroughness until the early part of the twentieth century, since as we have seen in relation to Conrad, writers such as Dickens and George Eliot shared with their readers basic assumptions about the nature of time, reality and character. It was partly a climate of ideas: the influence of developments in psychology, philosophy and art which urged a new conception of personal identity, and thereby encouraged the formal

methods of certain novelists who wished to convey this new sense of character. Ian Watt argues thus:

The main problem in portraying the inner life is essentially one of the time scale. The daily experience of the individual is composed of a ceaseless flow of thought, feeling and sensation; but most literary forms - biography and even autobiography, for instance - tend to be too gross a temporal mesh to retain its actuality; and so, for the most part, is memory. Yet it is this minute-by-minute content of consciousness which constitutes what the individual's personality really is, and dictates his relationship to others: it is only by contact with this consciousness that a reader can participate fully in the life of a fictional character. (42)

This reads like a prescription for the so-called 'stream-of-consciousness' writers such as Joyce and Virginia Woolf, and though one might take issue with what he implies as the reader's ability to "participate fully in the life of a fictional character" since it is the fictional credibility of a writer's delineation of character rather than the employment of any particular psychological method that determines the reader's sense of involvement, yet his argument does outline the formal difficulties for a writer like Joyce who, in the Portrait, regarded personality as bound very closely to the changing myriad impressions that impinge on it: character in a constant state of becoming, in contrast to what D.H. Lawrence described as "the old stable ego". (43) Or as Joyce

describes Stephen's response to his experiences:

Nothing moved him or spoke to him from the real world unless he heard in it an echo of the infuriated cries within him. (p.95)

Stephen is thus regarded as an individual in time, in a state of potential: of becoming the person he "had to become"; (p.244) and time for him is the reality of experience: a state of consciousness. The conglomeration of sense-data that Stephen is assailed with in infancy, and which he later attempts to disentangle, is presented from the psychological and empiricist angle which holds the position that the relationship between an individual and his sensations is of paramount importance, so that he can 'know' or be conscious of these as he cannot be of anything else. Such an aspect of personal identity argues for the primacy of self: an awareness of personal 'moments' that cannot be shared - an awareness of oneself in time.

Joyce establishes this sense of isolate consciousness in Stephen as an activity of mind that is forever gathering into itself the sensations of present experience and forming new amalgams of mental data, and the development of his mind is dramatised and enacted in a syntax that progresses from the simplicity of basic sentences to the increasing complexity of a language for concept formation. Stephen, however, as an artist and as a young man is, as it were, shaping and experiencing

the objects of his attention simultaneously. An example of such simultaneity, involving as it does the passivity of human consciousness and the creativity of the artist, is given in the vividly dramatic Christmas scene. Joyce presents the religio-political argument with a fine sense of objectivity, while yet reminding the reader of Stephen's presence, in his response to the more childlike interests and to the emotional states of the characters. As the argument gets under way Mrs. Dedalus tried to placate her husband:

- Really, Simon you should not speak that way before Stephen. It's not right.

-O, he'll remember all this when he grows up, said Dante hotly -- the language he heard against God and religion and priests in his own home.

-Let him remember, too, cried Mr. Casey to her from across the table, the language with which the priests and the priests' pawns broke Parnell's heart and hounded him into his grave. Let him remember that too when he grows up. (p.35).

Joyce has already assured the reader by his representation of Stephen's consciousness that Dante's prediction will be fulfilled more ironically than she appreciates.

Stephen is involved as a child and in a subconscious sense as an artist, so that the formal arrangement of the book celebrates this kind of parallelism by representing a kind of retrospective present in which, as Stephen writes in his diary:

The past is consumed in the present and
the present is living only because it
brings forth the future. I(p.255)

Thus there is a linking of past to future in the artist's
scheme of things so that the present comes around again;
and the identity of the young man and artist is thereby
asserted in the ongoing present that incorporates the
now mythic past: the "Once upon a time" that will return
again and again as a vindication of the artist and through
the artist of human experience.(p.7) Stephen's resolve
to "go to encounter for the millionth time the reality
of experience" is an acknowledgment of that recurrence
(p.257); and it is characteristic of him that his
experiences should become the living present, not a
disavowal of youthful growth and artistic development
but a deliberate acceptance of the "riot of his mind"
(p.94). The Portrait is thus in its representation of
the young artist the manifestation of a series of living
presents; and as such they are most characteristic of
human experience in its true sense of identity - that
consciousness of self.

Other orders of time are represented in the Portrait
which threaten to interfere with Stephen's consciousness
of self. There is throughout that call to the past -
the Dubliners' nationalistic glorification of Ireland,
and the legends of families that threaten to impose "duties

and despair" on him (p.174). Above all there is the Jesuit appeal to eternity - a time out of time -

Time is, time was, but time shall be
no more! (p.127)

That is a time which appeals more to the artist's sense of spiritual survival and one which thus persuades Stephen in a moment of weakness that he can put the past behind him:

Another life! A life of grace and
virtue and happiness! It was true.
It was not a dream from which he would
awake. The past was past. (p.150)

But from Joyce's representation of Stephen's consciousness, bound as it is to its own time and experience, such a denial of the past would be a denial of the experiences that live on in the present, and Stephen is soon to recognise the "grave and ordered and passionless life" that is offered to him (p.164). Thus Stephen refuses to adopt either a religious or national cause but instead chooses to embrace the complexity of all that holds meaning for him, putting his faith in the truth of his own calling: a recognition of himself in time.

The emphasis on personal identity as consciousness and as significant moments or epiphanies for the artist not only functions as means of rejecting conventional notions of time but also serves to create a new time order that is more in tune with the way in which ideas form

in the mind in a random sense. The fact that Joyce chose to chart the development of a young man of artistic sensibility in the Portrait - a so-called 'Bildungsroman' - indicates his acknowledgment of growth through development, both personal and artistic in Stephen's case, and the strength of his realistic detail in Dubliners was now put to the service of 'psychological realism'. As Edmund Wilson says:

"A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man" coming at a time when the public was already surfeited with early histories of sensitive young men ... not only was able to attract attention, but had the effect of making most of these books look psychologically superficial and artistically shoddy. (44)

The rigour of Joyce's presentation of psychological reality is strikingly demonstrated by the formal distance which he expects the reader to maintain in relation to Stephen, in which case here the conventional intimacy of autobiography is superseded by the credible illusion of participating in the character's mental awakening, from the time of his earliest feelings and perceptions. The first part of the Portrait is devoted to the registering of experience, mainly in keeping with the illusion of a young boy's exploration of his 'self'. Stephen is presented almost as a registering device: the Christmas scene and the pandybatting scene are dramatic examples of situations in which he is caught

up, although there are hints of his artistic leaning, in his sensitivity to names, his feeling for rhythm, and his participation in the melodramatic imaginings at the time of Parnell's death. Above all, there is his sense of isolation, caught beautifully in the inscription of his geography book, with its implication of an egocentric universe:

Stephan Dedalus
Class of Elements
Clongowes Wood College
Sallins
County Kildare
Ireland
Europe
The World
The Universe (pp.15-16).

There is hardly exaggeration in this on the psychologically realistic level, for it is not surprising that geography should suggest, through a natural association, the names of place; at the same time the inscription is suited to the nature of the artist who is attempting, albeit unconsciously, to escape the parochial life around him. But for Stephen at this stage he wanted to understand "By thinking of things you could understand them: (p.44); he wanted to orientate himself towards the future; he wanted to find some peace and order for the "riot of his mind"; and such a turbulent state of consciousness is presented by Joyce as a kind of kaleidoscope of thoughts and images that intermingle, as it were, by association. When the young Stephen is playing on the fields at Clongowes, past and present

experiences coalesce: Stephen's thoughts flit from the rough 'scrimmage' to the 'cold slimy water' to the "lovely warm smell" of Mother's "jewelly slippers" (pp.9-10). Later he associates the word 'suck' that is given to one of his school mates with the dirty water that went "through the hole in the basin" in the Wicklow Hotel" (p.11). Sounds and rhythms too are employed throughout as a means of suggesting a link with previous experiences, so that Joyce's presentation of the intermingling of past and present in Stephen's mind reflects a dynamic sense of the present. Stephen's desire to order and control his experiences, therefore, works on the level of increasing self-consciousness both in psychological development and in artistic growth. The fact is that in the Portrait the human faculty of consciousness and that of the artistic imagination are necessarily intertwined, are, in effect, in a state of becoming, so that Stephen's desire for that "magic moment" of self-realization does duty both for the adolescent sense of wish fulfillment, and in another sense, for the artist's epiphany (p.67); and it is the representation of this duality: the notion of psychological time and the artist's time of the epiphany, which seems to have confused those critics who find an ambivalence in the narrator's attitude towards Stephen Dedalus. Wayne C. Booth perhaps best sums up the general difficulties that the Joycean scholar is called upon to deal with:

When, in his earliest years, he recorded his brief epiphanies ... there was always an implied identification of the recorder's norms and the reader's; both were spectators at the revealing moment, both shared in the vision of one moment of truth. Though some of the epiphanies are funny, some sad and some mixed, the basic effect is always the same: an overwhelming sense - when they succeed - of what Joyce liked to call the 'incarnation': Artistic meaning has come to live in the world's body. The Poet has done his work.

Even in these early epiphanies there is difficulty with distance; the author inevitably expects the reader to share in his own preconceptions and interests sufficiently to catch, from each word or gesture, the precise mood or tone that they evoke for the author himself. But since complete identification with the author is a silent precondition for the success of such moments, the basic problem of distance is never a serious one. Even if the author and reader should differ in interpretation, they can share the sense of evoked reality.

It is only when Joyce places at the centre of a long work a figure who experiences epiphanies, an epiphany-producing device, as it were, who is himself used by the real author as an object ambiguously distant from the norms of the work, that the complications of distance become incalculable. (45)

Booth sees Joyce struggling to establish norms for the control of distance and attempting to overcome the

difficulties of objective narration, as Flaubert and James before him. However, he does admit that the Portrait is unquestionably great from any viewpoint, despite its inability, as he implies, to satisfy our need to "state with some precision what the ingredients are that have been mixed together".⁽⁴⁶⁾ Whatever Joyce would have thought of this criticism, there is little doubt that he would have been amused by the critical contradictions that his work has aroused. The real difficulty for Joyce in the Portrait was in representing the simultaneous states of Stephen's "becoming" both adult and artist: two aspects of Stephen's life - the real and the ideal - that create increasing tension as the 'life' progresses.

The title of the work is sufficiently indicative of the difficulties that Joyce envisaged; in keeping with the 'imagistic' aspect of the epiphany already discussed, the "Portrait" of the title suggests the total view of the character at a particular time: 'as a young man'. Epiphanies mark stages in Stephen's development at particular moments, yet there is throughout the feeling that there is a future stage: that of becoming the person "I had to become", as Stephen says (p.244). The form thus hints at the apotheosis of the young man into artist, while at the same time relating the increasing tension between psychological and artistic maturity. Artistic experiment and development are perhaps difficult

to convey through the character's progress from the naiveté of childhood, through the guilt and fears of puberty and, finally, precocious adolescence. Stephen is required to come to terms with himself, as with the materials of his own crude art, and Joyce's 'silence' on the precious 'villanelle' or on the 'aesthetic theory' may be, as Booth implies, a failure of distance from the norms of the work. Stephen's reaction to the vision of squalor and insincerity of the world around him is a legitimate and convincing reason for his retreat into the world of the imagination, although the literary pose as when "he began to taste the joy of his loneliness" (p.70) and like Shelly's moon indulges himself "Wandering companionless ..." (p.99) as a reaction to his insecurity and social malaise, smacks more of the aesthete than of the artist. In fact, Joyce's third-person narrative creates the opening for such ambivalence, and it was probably Joyce's intention, as Stephen's sense of importance can be regarded as caricatured in a number of scenes, particularly in his identification with Parnell, and in his attempt at writing a poem about his feelings towards the young lady on the tram; although:

The verses told only of the night and
the balmy breeze and the maiden lustre
of the moon. (p.72)

And afterwards "he went into his mother's
bedroom and gazed at his face for a long
time in the mirror of her dressing table. (p.73)

But he had not been changed any more than his identity had been changed by the death of Parnell, as Stephen reflects:

But he had not died then. Parnell had died. There had been no mass for the dead in the chapel and no procession. He had not died but he had faded out like a film in the sun. He had been lost or had wandered out of existence for he no longer existed. How strange to think of him passing out of existence in such a way, not by death but by fading out in the sun or by being lost and forgotten somewhere in the universe!

Then Joyce restores him with a sense of wonder that is comic:

It was strange to see his small boy appear again for a moment: a little boy in a grey belted suit. His hands were in his sidepockets and his trousers were tucked in at the knees by elastic bands. (p.96).

Such concrete particularities ironically undermine the young person's self-consciousness, although that consciousness is presented without any correcting comment, as Stephen comes nearer to his sense of vocation. What is one to make of the brothel scene with its fin de siècle swoon prose? Then there is the transformation scene, as Stephen's sense of vocation is endorsed by the vision of the young girl wading:

- Heavenly God! cried Stephen's soul,
in an outburst of profane joy.

He turned away from her suddenly
and set off across the strand. His cheeks
were aflame; his body was aglow; his
limbs were trembling. On and on and on
and on he strode, far out over the sands,
singing wildly to the sea, crying to greet
the advent of life that had cried to him. (p.176)

The quality of such writing does on the surface appear to
endorse Stephen's interpretation of experience; at the
same time, however, there might also be a slight mocking
edge to it. J.I.M. Stewart finds a comparable ambivalence
of response in the poem on Parnell in "Ivy Day in the
Committee Room" and makes the perceptive comment that:

Its massed clichés and threadbare poeticisms
declare it to belong to the same world of
impoverished feeling conveyed in the preceding
conversations. But this is not quite all.
There is a ghost in the poem - the ghost
of generous enthusiasms and of strong and
sincere attachment to large impersonal purposes.
We respond both ways, as we are later to do
to analogous outcrops of romantic clichés
in the reveries of Dedalus. (47)

The problem for Joyce was undoubtedly in his attachment to
the character of Stephen, and that was related to the
distinction between the epiphany and a wider notion of
consciousness. However, was the epiphany in Stephen's case

to be either a construct or a perception? Joyce,^{as} we have noted previously, used the notion of the artist as 'transforming' the bread of everyday existence into the life of art. And to some extent this is what Stephen attempts:

His morning walk across the city had begun, and he fore-knew that as he passed the sloblands of Fairview he would think of the cloistral silverveined prose of Newman, that as he walked along the North Strand Road, glancing idly at the windows of the provision shops, he would recall the dark humour of Guido Calvalcanti and smile, that as he went by Baird's stonecutting works in Talbot Place the spirit of Ibsen would blow through him like a keen wind, a spirit of wayward boyish beauty, and that passing a grimy marine dealer's shop beyond the Liffey he would repeat the song by Ben Jonson ... (pp. 179-180)

There is suggested in this a more active sense of the artist's imagination working beyond mere consciousness here, although, elsewhere in the work, Stephen's consciousness is likened to a passive recording device - functioning as a crucible for the raw materials of his art. Thus the two aspects of Stephen in the Portrait, inextricably and, perhaps, uneasily, link the humane and the artistic. Stephen's series of rejections may be pushed a little too far; and it is doubtful whether Joyce intended him to achieve the impersonal 'silence, exile and cunning' at the

expense of human warmth and feeling (p.251). The dilemma is conveyed in Stephen's diary, towards the close of the work:

'Mother is putting my new secondhand clothes in order. She prays now, she says, that I may learn in my own life and away from home and friends what the heart is and what it feels.' (p.257)

Ultimately Joyce leaves the issue of 'becoming' still in doubt: Stephen's invoked artistic paternity 'the old artificer' of myth is ironically linked to the winged son, Icarus, for Stephen is testing his ability "to fly by" the "nets" also (p.207).

Joyce, however, was moving on, and is reputed to have told Frank Budgen that Stephen no longer interested him, and that as far as Ulysses was concerned he felt that Stephen's "shape" could not be "changed". (48) Joyce's interest was elsewhere; consciousness in the person of Leopold Bloom offered him a more democratic and encompassing vision of life than Stephen's privileged 'moment' of the epiphany might allow.

6. TIME CONSCIOUSNESS AND IDENTITYIN 'ULYSSES':

The paradox of Ulysses is that as a novel dedicated to the apparent contingencies of an ordinary day it is a triumph of rationalism in the classical manner. And like most naturalist novels the compliment is to science: Balzac's La Comédie Humaine, and Zola's novels start from the premise that society is knowable in the widest sense of the term; Zola's artist working with the patience and detachment of a laboratory technician must pursue what is called the "experimental method". Zola expounds it thus:

Now, science enters into the domain of us novelists, who are today the analyzers of man, in his individual and social relations. We are continuing, by our observations and experiments, the work of the physiologist, who has continued that of the physicist and the chemist. We are making use, in a certain way, of scientific psychology to complete scientific physiology; and to finish the series we have only to bring into our studies of nature and man the decisive tool of the experimental method. In one word, we should operate on the characters, the passions, on the human and social data, in the same way that the chemist and the physicist operate on inanimate beings. (49)

For Zola the dominant factor is 'determinism' so that in effect he has clearly committed his writer to find

'scientific' explanations. It was after all Aristotle, that arch-scientist, who argued that in drama the "well-constructed" plots were superior to any other, and though he championed the cause of "probability" (50) according to the norms of the particular fiction against the imposition of empirical fact, nevertheless, his most important work was devoted to finding an explanation of the cosmos by rational means: everything was traced by the logical process of cause and effect back to its original force: the First Mover or God himself. Now, in a similar vein, the encyclopaedic range of Joyce's Ulysses, with its strict category of headings and interrelatedness of part to part, owes so much to the scientific attitude, although it is a parody of that attitude. If Aristotle's Categories and De Anima pervade the work, so does the Metaphysics, and the spirit of the long line of commentators and thinkers of the rationalist and empiricist schools, down to the philosophers and scientists of Joyce's time. In the great scheme of Ulysses where all things by such emphasis are "knowable", Man in the persons of Bloom and Stephen Dedalus, strives to place himself in it, and to participate, as it were, in the central intelligence that governs the world; namely, that consciousness that Joyce manifests throughout, in his narrative technique: the so-called 'Technic'. For, in the novel, the collective consciousness of Bloom, Stephen and Molly is not our exhaustive interpretation on the Ulyssean day, Joyce has seen to it that there is a presiding consciousness as well.

In a sense this presiding consciousness has an affinity with the omniscient author of traditional fiction, although, clearly, the manner of telling was meant to establish a kind of identity above and beyond the characters of the novel. It did not expose itself, however, as the kind of genial-author persona of a Fielding novel, nor did it exhibit the disarming self-effacement of 'telling' as in Conrad or Henry James; in its guise of a multi-consciousness it adapted itself, with Protean variations, to the various characters, situations and events of a particular Dublin day. It was in effect akin to, and yet an advance on, what Stephen calls in the Portrait: the "artist" who "like the God of the creation, remains within or behind or beyond or above his handiwork, invisible, refined out of existence, indifferent, paring his fingernails." (p.219) Such a manifestation of the art of telling is a characteristic Joycean translation of the spirit of authorial omniscience. Even as early as Dubliners that subtlety of style performed a most exploratory and self-conscious function in relation to character and situation: Joyce's intention was to combine both a way of telling with a way of feeling, and the instantaneity of the epiphany combined just such a function with construct and percept: the conscious imagination. The Portrait implies that kind of simultaneity in the sense that the future written text is, as it were, present

in the feeling consciousness of the young artist; in Ulysses the consciousness of Bloom, Molly and Stephen reflect, to some extent, the Consciousness, which is the creative God of Stephen's aesthetic - the "zeitgeist" of the Ulyssean world. It is present in "the signatures of all the things I am here to read", as Stephen remarks in the Proteus episode (p.45).

This notion of the enlarged consciousness as the moving spirit behind the work, yet manifest throughout, is not to be taken as transcendental in a conventional sense; it reflects the spirit of mind, a kind of collective consciousness, revealed throughout a natural day in the many forms or 'voices' that represent its history and continue to live on in the present. Perhaps Joyce noted with some satisfaction the following remark taken from Giambattista Vico's New Science, a work with which he was familiar, and whose doctrine of recurrence echoes throughout Ulysses:

The nations mean to dissolve themselves,
and their remnants flee for safety to
the wilderness, whence like the phoenix,
they rise again. That which did all this
was mind, for man did it with intelligence;
it was not fate, for they did it by choice;
not chance, for the results of their always
so acting are perpetually the same. (52)

Such a manifestation of 'mind' is present throughout Ulysses on a particular day, June 4th, 1904; for the city of Dublin is given identity through the attention of

mind. Hence even the inanimate as the object of consciousness may become a 'living' example of man's existence. Stephen's experiment in Humean scepticism in the Proteus episode, as he walks with his eyes closed along Sandymount strand, is a comic assault on Berkeley's 'idealism':

Open your eyes now. I will. One moment. has all vanished since? If I open and am for ever in the black adiaphane. Basta! I will see if I can see. (p.46)

This is a caricatured version of Berkeley's esse est percipi, (53) but it is also an example of a profoundly serious consideration of the nature of existence and continuity that is at the heart of the novel. And despite the assertion of 'materialism' that ensues:

See now. There all the time without you: and ever shall be, world without end. (p.46).

Stephen, in tone and substance, comes close to Berkeley's deistic solution:

He willed me and now may not will me away or ever. A lex eterna stays about him. Is that then the divine substance wherein Father and Son are consubstantial? (p.47)

This act of self-consciousness on Stephen's part is here related to a greater consciousness in the sense that there is a controlling, or creative, mind overshadowing

the individual. In the Cyclops episode the Citizen in all his bigotry and crassness identifies himself with a figure from Irish folklore; a self-conscious act; although the 'technic' of 'Gigantism'⁽⁵⁴⁾ that Joyce employs functions as a technique of exposure, of parody: the creative consciousness. Similarly in the Nausicca episode, what Joyce called, in a letter, the "namby, pamby, jammy marmalady" style,⁽⁵⁵⁾ places the romantic-erotic fantasies of Bloom and Gerty MacDowell, at the same time that in the local church the men's temperance retreat conducted by the missionary, the reverend John Hughes S.J., rosary, sermon and benediction of the Most Blessed Sacrament ... were there gathered together without distinction of social class (and a most edifying spectacle it was to see) in that simple fane beside the waves, after the storms of this weary world, kneeling before the feet of the immaculate, reciting the litany of Our Lady of Loreto, beseeching her to intercede for them, the old familiar world, holy Mary, holy virgin of virgins. (p.460).

This dual vision is an aspect of that mind, the over-seeing consciousness, that pervades the work, and the projection of that consciousness is most dramatically in evidence in the Circe episode, where even the Nymphs, the Yew and the Waterfall speak as personae in a drama according to a principle that Bloom noted ~~satirically~~ in the newspaper office, while watching the typesetter in action:

Slit. Almost human the way it slit to call attention. Doing its level best to speak. That door too slit creaking, asking to be shut. Everything speaks in its own way. Slit. (p.154)

Bloom reflects Joyce's concern with the pervasiveness of mind : the capacity of consciousness to give otherwise static matter a kind of life, and Stephen, as artist, is more aware of this than Bloom, as he wrestles throughout with his own "horrible example ... of free thought" and the creative intelligence of his artistic calling. (p.23)

His most telling comment on the power of mind comes in the Eumeus episode where he tells Bloom: "... I suspect ... that Ireland must be important because it belongs to me"; (p.748) a neat and typically Joycean example of allowing the young artist Stephen a half-glimpse of the creative intelligence that is the controlling consciousness of the world of Ulysses itself.

In this sense Joyce attempts to bring closer the relationship between reality and fiction by this democratization of his notion of the epiphany, whereby his original conception of special moments are, in Ulysses, translated into one total consciousness - a kind of experiential present. The complicated structural apparatus of the work with its persistent cross references involves the reader, perhaps as never before, in the novel, in an act of creative unification, so that he is invited to have that total over-view that is Joyce's itself. Litz sees the activity of reading as demanding from the reader a prodigious

memory, so that:

Once the events and themes of Ulysses have become familiar the entire work stands before us as a vast static 'Image'. (56)

The reader, so to speak, in his 'consciousness' of the work assumes an identity with that of the author, as well as participating in the fictional world of the novel. The experience of time as present, therefore, is reinforced by a position that is both within and without the work. Leon Edel attempts to explain the difficulty of reading such a novel:

I suspect ... that for many the problem lies in the need to see a wholeness that can be achieved only after all the disparate facts have been gathered. This is what Joseph Frank meant when he observed that a stream-of-consciousness novel cannot be 'read' in the usual sense - it can only be 're-read'. (57)

Edel touches upon 'wholeness' a concept that, quite likely, Joyce speaking through Stephen in the Portrait, saw as fundamental to his 'esthetic image' in the name of 'integritas'. That is the kind of instant^{an}ty of the 'image' already discussed in relation to the epiphany. In Litz's view of Ulysses as a "vast static 'image' " therefore the entire Dublin day is radiant with meaning, as an experiential "now".

This concept of time as an experience of the present has already been examined in connection with that crucial notion of Stephen's in the Portrait, namely, "the reality of experience", and it is essential for understanding Ulysses as well, with its enormous advance in the depth and breadth of its human concerns. The relentless workings of the mind as a river of sequential presents had already its metaphor from the "stream of consciousness". Joyce, however, acknowledged Dujardin's Les Lauriers sont coupés for his own use of the 'interior monologue', (58) although he had previously developed a suitable form in the Portrait for the presentation of a fluid succession of present experiences according to a principle of association. Joyce's great contemporary Marcel Proust was also working along such lines in his great sequence A la recherche du temps perdu, although Joyce found or affected to find no "special talent" in his work. (59)

The academician Henri Bergson published three influential works between 1889 and 1907 in which he emphasised the private experiential nature of time as real duration, (60) the "durée réelle", and it would be surprising if Joyce, a keen reader of philosophy and ethics, particularly during his visits to the Sorbonne, was not acquainted with his work in some form. Moreover, the inevitable problem for an artist such as Joyce, living in the shadow of a theory that identifies reality with an unbroken stream of consciousness, was perceived by Bergson who justly recognised the contradiction inherent in expressing

that which has neither beginning or end:

" ... the very fact that he (the artist) spreads out our feelings in a homogenous time, and expresses its elements by words, shows that he in his turn is only offering us its shadow: but he has arranged this shadow in such a way as to make us suspect the extraordinary and illogical nature of the object which projects it; he has made us reflect by giving outward expression to something of that contradiction, that interpretation, which is the very essence of the elements expressed." (61)

But most important for Joyce's representation of mind were the contradictions in the human psyche, with its layers of consciousness, as well as the hidden depths of the unconscious which were being explored by Freud and Jung, and it is their 'findings' that give Ulysses its sense of veracity in conveying the atmosphere of the mind. Richard Ellmann in his book, The Consciousness of Joyce cites Jung's, The Significance of the Father in the Destiny of the Individual, and Freud's Psychopathology of Everyday Life as influential to the making of Ulysses and says:

The relevance to Joyce of this new way of thinking about the mind cannot be overstressed. (62)

This new way of thinking about the mind must have endorsed Joyce's principles of freedom and frankness which he adopted in presenting a total picture of individual

experiences for it purported to offer a scientific and hence rational basis/contemporary experience. The apparently trivial and meaningless, the so-called slips of the tongue, the dreams, and the neuroses, according to Gabriel Josipovici, were explained by Freud as those "unexpected knots" that represented a "Desire to put a stop on the meaningless forward movement".⁽⁶³⁾ In a sense, then, when explanations were forthcoming, life could be given meaning if the kind of omniscience that the ancient cosmologists posited, or that the scientists of Joyce's own time managed to attain, were possible. For Joyce, as for Zola, only the artist could achieve such eminence and not simply by continuing what the latter called "the experiential method" but by adopting the form and expression of what Stephen sees as the artist's ability to "weave and unweave" his image" in time. (p.249).

If time, then, for the artist is manifest in a kind of consciousness, which is a feeling, contemplative experience - Stephen in Ulysses calls it "one livid final flame" (p.28) - in its outward form it appears fragmented as 'change'; a spatio-temporal relationship. It is the public time of Ulysses that marks the boundary of that particular day, and Joyce keeps faith with a naturalistic time-scheme. Both Stephen and Bloom set out from home, conscious of guilt and failure, and Joyce steers them through a calendar of events, with time constantly reminding them of meetings, funerals, pubs,

the hospital, the brothel, home, separation and finally, sleep, with the sounds of the churchbell heard and the distant train caught in Molly Bloom's soliloquy. Time is charted very carefully, with a reasonable time lapse given for a particular action to occur; consequently, simultaneities are frequent. Bloom and Stephen are given parity of time in the first six episodes, and then sometime around noon their paths cross, when Bloom notices Stephen returning from the Strand, as Bloom journeys to Paddy Dignam's funeral. Twice more in the library and the newspaper office they come close before they are meaningfully brought together in the lying-in hospital, and in the following night-town scenes. Bloom notices Boylan three times as the latter is on his way to seduce Molly, and remarks on the coincidence; and it is observed that his watch stopped at 4.30. The young man who emerges from a meadow with a rather flustered young woman is later revealed to be Lenehan. The day, full of apparent insignificance - that "meaningless forward movement" - is, when regarded in its entirety, seen to have meaning, for despite the spatial conception of time measured by clocks and watches, by the movement of the blind young man through Dublin, the Viceregal calvalcade, H.E.L.Y.S. sandwichboard men, the floating throwaway, and much more, the manner in which they are connected and presented, testifies to the governing consciousness of mind .

With time fixed so implacably on the public chronological level, individual time is given over to consciousness, particularly in the persons of Stephen and Bloom, who are portrayed as concerned with the integrity of their own identities. If the particular day is full of trivialities and a sense of time passing, Joyce explores the ways in which they both attempt to make sense of what they regard as the passing of time. In the space of a single day the free range of their minds overwhelms mere chronology and, by the very force of a total history revealed, asserts individuality above the obvious constraints of an ordinary day.

Stephen remains primarily that Stephen of the Portrait, retaining the hauteur and self-consciousness of the earlier work, although now somewhat mellowed by his experience in Paris and his mother's death. The egocentricity of his affirmation at the conclusion of the previous work 'Welcome O life' has been converted, in Ulysses, to a painful wryness:

You were going to do wonders, what?
Missionary to Europe after a fiery
Columbanus. (p.52)

The human predicament of his own background and personality: "a nightmare from which I am trying to awake", is still at odds with his sense of artistic vocation (p.42). For Stephen, the need to relate himself to time

is to assert himself as artist; to make connections between beginnings and endings; to find his place in a meaningful existence. In the Proteus passage he experiments with his sense of time and space and muses:

God becomes man becomes fish becomes
barnacle goose becomes featherbed
mountain

... Yes, evening will find itself in
me, without me. All days make their
end. (p.63)

The poignancy in his final comment expresses his acknowledgment of change, though at the same time he realizes a fundamental stability; for Proteus as the god of change is metaphorically identified with the artist who weaves and unweaves his image, yet the material out of which these images are woven by the artist are taken from personal experience - the human feelings that can torment still. Stephen's creative effort is diverted by his own human erotic drama:

You find my words dark. Darkness is in
our souls, do you not think? Flutier.
Our souls, shamewounded by our sins,
cling to us yet more a woman to her lover
clinging, the more the more. (p.61)

Throughout this day, then, Stephen is concerned with the struggle between the human mundaneness of his existence and the sense of permanence that is inherent in art: "Life is many days. This will end." (p.275) He reflects particularly on the relationship to his dead mother who

haunts him still, and he moves towards a position where he must exorcise her ghost, come to terms with the consubstantiality of the son with the father, encounter the 'mockers', such as Buck Mulligan, and ultimately admit, as he does in the Aeolus episode: "Dublin I have much, much to learn." (p.183)

The merging of personal consciousness with that of the artistic imagination is his aim in a kind of feeling of detachment by which human transience can be transmuted into the permanency of art:

In the intense instant of imagination, when the mind, Shelley says, is a fading coal, that which I was is that which I am and that which in possibility I may come to be. So in the future, the sister of the past, I may see myself as I sit here now but by reflection from that which then I shall be. (p.249)

Hence Stephen's admission that it is impossible to escape from one's own history:

We walk through ourselves, meeting robbers, ghosts, giants, old men, young men, wives, widows, brothers - in - love. But always meeting ourselves." (p.273.

What can be salvaged from all this is achieved by the artistic imagination, so that personal experiences are converted to an end. Stephen's preoccupation with Shakespeare's life and works in the library scene is quite

simply an exposition on the closeness of human biographical experience to artistic creation, inasmuch as the playwright "found in the world without as actual what was in his world within as possible". (p.273) And this is undoubtedly an interesting comment on Joyce's own working thesis, and evident from the amount of autobiographical material that was consciously employed by him in all his work. Ultimately, in the brothel scene, Stephen affirms his artistic integrity, as he had done in the Portrait, and as Joyce himself had done: "The intellectual imagination! With me all or not at all. Non serviam!" (p.682).

Stephen, however, is only one aspect of his creator; the character Leopold Bloom is primarily the hero of the work, and a dominant counterpart to Stephen. In an important sense they complement one another, for though Bloom is less esoteric in his pronouncements and, certainly, less egocentric, his concerns with the nature of change and a sense of loss are often represented as striking illustrations of Stephen's. Sheldon R. Briwic in his article "Time, Sexuality and Identity in Joyce's Ulysses" argues for a fairly strict division in personality between the main characters in which Bloom is represented as "a physical or materialistic person" and Stephen is the "spiritual or intellectual".⁽⁶⁴⁾ But while there are examples enough to demonstrate an idealistic/materialistic

dichotomy, such a strict division does not account for the areas in which they seem to merge and to achieve a corporate identity. Most significantly, they 'echo' one another throughout the work. Bloom's metempsychosis, so patiently explained to Molly, is heard in Stephen's considerations of the nature of change in art; in the latter's Proteus experiment with sense-experiences, Bloom's similar inquiry is directed towards the "blind stripling" (p.231). Bloom, conscious of being the last of his race, comments sadly on the change around him "Always passing, the stream of life" (p. 107) and can at another time say "History repeats itself Life, love, voyage round your own little world." (p.491) Memory too pains him as it does Stephen: in the library episode Stephen thinks: "I am other I now". (p.242). a similar concern to Bloom's, "Or was that I? Or am I now I?" (p.243). There is as Lenihan says, "a touch of the artist about old Bloom (p.302) and for Joyce the comment is well placed since it is through the wide ranging consciousness of Bloom, Stephen's spiritual father, that the day is primarily viewed, and if Bloom cannot match the clarity and conceptual brilliance of Stephen's considerations, yet he provides a richness of experience and a depth of human concern that the younger man has yet to learn; for Bloom attends both a death and a birth and by his humour and presence manages to turn both into a kind of celebration: he invokes "warm fullblooded

life" at the graveside of Paddy Dignam, (p.146) and he rejoices at the birth of a Purefoy. The facts may be against him: conscious of failure as a husband, and helpless to protect his daughter, he turns to fantasy, flirtation and voyeurism. Moreover, guilt and remorse pursue him still in the form of a suicide father, and his dead son, Rudy, although he shadows his younger idealised self, Stephen, like a fidus Achates; and just as Joyce has emphasised their shared consciousness, so he underlines this fact by their paths, which, finally, converge. Stephen, moreover, in his search for an artistic spiritual paternity: the "Son" "consubstantial" with the Father" at last finds a relative in Bloom that he did not bargain for; and when in the brothel episode they both gaze into the mirror:

The face of William Shakespeare, beardless, appears there, rigid in facial paralysis, crowned by the reflection of the reindeer antlered hatrack in the hall. (p. 671)

the configuration of images of cuckoldry and of the artist link Bloom to Shakespeare and Stephen to both in their spiritual and human artistic confraternity. The complementariness of both here assets the independence of art and nature; a triumph of the artistic imagination, as consciousness, over time regarded as mere change. And finally it is in the consciousness of Molly that as Richard Ellmann says: "Bloom and Stephen are joined

(65)
forever;" more significantly that they are united in
a kind of celebration of the joy of artistic creation,
which is the coeternal present that Joyce has encapsulated
in the pervasive consciousness that is Ulysses itself.

7. MYTH AND THE CREATIVE IMAGINATIONIN 'ULYSSES'

In view of the argument put forward that in all Joyce's work a consideration of consciousness as an experiential mode is fundamental, it is now time to examine the reasons why he chose to adopt the framework of the Odyssey for a representation of his own time, particularly as Joyce is one of the most 'contemporary' of writers. In his own words he says:

My intention is to transpose the myth sub specie temporis nostri. Each adventure (that is, every hour, every organ, every art being interconnected and interrelated in the structural scheme of the whole) should not only condition but even create its own technique. (66)

Such a transposition, in view of the preoccupation with mental experience, resulted largely in an internalization of the actions of the mythical figures in the modern consciousness, with the result that this time linking inevitably draws comparisons between the contemporary and the ancient. Joyce's super-imposition of one time on another, however, asserts continuity and persistence in the human condition, since the past is not conceived by him as a different, and idealized place in comparison with the present - a conventionally traditional treatment in the hands of the satirist. Harry Levin, among others,

however, inclines to that view when he argues that in Ulysses "the present is treated as a travesty of the past": (67) an interpretation which is based on what he regards as Stephen and Bloom's lack of real communication. (68)

Litz and Ellmann on the other hand interpret Ulysses as an affirmation of the human spirit by the parallels between the two characters, Ellmann finally merging both in Molly's consciousness. The argument of this thesis is that the characters are aspects or manifestations of the creative artist, Joyce himself, locked in a dialectic between art and experience and thus manifesting that position in a kind of self-reflecting autobiographical form.

Joyce in this sense corresponds not so much to Homer's myth as to Homer himself: artist to artist. The persistent human condition may then be seen to be truly artistic and relating to art as an imaginative sympathy with all experience. At the conclusion of the Portrait, we remember that Stephen, as artist, determines to "forge in the smithy of my soul the uncreated conscience of my race" - a form of translating experience into art through his own sense of identity. (p.257). Vico provides an interesting parallel in defining the relationship between Homer and the experiences of his race:

"... the reason why the Greek peoples vied with each other for the honour of being his fatherland, and why almost all claimed him as a citizen, is that the Greek people were themselves Homer." (69)

In the same way, Ulysses exists as a celebration of the artist in relation to the experiences of his own time, so that in focussing on the artist as "maker" it reveals his consciousness in the way that Vico above observes Homer in his creations. For Joyce, therefore, such a manifestation of the artist in his work required that he eschew the traditional narrative as well as the more contemporary form which, as in the Portrait, represented the individual character as hero of the work; it required a schema which represented the artist as lord of his creation and, as such, sought the epic proportions that Joyce found in Homer. Indeed, his tireless elaboration of the correspondences, as Litz has pointed out, was an attempt to "transform the entire novel into an 'epic' work".⁽⁷⁰⁾ Moreover, Litz remarked that the Homeric parallels were only fractionally used and were "more important for Joyce than for the reader".⁽⁷¹⁾ However, it is crucial to see them as important on that account for the reader, since the method of construction is its own justification and, as Joyce said, "should create its own technique".

Not without good reason have biographers and critics compared the facts of Joyce's life with his artistic representation of them; the combination of naturalism together with the elliptical nature of the epiphany helped to encourage such curiosity initially. If he has been identified with Stephen in the earlier work, then he has come to be associated more recently with Bloom, and the publication of his private correspondence

has endorsed that view, and revealed him to have much
(72)
in common with Bloom's more intimate obsessions.

Joyce, in fact, may be seen to have nurtured his experiences in order to use them in his writing. So many of the events related in Ulysses are connected to episodes in his life: a man called Alfred Hunter had once rescued Joyce in circumstances similar to those in which Bloom dusts off Stephen and takes him home, and Joyce had lived with Oliver St. John Gogarty and Samuel Chevenix in just the way that Stephen does with Mulligan and Haines at the Martello Tower. Moreover, about June 1904, Joyce was nostalgic for Paris and making plans for exile from Ireland, as Stephen was. Some real people appear in the novel without change - political and historical figures such as Parnell and his brother, and it is well known that Dr. Richard I. Best, a librarian in the Scylla and Charybdis episode, at one time protested indignantly:

"I am not a character in fiction: I
and a living being". (73)

Later in life Gogarty, attempting to patch up the quarrel between himself and Joyce, said:

"I don't care a damn what you say (74)
of me so long as it is literature".

For Joyce these experiences were a constant source of 'meaning' to him, and therefore, the material for his art. They provided the "voyage" around one's own "little world" that figures so much in the minds of Bloom and Stephen.

The metaphor of the voyage of discovery is, then, at the heart of the novel and Joyce hinted at this in conversation with Frank Budgen in 1918:

I am now writing a book " ... based on the wandering of Ulysses. The Odyssey, that is to say, serves me as a ground plan. Only my time is recent time and all my hero's wanderings take no more than eighteen hours." (75)

The shift now was to Leopold Bloom away from Stephen Dedalus, and it is likely that his own maturity and his experiences as a family man, as well as his own self-imposed wanderings in the name of 'exile', could be realised in his hero Ulysses-Bloom. Ellmann, moreover, provides an interesting clue to Joyce's interpretation of the Homeric figure:

Another aspect of his hero Joyce borrowed as much from Dante as from Homer. In Dante Ulysses makes a voyage which Homer does not mention, a voyage which expresses his splendid lust for knowledge. In Canto XXXVI of the Inferno, Ulysses says: "Neither fondness for my son, nor reverence for my aged father, nor the due love that should have cheered Penelope, could conquer in me the ardor that I had to gain experience of the world, and of human vice and worth." This longing for experience, for the whole of life, is related to that of Stephen crying at the end of A Portrait, "Welcome, O life," but Bloom is able, with the persistent ruminative curiosity which is his middle class correlative for Ulysses' lust,

to cover even more of life and the world
in his thoughts than Stephen is. (76)

The "whole of life", therefore, as Joyce represents it in his encyclopaedic approach in Ulysses is the fullest documented account of consciousness, voyaging in action among all his characters in the novel, particularly among Stephen and Bloom, for of the latter it is said with some confidence: "He rests. He has travelled." (p.870)

Again, Ellmann in an analysis of the sources available to Joyce for his interpretation of the Homeric background finds that in classical scholarship such interpretations proffer, among many, the possibility that Ulysses was a Phoenician rover, belonging to a Semitic people; that he was shipwrecked in Ireland; and Penelope was not simply unfaithful, but an amalgam of Calypso and Nausicca. (77) This was the kind of literary exegesis that appealed more and more to Joyce as his writing developed, and he incorporated as much of the apparent contradictions in his work, primarily because he believed that the "riot" of the mind could be triumphant in the imaginative experience, since only the artist might embrace the whole of human fragmented thinking in its relative and transient form and, through his consciousness of it, achieve a synthesis that went beyond the particularities of a definite time and place. This sense of the past and its reality in the present was, moreover, endorsed for Joyce by his interest in Vico.

Ellmann notes that: one of Joyce's pupils who "was studying Vico in school, discovered that Joyce was also passionately interested in this Neapolitan philosopher", and he adds in a footnote to this, the valuable information that:

Joyce also knew Croce's Estetica with its chapter on Vico. Croce's re-statement of Vico, 'Man creates the human world, creates it by transforming himself into the facts of society: by thinking it he re-creates his own creations, traverses over again the paths he has already traversed, reconstructs the whole ideally, and thus knows it with full knowledge,' is echoed in Stephen's remarks in Ulysses, (p.623) 'What went forth to the ends of the world to traverse not itself. God, the sun, Shakespeare, a commercial traveller, having itself traversed in reality itself, becomes that self ... Self which it itself was ineluctably preconditioned to become. Ecco!

This full consciousness of Self is attainable only by the artist transforming himself into the facts of society; a notion that is close to what Vico saw in Homer. John Rosselli in a review of Sir Isaiah Berlin's study of Vico and Herder says that:

Vico's insights are those of eccentric genius. His awareness that the myth of the Cyclops was not a convenient lie or a nonsense but was the shape that experience took in the minds of men at a certain stage of development brings him close to Freud and Jung. (80)

In fact, Joyce, as Ellmann relates, believed that Vico had anticipated Freud. ⁽⁸¹⁾ But, more importantly, Joyce, in adopting for himself the mythological framework, was asserting thereby the persistence of human experience as it exists behind the shapes that body it forth in imaginative experience, and change throughout history. Moreover, Vico's theory of recurrence, the "ricorso", must have suggested to Joyce the recurrence of those 'shapes' as they are given expression by the suggestion; for Vico sees: "a substantial identity of meaning in the diversity of modes of expression" despite, "the affairs of all nations as they proceed in their rise, progress, mature state, decline and fall." ⁽⁸²⁾

It is interesting to note that Vico's view of 'expression' as the repository of meaning must have pleased his disciple, and endorsed Joyce's view that the artist was the true interpreter of 'reality', that, in language, the truth might shine forth sempiternally, despite the inevitable changes that Vico described: In an important sense, therefore, Joyce was far removed from that kind of pessimistic outlook which could be found in apocalyptic writings such as Spengler's Decline of the West and Yeats' poetry, with his historical revolution of the Great Wheel. Recurrence is certainly hinted at in Ulysses, as in the Portrait: the twenty-four hour cyclical 'voyage' is there in Stephen's "Life is many days", as it is in Bloom's thoughts. In the brothel

episode Stephen muses on "The ultimate return" of the musical octave, (p.622) and on Genesis: "In the beginning was the world, in the end the world without end." (p.626). Stephen here comes close to the secret of the creative principle which asserts the eternal validity of the artist in his creation: his belief in "the eternal affirmation of the spirit of man in literature" (p.777) That is Joyce's view - a view that can reconcile Bloom and Stephen in an affirmation of the human spirit, for the structuring of the novel invites this kind of interpretation. As David I. Grossvogel says à propos the structuring of the novel:

If Molly's invocation to the rocks binds together for Joyce the worlds of Calypso, Circe, Penelope, the reader will appreciate the depth of characterization only if he senses through it the recurrence of being and the metempsychosis that Molly suggests as the earth soul. But such subtlety of characterization is more likely to lead the reader to the author than Molly. This is structuring, but of a special kind, one in which the word is revealed as world. (83)

Grossvogel's interpretation is fairly precise, although he misses the point and censures Joyce for "finding an increasingly attractive means of escape" in words. (84) In a similar fashion Frank O'Connor in recalling the following incident connected with Joyce, half glimpses the kind of richness Joyce offers, yet balks at the effort

he feels that is demanded of him:

The incident concerned a picture of Cork in his [Joyce's] hallway. I could not detect what the frame was made of. 'What is that?' I asked. 'Cork' he replied. 'Yes', I said, 'I know it's Cork, but what's the frame?' 'Cork' he replied with a smile. I had the greatest difficulty in finding a French frame-maker who would make it. (85)

Both of these commentators incline towards the fairly popular view of Joyce as tirelessly devoted to word spinning for some obscure reason - the 'cunning artificer - and thereby forsaking what he ought to be concerned with: the conventional, integrated fictional character. Consequently, there is some disappointment at what they imply as a lack of fictional autonomy. The fact is, however, that the close relationship between Joyce's life and work obviated such a strict dichotomy; and, if the structure, as Grossvogel says, leads the reader to the author, that is precisely as Joyce intended it, just as the "frame", as in O'Connor's anecdote, reflects its subject matter. For Joyce, therefore, the artist was not just at the periphery of the work, but essentially reflected in it; that is more than likely what Joyce saw in Homer, with the help of Vico, and that is the substance of Stephen's consideration of the relationship of Shakespeare's life to his work. Moreover, since for

Joyce consciousness is predominant, there is no demarcation line between the subject and the object of its contemplation. In effect, Ulysses asserts the supreme egoism of the artist, as omniscient author, and is thus the culmination of Joyce's work on the epiphany begun so many years before. Coleridge would have understood Joyce's achievement, for he too in attempting to define the imaginative experience conceived of it as a kind of synthesising agent - "the
(86)
esemplastic power".

"The primary imagination I hold to be the living power and prime agent of all human perception, and as a repetition in the finite mind of the eternal act of creation in the infinite I AM." (87)

For the reader, then, to experience Ulysses is to participate in that artistic omniscience - the eternal act of creation, to share with Joyce that larger sense of the epiphany, not simply as the 'moment' but as the suspension of time itself.

8. Virginia Woolf: Time, 'Character'
and the "Moderns"

Whereas Joyce's concern with time, particularly in Ulysses, is related to consciousness as a liberating feature of contemporary man, Virginia Woolf's focus is primarily on the more personal, isolated awareness of time in the individual's sense of personal identity. In many ways, therefore, there is a good deal of similarity between them in their preoccupation with time and the presentation of character; and although she "reflected" (88) in her diary that Joyce might have anticipated in method what she was attempting to do in Jacob's Room, nevertheless, she wanted to avoid what she regarded as his "narrowing and restricting". (89) In a general sense, however, it is clear that there was a kindred spirit operating on both of them, for like Joyce she was profoundly concerned with the 'craft' of writing and conscious of the inadequacy to her of the traditional nineteenth-century narrative; like Joyce she concentrated her efforts on the exploration of character in relation to time; and, to that end, like Joyce, she drew much from her own private resources, as her letters and diaries testify. Her response to Joyce's Ulysses, however, was generally ambivalent, as this entry in her diary shows:

I should be reading Ulysses, and fabricating my case for and against. I have read 200 pages so far - not a third: and have been amused, stimulated, charmed - interested by the first 2 or 3 chapters - to the end of the Cemetery scene; and then puzzled, bored, irritated and disillusioned by a queasy

undergraduate scratching at his pimples.

The air of revulsion conveyed in the latter part of this may be to some extent affected, for it is hard to imagine her being offended by the scabrous element in Joyce. What is more likely is that under cover of this criticism she was defending her own style and rejecting the bravura element in a technique that sought to fashion language to accommodate to every situation, instead of, as in her case, designed to convey a spiritual quality that was intended to represent the unifying activity of a sensibility. Her unqualified admiration was reserved for Proust: o

The thing about Proust is his combination of the utmost sensibility with the utmost tenacity. He searches out these butterfly shades to the last grain. He is as tough as catgut and as evanescent as a butterfly's bloom. And he will, I suppose, both influence me and make me out of temper with every sentence of my own. (97)

The epithets here: "butterfly shades", "evanescent", and "bloom" are characteristic of the kind of vocabulary Virginia Woolf employs in discussing the sensibility; on the one hand it is a language of suggestion and allusion that in its deliberately 'poetical' way seeks to avoid mere common-place description; on the other, it achieves through its accumulative force an ability to convey that essential 'spiritual' quality which she felt was lacking in contemporary writers such as H.G. Wells, Arnold Bennett,

and John Galsworthy. Such writers as these were opposed to the kind of writing that she advocated in her essay "Modern Fiction", ⁽⁹²⁾ where she describes them as 'materialists' concerned only with the 'alien and external' in consequence of which, she said "Life escapes". ⁽⁹³⁾ In another essay she criticised Bennett in particular for failing to invoke 'life' and neglecting, in discussing "character" in fiction, what she called the "reality" of human individuality. ⁽⁹⁴⁾ Her concern with "character", therefore, was primarily a concern with personal identity, and to that end she directed her talents; for her main characters in the novels, by their sensitivity to experience, clearly reflect a similar spirit of authorial control. Again and again one is struck by the emphasis on the sense of individual identity in her novels by the centrality of such characters as Jacob Flanders, Clarissa Dalloway, Mrs. Ramsay, Lily Briscoe, Orlando, and the six differentiated characters in The Waves. Such emphasis on identity with all the possibilities of that freedom of consciousness thus implied, was not, she maintained, to be either defined, or even confined by the documentation of 'facts', as the materialists had attempted to do. Joyce had shown the way:

In contrast with those whom we have called materialists, Mr. Joyce is spiritual; he is concerned at all costs to reveal the flickerings of that innermost flame which flashes its messages through the brain, and in order to preserve it he disregards with

complete courage whatever seems to him adventitious, whether it be probability, or coherence, or any other of these signposts which for generations have served to support the imagination of a reader when called upon to imagine what he can neither touch nor see. (95)

Clearly for Virginia Woolf the new writers, whom she admired, the 'moderns', were spiritual because of this response to human consciousness, and it was the failure of the materialists to interpret character as such that rendered them anachronistic, for even traditional writers such as Scott, Jane Austen or Wordsworth were to some extent unable to match the modern writer, as:

They seem deliberately to refuse to gratify those senses which are stimulated so briskly by the 'moderns'; the sense of insight, of sound, of touch - above all, the sense of the human being, his depth and the variety of his perceptions, his complexity, his confusion, his self, in short. (96)

Such a view of the complexity of the individual, particularly with that emphasis on "confusion" put a good deal of weight on the impressionistic area of consciousness, and it brought the personal and autobiographical closer to Virginia Woolf's writing, as it had to James Joyce's. That she regarded herself among the pioneers of this kind of

writing may be supported from the fact that she regarded her novels previous to Orlando as "serious poetic experimental books whose form is always so closely considered"; there was also a certain quality that she felt she might contribute to fiction, being a woman:

The greater impersonality of women's lives will encourage the poetic spirit, and it is in poetry that women's fiction is weakest. It will lead them to be less absorbed in facts and no longer content to record with astonishing acuteness the minute details which fall under their own observation. They will look beyond the personal and political relationships to the wider questions which the poet tries to solve - of our destiny and the meaning of life. (98)

There is little doubt that Virginia Woolf was outlining her own literary aims in that essay, and, since she felt that the 'meaning of life' was closely related to the complexity of individual perception, her attention to the 'form' of the novel can be seen as an attempt to come to terms with a genre that was traditionally determined by the contingencies of events. The representation of 'character' in Virginia Woolf would in its own right become predominant, and in relation to that, the method of telling was to become all important. As Frank W. Bradbrook says:

Fiction for Virginia Woolf was not a 'criticism of life' in any Arnoldian sense, but rather a re-creation of the complexities of experience. Just as life was a most subtle and complicated succession of experiences, so fiction must be infinitely adaptable and supple in order to catch the 'tones', the light and shade of experience. (99)

It is necessary, however, to emphasize that Virginia Woolf's concern with the experiential life of the individual was very much a reflection of the close-knit Bloomsbury Group, among whom the spirit of non-conformity was as pronounced as that of their cosmopolitanness.

An important member of the group, Lytton Strachey, in Eminent Victorians, published in 1918, had provided a 'modern' psychological reappraisal of established and eminent Victorian public figures, by concentrating more on the dubious motives that often determined their actions - actions which had conventionally been regarded as definitive statements about character. And Roger Fry's championing of the Post-Impressionists similarly undermined the obvious public statement implicit in traditional representational painting, in favour of a more personally related way of interpreting experience. In an important sense the artifact was now to become more dynamic in that it reflected this more complex way of being perceived, and it was Virginia Woolf who best expressed that aspect of dynamism in her essay "Modern Fiction":

Examine for a moment an ordinary mind on an ordinary day. The mind receives a myriad impressions - trivial, fantastic, evanescent, or engraved with the sharpness of steel. From all sides they come, an incessant shower of innumerable atoms; and as they fall, as they shape themselves into the life of Monday or Tuesday, the accent falls differently from of old. (100)

The fluidity of this kind of impressionism cannot be overestimated in relation to her writing, with its emphasis on the flux of experience; a spirit of restlessness that was conveyed through the objects of perception. Hence character as consciousness represented a new dynamic time-sense, since it was always conceived as potential, and not, as the materialists implied, as a complete, fixed and knowable entity.

This sense of restlessness was much in evidence in her work as early as 1917, when she wrote a prose reverie called "The Mark on the Wall" in which she sought to convey the floating possibilities that consciousness might create, in response to an insignificant object. That the object should, in reality, have proved to be a snail on the wall was beside the point, since the emphasis is on the richness of the sensibility that was provoked. That floating mental quality is described as a kind of surrendering to the speculations random and casual of human consciousness:

"I want to sink deeper and deeper, away from the surface, with its hard separate facts. To steady myself, let me catch hold of the first idea that passes ..." (102)

That was the life of the spirit, and her aversion to hard separate facts was a denial that the alien and external had any important value independent of that which mind conferred upon it. In this respect the gradual development in her writing was towards a metaphysics of impressions, for she had a deep philosophical concern with the nature of the individual as 'being' in relation to time and place. In Jacob's Room the character of Jacob resides largely in the agglomeration of impressions that his friends and acquaintances have of him, particularly after his death. Thus the novel ends:

Bonamy turned away from the window.

"What am I to do with these, Mr. Bonamy?"

She held out a pair of Jacob's old shoes.

It ends with the gesture of materialistic 'fact' - the pair of shoes held out - the poignancy of which lies in their total inadequacy to say anything about Jacob, when so much has been implied throughout already. In another sense the fact of Jacob's absence - implied also in the 'Room' of the title - is contrasted with the spiritual aspect of Jacob that survives in those impressions, so that character as a spiritual entity cannot conform to the traditional notion of time that has its finality in death. In Mrs. Dalloway this permanence of spirit is similarly endorsed by the way that the dead Septimus Smith seems to dominate Clarissa's thoughts at the party; and in To the Lighthouse where the dead Mrs. Ramsay very

vividly revives in the thoughts of Lily Briscoe:

Mrs. Ramsay - it was part of her perfect goodness to Lily - sat there quite simply, in the chair, flicked her needles to and fro, knitted her reddish-brown stockings, cast her shadow on the step. There she sat. (p.310)

Virginia Woolf's own diary notation for November 23rd, 1926, clearly expresses her desire to represent character in relation to this view of time, particularly as it might apply to To the Lighthouse, which she was at that time writing:

Yet I am now and then haunted by some semi-mystic very profound life of a woman, which shall all be told on one occasion; and time shall be utterly obliterated; future shall somehow blossom out of the past. One incident - say the fall of a flower - might contain it. My theory being that the actual event practically does not exist - nor time either. (103)

The difficulties of representing the life of the spirit, as here expressed, are obvious in relation to the form of the novel, and as problematical as philosophic argument on the nature of existence. Virginia Woolf recognised this; that 'practically' can in fact be interpreted as a concession, though grudgingly, to that more public notion of time and character attributed to the materialists. The whole extract admirably focuses on a conflict that is at the heart of so much of her work. Thus she is inclined to

concede the facts of time and character in the objective sense, though as having only a second-order reality to consciousness which strives for primacy over them.

For example, the chronological time in Mrs. Dalloway, the cyclical time in To the Lighthouse, and the historical time of the pageant in Between the Acts - all contrast with the time-consciousness of the main characters, just as, at another level, the characters themselves are aware of the tensions between physical ageing and the experience of a more immediate sense of time within themselves.

The complexity of this sense of 'being' or existence in relation to time is close to what she felt 'life' was at its most important, and understandably she would not propound a more definite prescription for its fictional usage, although she was quick to pounce on anyone who used the term as she felt irreverently, or as in E.M. Forster's case irrelevantly. P.N. Furbank in his biography of Forster provides the background to their disagreement. After the publication of his Aspects of the Novel, she carped at him for his use of the term 'life, to which she said:

... he brings the book of Meredith, Hardy or James for comparison. Always their failure is some failure in relation to life. It is the humane as opposed to the aesthetic view of fiction ...

But at this point the pertinacious pupil may demand: What is this 'life' that keeps on cropping up mysteriously and so complacently in books about fiction? Why is it absent in

a pattern and present in a tea party?
 Why is the pleasure that we get from
 the pattern in The Golden Bowl less
 valuable than the emotion which
 Trollope gives us when he describes a
 a lady drinking tea in a parsonage? (104)

Again, the strategy that she adopts here is similar to that used when criticising Joyce's Ulysses: she is defending her own position as a novelist devoted to the representation of life as personal identity, in a form, or 'pattern', best suited to her subject. And since her novels are close-knit studies of 'character' in time, the formal lines reflect the subject - are, in fact, manifestations of it, so that there could be no way of forcing a disjunction.

This preoccupation with 'life' is, moreover, a strong feature of the major characters in her novels. In Mrs. Dalloway, the dialectic between time and consciousness is represented by the way in which the main character attempts to bring her private feelings into harmony with the public world that impinges on them. Clarissa Dalloway wants to bring the external world of physical, chronological time within the consciousness of her own sense of existence, which, after all, is bound up with a sense of mission, in relation to her attitude to life:

the overwhelming incapacity, one's
 parents giving it into one's hands,
 this life, to be lived to the end
 ... (p.203).

That indefinable and mysterious sense of life together with the emphasis on the privacy of the individual is similarly felt by Mrs. Ramsay in To the Lighthouse:

Life: she thought but did not finish her thought. She took a look at life, for she had a clear sense of it there, something real, something private, which she shared neither with her children, nor with her husband but for the most part, oddly enough, she must admit that she felt this thing that she called life terrible, hostile and quick to pounce on you if you gave it a chance. (pp.95-96).

Now, this interpretation of life is interestingly conceived both as somehow inherent in the individual character at the same time that it can be felt as separate and threatening. It is often characterised as an experience of 'being' that can be, by turns, exhilarating and dangerous. The very private and intangible sense of life, as experienced by Mrs. Dalloway, is contrasted with the view held by other characters in that novel who have more definite summary views of life; in particular, there is Sir William Bradshaw, the psycho-analyst, who sees life in terms of proportion, and Doris Kilman who interprets life through the dogma of religion and historical materialism - both of these stand for the classifying approach to life in contrast to Clarissa Dalloway's experience of it as a shifting, dynamic force that is closely allied to her consciousness of it. It is significant that it is the psycho-analyst who precipitates

the suicide of Septimus by what Clarissa suspects as an attempt at "forcing his soul" (D, p. 203)

If the materialists may then be regarded as opposed to 'life' in Virginia Woolf's terms, then the classifiers within her novels, and they generally include scientific or academically-minded characters, also come into the category of 'anti-life' figures. One such pre-eminent figure is Mr. Ramsay in To the Lighthouse. His wife is conscious of the demands made upon her by this dominant personality, and Lily Briscoe, on Mrs. Ramsay's death, takes over the mantle of sensitive awareness and becomes even more conscious of his over-bearing egotism. Mr. Ramsay represents the materialist view of life, in his emphasis on the outward and demonstrable. Ironically, he is a philosopher whose study is "subject and object and the nature of reality"; although it is made clear that ^{is a} his/surface view of reality, as implied particularly in Lily Briscoe's reflections:

Whenever she "thought of his work" she always saw clearly before her a large kitchen table. It was Andrew's doing. She asked him what his father's books were about. "Subject and object and the nature of reality", Andrew had said. And when she said Heavens, she had no notion of what that meant. "Think of a kitchen table then, he told her, "when you're not there." (p.40)

In contrast to the spiritual nature of his wife, Mr. Ramsay maintains a finite attitude to existence - finite to the point of dogmatism, and the key word that Virginia

Woolf reserves for him is one that in her writings is usually associated with the materialists: 'facts'. When his sincere conviction that the weather will not permit their going to the lighthouse is challenged by Mrs. Ramsay:

The extraordinary irrationality of her remark, the folly of women's minds enraged him. He had ridden through the valley of death, been shattered and shivered; and now she flew in the face of facts, made his children hope what was utterly out of the question, in effect, told lies. (pp. 53-54)

Even his connection with the poem he chants, "The Charge of the Light Brigade", an example of jingoistic sentiment, contrasts sharply with a spirit that to the 'moderns' would have dealt more sensitively with the subject of war and death; for in that irreversible gallop, conveyed in the poem and in the novel associated with the character of Mr. Ramsay, there is implied a sense of order and values, a progressive notion of time ("Onward, onward) and a clan spirit that are contradicted by the homage to individual sensibilities, particularly to that of Mrs. Ramsay, which the novel celebrates. Moreover, there is the ironic analysis of Mr. Ramsay's mind:

It was a splendid mind. For if thought is like the keyboard of a piano, divided into so many notes, or like the alphabet

is ranged in twenty-six letters all in order, then his splendid mind had no sort of difficulty in running over those letters one by one, firmly and accurately, until it had reached, say, the letter Q. He reached Q. Very few people in the whole of England ever reach Q. (p.56)

But, of course, irony denies the premises on which this argument is based, since thought, in a meaningful sense, is neither like the keyboard or the alphabet - nor is it "ranged all in order", though on the basic level of the unimaginative that Mr. Ramsay and, to some extent, the academic Charles Tansley operate it can be said to do so. And then there is an awful finality in:

He reached Q. Very few people in the whole of England ever reach Q.

There, in that summary, is expressed a severe limitation on the materialists' conception of chronological time in contrast to the dynamic time-sense of the modern spirit, with its sense of a future, and hope - the faith in tomorrow that Mrs. Ramsay gives her children.

For Virginia Woolf, moreover, there was the possibility that such characters as Clarissa Dalloway and Mrs. Ramsay might serve to abolish time entirely.

9. TIME AND THE FLUX OF CONSCIOUSNESS.

Since it is a dynamic sense of time as experienced in the individual that helps to define reality for Virginia Woolf, it is important to note the various manifestations of time in her novels and the way time is related to her main characters. As with Joyce's A Portrait of the Artist As a Young Man, in which the consciousness of Stephen is an active state of receptivity, incorporating all other forms of time in a vivid present awareness, so, in Mrs. Dalloway, this form of subjective time is primarily related to Clarissa, and from her extends to some of the other characters, such as Peter Walsh and Septimus Smith, at the same time that it resides in the spirit of authorial control - an important and, as it were "unacknowledged prime mover" in the scheme of her novels. Such a technique in relating the flux of experience to the community seeks to establish Virginia Woolf's thesis that character 'spreads abroad' and cannot be absolutely defined. Clarissa Dalloway exemplifies this in that she:

would not say of Peter, would not
say of herself, I am this I am that (p.11)

At the heart of the novel, then, this kind of extended consciousness, linked by an association of like-minded characters, hints at the complementariness of human experience. Clarissa is said to have:

felt herself everywhere ... So that to
know her, or anyone, one must seek out
the people who completed them; even
the places. (p.168)

And in her vivid experience of the present she is able to identify with the dead Septimus, and then return to the social world of the party to bring the pressure of the present to bear on the past, and vice versa, not only in her consciousness but also in that of Peter Walsh, for whom she:

Still had the power, as she came across the room, to make the moon, which he detested, rise at Bourton on the terrace in the summer sky. (p.53)

In contrast to this sense of time, and in opposition to it, as it were, there is the manifestation of time in Mrs. Dalloway, in the guise of 'ageing' -- a destructive and progressive force that suggests death. Clarissa is aware of this sense of physical change, and its menacing presence is reflected throughout in the reference to clocks, and the chiming of Big Ben. Clarissa "feared time itself"; (p.34); the old lady at the window represents a kind of extential projection of Clarissa and is 'attached' to the sound of the clock striking; and the dead Septimus is also implicated in time, though in a defiant sort of way, as it seems to her:

The young man had killed himself;
but she did not pity him; with
the clock striking the hour, one, two,
three ... (p.204)

Considering such obvious time notations in Mrs. Dalloway, one can easily appreciate why Virginia Woolf originally

intended to give it the title The Hours, particularly since its chronological time structure followed the eighteen-hour day scheme, as Joyce's Ulysses had done. (105) Yet in view of the dominant position of the individual consciousness in her concept of life - the subjective force of time in contrast to the conventional - it is clear that the title "Mrs. Dalloway" celebrates the triumph of that character, since it is primarily Clarissa's consciousness that is pervasive. As David Daiches says:

Each character who makes contact with Mrs. Dalloway in space (crossing her path in London), in time (doing something at the same moment that she is), or in memory (the third dimension, as it were) has some symbolic relation if not to Mrs. Dalloway herself then to the main theme of the book, in the interpretation of which the life and the character of Mrs. Dalloway plays such an important part. (106)

Thus we have consciousness with its own order of time as it attempts to give unity to the flux of experience, in opposition to the limiting interpretations of such as Dr. Bradshaw and Doris Kilman who, in acquiescing in laws that are dogmatic and impersonal, are linked to a chronological notion of time. Clarissa Dalloway, like Mrs. Ramsay in To the Lighthouse, registers the perceptions and feelings of a commonplace existence, yet the very act of doing so serves to assert the spiritual and wide-ranging quality of human individuality, and by so doing to oppose, if but for a moment, that menacing aspect of time in its form of ageing and death. That is the 'fear' in the

quotation "Fear no more the heart o' the sun"; (p.22) and it is the submergence of that fear in the intensity of 'feeling' that is the ultimate triumph - even in Septimus's suicide, as Clarissa sees it:

She had thrown a shilling into the Serpentine, never anything more. But he had flung it away. They went on living (she would have to go back; the rooms were still crowded; people kept coming). They (all day she had been thinking of Bourton, of Peter, of Sally), they would grow old. A thing there was that mattered; a thing, wreathed about with chatter, defaced, obscured in her own life, let drop every day in corruption, lies, chatter. This he had preserved, Death was defiance. Death was an attempt to communicate, people feeling the impossibility of reaching the centre which, mystically, evaded them; closeness drew apart; rapture faded; one was alone. There was embrace in death. (p.202)

This extract helps to illustrate the various aspects of time that are represented throughout the novel: Clarissa's social obligations - "she would have to go back" - is an obligation to the clock world in which "they would all grow old"; it is the world that Septimus rejected "with the clock striking", and the attractiveness that Clarissa finds in Septimus' death is in this identification with him in the search for something outside time: "the thing that was that mattered" and "the centre which mystically evaded"

the living.- This awareness of death and intense personal experience as a combination is frequently in evidence not only in her novels but in this typical entry in her diary as she was working on Mrs. Dalloway:

Often now I have to control my excitement - as if I were pushing through a screen; or as if something beat fiercely close to me. What this portends I don't know. It is a general sense of the poetry of existence that overcomes me. Often it is connected with the sea and St. Ives. Going to 46 continues to excite. The sight of two coffins in the Underground luggage office I daresay constricts all my feelings. I have the sense of the flight of time; and this shores up all my emotions. (107)

This 'poetry of existence' is that other subjective dimension of time and it relates particularly to what she called (108) "moments of being"; for not only is there the suggestion that time as the flux of experience is an ever-changing medium for the personality, as Jeanne Schulkind says Virginia Woolf:

believed the individual identity to be always in flux, every moment changing its shape in response to the forces surrounding it. (109)

but also there is the possibility that the poetry of existence, as a moment of being might be a transcendent state to which even the flux of experience is ultimately subservient.

But before considering this aspect of intense individual time we can consider Virginia Woolf's treatment of external time in To the Lighthouse in relation to the flux of experience, for in this novel the representation of a less specific location, (say, in contrast to the precise names and places in Mrs. Dalloway) is set against the brooding presence of the sea. Moreover, the symbolic attachment of time to the lighthouse gives to the notion of personal identity the quality of myth. In effect, there is created a Wordsworthian feeling for the nature of existence in the context of a more cosmic notion of time - Time in fact. The domestic London day of Mrs. Dalloway is in To the Lighthouse superseded by a 'natural' day in which tides and weather play a vital part. Because of these, Mrs. Ramsay's hopes of going to the lighthouse are confounded, so that, as the main protagonist in the work, she exemplifies subjective time attempting to hold out against time in its natural and cyclical form, although in spirit, of course, and according to the laws of her personal experience, those hopes of gaining the lighthouse are realized ten years later. Again (as in Mrs. Dalloway) the main character in this novel, Mrs. Ramsay, exists as the central spirit of consciousness and extends through space and time through her influence on others. Like the Lighthouse with which she is identified;- "the long steady stroke, the last of the three, which was

her stroke" - she is a cohesive force; (p.100) for they both demand a communal focus. And in that capacity she is represented as locked in combat with that cosmic sense of time, which is granted so much power in the section "Time Passes". In a crucial sense the section Time Passes is heralded by a turbulent journey into the night:

So with the lamps all put out, the moon sunk, and a thin rain drumming on the roof a down-pouring of immense darkness began." (p.195)

In this section Virginia Woolf comments on the helplessness of man, as a physical entity, against the cyclical forces of nature - forces in contrast to which he exists only, as it were, in parenthesis:

(Mr. Ramsay stumbling along a passage stretched his arms out one dark morning, but, Mrs. Ramsay having died rather suddenly the night before, he stretched his arms out. They remained empty.)
(pp. 199-200)

In a similar fashion, after the death of Mrs. Ramsay, other members of the family are dismissed in asides: Prue Ramsay dies in childbirth, and Andrew dies "blown up in France" (p.207). Then, in earnest, that primeval form of time takes over the uninhabited house:

The house was left; the house was deserted, It was left like a shell on a sandhill to fill with dry salt grains

now that life had left it. The long night seemed to have set in; the trifling airs, nibbling, the clammy breaths, fumbling, seemed to have triumphed ... A thistle thrust itself between the tiles in the larder. The swallows nested in the drawing-room; the floor was strewn with straw; the plaster fell in shovelfuls; rafters were laid bare; rats carried off this and that to gnaw behind the wainscots. Tortoise-shell butterflies burst from the chrysalis and pattered their life out on the window-pane. Poppies sowed themselves among the dahlias; the lawn waved with long grass; giant artichokes towered among roses; a fringed carnation flowered among the cabbages; while the gentle tapping of a weed at the window had become, on winters' nights, a drumming from sturdy trees and thorned briars which made the whole room green in summer. (pp. 212-213)

The representation of time here, with its possessive luxuriance and arbitrariness, clearly contrasts with the sense of the life of consciousness that is otherwise prevalent throughout the work, and manages to convey the mythic proportions of the work. Here is the invasion of an impersonal time, the natural and cyclical time of the seasons, and life in terms of the flux of experience is notably absent. This representation of natural time as progressive is worth considering in relation to Eric Auerbach's analysis of the representation of time

in consciousness-another form of 'natural' time -
as he applies it to Virginia Woolf's work in particular:

... in a surprising fashion unknown to earlier periods, a sharp contrast results between the brief span of time occupied by the exterior event and the dreamlike wealth of a process of consciousness which traverses a whole subjective universe. These are the characteristic and distinctively new features of the technique: a chance occasion releasing processes of consciousness; a natural and even, if you will, a naturalistic rendering of these processes in their peculiar freedom, which is neither restrained by a purpose nor directed by a specific subject of thought; elaboration of the contrast between "exterior" and "interior" time. (110)

In an important sense the section Time Passes is an example of that form of "exterior" time, whereas consciousness as a flux in the novel exists in opposition to the threat of time in its physically destructive capacity. These, then, are the two pillars of Virginia Woolf's universe: the physical and the spiritual, and her novels are constructed on the basis of a dialectic between them.

10. MOMENTS OF BEING AND PATTERNS OF ETERNITY.

Since Virginia Woolf's preoccupation is with the representation of identity as consciousness in a present state of awareness, the manner of her attempt to give unity and coherence to that state which, in A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man is called the "riot of the mind", is a crucial comment on the relationship of the individual to time. Unlike Joyce's characters, however, who inhabit a larger and often unpredictable imaginative world, Virginia Woolf's Mrs. Dalloway and Mrs. Ramsay rarely extend beyond the domestic circle defined by characters and situations in the particular work. Even the authorial comment shares the same spirit of doubt or elation as the main characters and merges with them, as it were, in consciousness. Moreover, there is a sense of coherence given to the expression of individual thoughts by what might be called a meditative or religious tone which, in relation to such characters as Mrs. Dalloway and Mrs. Ramsay, reflects that focussing on intense feeling which is directed towards the abnegation of self. In one sense this tone might be interpreted as a desire for death. But death is clearly not the abnegation of self that her characters seek, since it would be a denial of consciousness. On the contrary, the real realization of a submergence of self is to be achieved in those special 'moments' which give both a sense of coherence to the flux of consciousness,

and a transcendent state of being to the individual, putting her, as it were, beyond time.

Leonard Woolf in his autobiography wrote of the peculiar need Virginia Woolf had for the survival of her novels, as in some way an expression of herself, (111) and perhaps the religious aura attached to these 'moments' gives some credence to his views, as it bodies forth in her writings her definition of 'life' as:

a luminous halo, a semi-transparent envelope surrounding us from the beginning of consciousness to the end. (1102)

The quality of the language here in its tone of reverence applies to consciousness in general, at the same time that it suggests a contact with the mysterious. Yet within this flux there is the moment of greater intensity, as it is described in Mrs. Dalloway, when Clarissa had:

a sudden revelation ... some astonishing significance ... for that moment, she had seen an illumination; a match burning in a crocus; an inner meaning almost expressed. (p.36)

Such a moment in Virginia Woolf is sacred, as is the moment when Clarissa makes the connection between the death of Septimus and her own life at the party; in To the Lighthouse it is the vision that Lily Briscoe has on the completion of her painting: a moment of synthesis. These moments are felt by her principal characters as a consequence of harmonising in themselves the world of connections and

associations that consciousness asserts. Joyce's 'epiphany', it will be remembered, is just such a moment; but in his novels it is generally reserved for the artist, as the "man of feeling"; moreover, his aesthetic theory gives support to the role of art in such an experience. For Virginia Woolf the moment, although being intensely individual, is yet granted the possibility of general application; there is no pronounced 'theory' as in Joyce. In fact, the sensibility of such as Clarissa and Mrs. Ramsay deliberately emphasises the more commonplace possibilities of the experience. There is, nevertheless, a close affinity between Joyce's 'epiphany' and Virginia Woolf's 'moment', for both put emphasis on a kind of harmony, and in that sense her characters function in their roles as organisers or unifiers similar to Joyce's 'artist'; and finally, as in Joyce, the role of her characters can be seen as reflecting the organising and controlling function of the novelist, Virginia Woolf herself, in her capacity as artist.

In this respect, the question of 'pattern' as the controlling scheme of the novel becomes important, for by that formal design she sought to reflect the 'moment' as a "pattern" of eternity.

In her 'method' we remember the injunction:

let us trace the pattern, however
disconnected and incoherent in appearance,
which each sight or incident scores upon
the consciousness. (113)

Continuity is suggested here in the notion of 'tracing'; but the object is to achieve a moment of synthesis and to deny the linear chronology that writing necessarily implies. This time sense of the consciousness can be illustrated by the following example in which Clarissa Dalloway sets out on her walk to the florist's:

For Heaven only knows why one loves it so, how one sees it so, making it up, building it around one, tumbling it, creating it every moment afresh ... In people's eyes, in the swing, tramp and trudge; in the bellow and the uproar; the carriages, motor cars, omnibuses, vans, sandwichmen shuffling and swinging; brass bands; barrel organs; in the triumph and the jingle and the strange high singing of some aeroplane overhead was what she loved; life; London; this moment of June. (p.6)

Here the unifying focus of consciousness seeks to trace the pattern of an atomistic representation of reality. The summary "moment" acts as a kind of overview of the variety of visual moments that the serial nature of language suggests, so that the pressure of external phenomena creates the effect as of a kind of simultaneity. The ability of consciousness to include so much in this kind of 'moment' is a statement about the possible timelessness of the moment. In two other important scenes in Mrs. Dalloway there are external patterns, such as the movements of the skywriting plane and those of the

VIP automobile, both of which provide a focus for a more general consciousness. In a sense these can be described as 'life patterns' which function in the novel as metaphorical tokens of what Clarissa deliberately attempts to achieve by bringing people together at her party:

she felt quite continuously a sense of their existence; and she felt what a waste; and she felt what a pity; and she felt if only they could be brought together, so she did it. (pp.134-135)

The party therefore assumes an importance in the novel as a 'unifier'; an occasion for what one of the characters, Peter Walsh, describes as "a moment, in which things came together" (p.167) And it is in this ability to bring people together - the hostess element in Clarissa Dalloway, in Mrs. Ramsay (and in Miss la Trobe in Between the Acts, who attempts to bring about a simultaneous experience of being at the Pageant) that reflects the overall concern of the novelist to create that sense of the 'moment' through the form of the novel itself.

The implications of such a moment of being are to be considered ultimately in a transcendental sense, and the view attributed to Clarissa by Peter Walsh in Mrs. Dalloway might as easily be attributed to Virginia Woolf, for:

It ended in a transcendental theory which, with her (Clarissa's) horror of death, allows her to believe, or say that she believed (for all her scepticism), that since our apparitions, the part of us which appears, are so momentary compared with the other, the unseen part of us which spreads wide, the unseen might survive, be recovered somehow attached to this person or that, or even haunting certain places, after death. (p.168)

Now this 'unseen' as consciousness is clearly that which matters, and in the novels, where patterns of eternity are sought, there is an attempt to achieve a communal sense of consciousness - as an expression of that which people have in common. This spiritual state is evoked at one time by certain fortuitous patterns or at another by the personality of some of the main characters in the novel. At the close of Mrs. Dalloway, Peter Walsh focuses on Clarissa:

It is Clarissa, he said.
For there she was. (p.213)

Here Virginia Woolf balances a sense of the moment with a more ambiguous impersonal comment that combines in "was" both terms of the verb 'to be' to suggest both the pattern complete, as fulfillment for Clarissa in the present, at the same time that it is completed or past. And this sense of the elusive momentary nature of the experience

is contained in the conclusion of To the Lighthouse when Lily Briscoe finally manages to achieve the harmony she sought in her painting, and in her relationship with the Ramsays:

she looked at her canvas; it was blurred. With a sudden intensity, as if she saw it clear for a second, she drew a line there, in the centre. It was done; it was finished. Yes, she thought, laying down her brush in extreme fatigue, I have had my vision. (p.320)

in
These patterns, then, bringing things together have been demonstrated either as deliberate attempts on the part of the protagonists of the novels, or as mere fortuitous events that demand a communal focus; but always they seek to draw the intractable material from situations into a sense of community and close relationship in time. Moreover, in the 'moment' the contradictory forces of change and permanence are delicately contained - a state of affairs that reflects Virginia Woolf's own feelings about life, as this extract from her diary reveals:

Now is life very solid or shifting?
I am haunted by the two contradictions.
This has gone on for ever; will last for ever; goes down to the bottom of the world - this moment I stand on. Also it is transitory, flying, diaphanous.
I shall pass like a cloud on the waves.
Perhaps it may be that though we change, one flying after another, so quick, so quick, yet we are somehow successive, and continuous (114)
- we human beings; and show the light through.

The sense of being human is an important assertion for her in response to the passing of time, for it promises a kind of permanence in human experience, which is a state of affairs that she, as a novelist, has created within her novels in a world where the things that matter can be regarded as sharing that 'moment' of simultaneity - the time-value that is a reflection of the artist's consciousness of her creation. The narrator-author thus, as participant in the novel, has the dual function of acknowledging the artistic independence of her character creations, ^{at} the same time as she strives to bring about a sense of harmony in her creation - a unity in, as it were, 'One being'. In an exhaustive study of character participation in To the Lighthouse Mitchell A. Leaska has demonstrated the very high percentage of comment granted to the 'omniscient narrator'; it is an involvement that blends unobtrusively with the consciousness of the characters themselves. ⁽¹¹⁵⁾ This kind of narrator-character relationship can be seen in her other novels as well and suggests that, up to a point, characters such as Clarissa Dalloway and Mrs. Ramsay become surrogates for the authorial spirit of the novels, both in their desire to maintain that precious sense of oneness achieved in the 'moment' at the same time that they need to bring others into the harmony of that experience.

With the benefit of hindsight it does seem inevitable that Virginia Woolf should have arrived in her last novel Between the Acts at the pessimistic conclusion

about the failure of art to articulate that experience of the moment, (although it has to be remembered that she did not live long enough to subject the novel to her usual extensive revision). The preoccupations with time and identity are there in a very overt way, as well as the attempt of the individual to create a sense of communal identity or 'being'. The chief individual is Miss la Trobe, a real 'artist' of the theatre and characteristically an outsider, who more than usually bears the responsibility of the novelist herself in creating a sense of oneness from the materials of art. In a quiet English hamlet, with a strong sense of history, the villagers prepare for their annual fete; in the background there are hints of war across the Channel, and this is contrasted with the failure of individuals to communicate at home. The artist, Miss La Trobe, with her sense of literary history, attempts by her Pageant to make the villagers 'see' themselves. During the performance the villagers enact parodic versions of the past in literary forms, and always the artist attempts to break through the fictional devices to get the audience to look at themselves meaningfully, if just for a moment. Another gloss on man in time is provided by the fact that the sensitive and ageing Mrs. Swithin is reading H.G. Wells Outline of History and tracing man's descent from his Darwinian forbears, while the modern tabloid reports a particularly brutal case of rape

in the language of sensationalism. Everywhere there is a gulf between feeling and the representation of it, and the artist to a large extent feels helpless in bridging it, although it seems that she is compelled to try. Only something like a natural and, as it were, gratuitous occurrence, such as the bellowing of a herd can manage to create the sense of unity that the artist needs to achieve a sense of identity in the present; and it is only later in the performance, as Miss La Trobe "wanted to expose them, as it were, to douche them, with present-time reality. But something was going wrong with the experiment." (p.209), that a shower of rain falls suddenly: "Nature once more had ~~take~~ her part" (p.211). Finally, as she attempts to get them to look at themselves in the mirrors -"All evaded or shaded themselves" until through a combination of disjointed music and a mirror held up before them: the audience saw themselves (p.216).

For a moment a communal sense of 'being' is achieved before people begin to interpret the experience, and the artist feels conscious that she has failed. Thus, as Miss La Trobe leaves, the local vicar quite accurately attempts to sum up the object of her Pageant, though clearly the point travestied is that the end of art is experience and not paraphrase; that art, somehow, may be irrelevant to man in his still primeval responses. That language fails to embody experience is suggested in

the powerful conclusion of the novel:

Isa let her sewing drop. The great hooded chairs had become enormous. And Giles too. And Isa too against the window. The window was all sky without colour. The house had lost its shelter. It was night before roads were made, or houses. It was the night that dwellers in caves had watched from some high place among rocks.

Then the curtain rose. They spoke. (p.256)

In this marvellous primitive landscape man is seen in his own time as essentially unchanged from the beginning of history, and the artist, Virginia Woolf, closes her novel, as a fiction, before character can betray itself in language. Thus the real experience, the moment of being, is, ultimately, silence.

11. CONCLUSION: LANGUAGE, READER AND TEXT.

Between the Acts concludes as the characters are apparently about to communicate, thus drawing attention by implication to the 'fictive' nature of the book, which in its preoccupation with language expresses the failure of art in bringing people meaningfully together, for such is the argument of the pageant; in Lord Jim and Heart of Darkness the fate of Jim and Kurtz is kept in the shadows and Marlow's moral dilemma unresolved; in Ulysses Molly Bloom's dreamy, rambling interior monologue ends in a magnificent affirmation of present experience. Time is brought up to date, as it were, in the reader's awareness of the text, complete only up to a particular point. In effect, the emphasis on the reading act as a self-conscious process, in that the reader is no longer to marvel at events that are at a distance from him, but to participate in a preternaturally close sense, helps, through the reality of the reading experience, to validate the serious claim that language makes to reality within the text itself.

A preoccupation with time as a private and intense experience had, as we have seen, implications for the shape of the work, in involving the reader. In particular, the emphasis on that privacy of individual feeling, as it is seen in the characters of Marlow, Mrs. Ramsay and Stephen Dedalus, for example, relates to the solitary and meditative nature of the reading experience, and an inevitable involvement with the identity of the character in the

particular work; for the question of what it is to be an individual is raised in differing ways by all three writers. For Conrad, through Marlow, individuality is at base a state of uncertainty, a failure to establish a moral identity; for Virginia Woolf, individuality is an activity, a natural state of 'being' that translates the matter of the external world into the spiritual language of feeling; for Joyce, individuality is the manifestation of the creative spirit, which is supremely the work of art itself. In these writers the relationship between the reality of the individual and the form of the language to embody that reality was crucial, therefore, and we have seen the various ways in which the text attempted to convey the illusion of a more direct transcription of the individual in relation to time.

There is, however, a sense in which the language (and by 'language' is meant the words arranged in the text) pictures, in a particularly vivid way, the epistemological concerns of the writer, until it becomes inevitably the object of that concern. This preoccupation with the status of the text as a self-conscious mimetic form can be traced from Conrad, whose moral concerns are highlighted in the distorted features of a popular and traditional genre; for although he quite naturally disliked being thought of as a writer of sea stories in the style of Marryat and Stevenson, yet the elements of action and adventure, as well

"as the glamour of exotic places, are much in evidence as a tribute to the simplicity of that particular genre. For Heart of Darkness and Lord Jim maintain a balance, in language and form, between the traditional and the modern, and this is well exemplified by the complex role of the narrator, Marlow, as compulsive 'talker'. In Virginia Woolf, however, the ~~all~~ focus in this respect is on her exclusive syntax-built structures, while in Joyce it is on that interweaving of a multiplicity of styles.

Now, whereas 'talking', as we have seen, is a strong feature in Conrad, in Virginia Woolf it is represented as a barrier, opposed, as it must be, to the continuity of the inner active process that she conceives of as the real life of the individual. In that sense, talking is finite, whereas the indirect free style that she employs is much more fluid in corresponding to the so-called 'stream of consciousness'. The application of a sense of duration to a conception of individuality, as expressed in her description of 'life' in "Modern Fiction", required a much more fundamental appraisal of language than had hitherto been employed in the novel, with the exception of some of her contemporaries. Physical representation had to give way to congeries of perceptions and feelings in the presentation of personal identity, and to that end syntax, in a new form, was required in order to simulate those random thought processes that constitute the individual

consciousness. That consciousness is represented by a linking of sentences according to a general principle of association, so that any external statement or action is generally brought into relief, as in the opening of To the Lighthouse, where Mrs. Ramsay's remark:

"Yes, of course, if it's fine
tomorrow ... "

is recalled over eighty pages later with: "Yes, you were right. It's going to be wet tomorrow." (p.191) Thus with a kind of surprise we are reminded of the sense of space, freedom and time that consciousness contains as opposed to the arbitrary and restricting force of definite statements. As a corollary to this, Virginia Woolf employs the continuous tenses to convey a sense of flowing through time as in the following, from To the Lighthouse:

But his son hated him. He hated him for coming up to them, for stopping and looking down on them; he hated him for interrupting them; he hated him for the exaltation and sublimity of his gestures; for the magnificence of his head; for his exactingness and egotism (for there he stood, commanding them to attend to him); but most of all he hated the twang and twitter of his father's emotion which, vibrating round them, disturbed the perfect simplicity and good sense of his relations with his mother. (p. 61).

and the defined character or situation is relegated to insignificance, as in the use of the parenthetical "for there he stood". Another feature of this malleable style is her employment of the conjunctions 'but' and 'for', which, as here, often lose their conjunctive force and are employed simply to maintain a sense of movement. They help her to suggest a process that has neither beginning nor ending.

The focus, therefore, is on language in a mimetic sense whereby variations in syntax can convey the 'feeling' of thought, so that the reader might get closer to an involvement in the actual process. Moreover, the reader's response is to a large extent conditioned by that energy of thought which is conveyed often by accented rhythms and unexpected sentence inversions, as in this typical extract from To the Lighthouse:

Foolishly, she had set them opposite each other. That could be remedied tomorrow. If it were fine, they should go for a picnic. Everything seemed possible. Everything seemed right. Just now (but this cannot last, she thought, dissociating herself from the moment while they were all talking about boots) just now she had reached security; she hovered like a hawk suspended; like a flag floated in an element of joy which filled every nerve of her body fully and sweetly, not/noisily, solemnly rather, for it arose, she thought, looking at them all eating there, from husband and children and friends; (p.162)

This 'reflection' of Mrs. Ramsay's continues for over another one hundred and fifty words until it is interrupted by her saying:

"Yes," she assured William Banks,
"there is plenty for everybody." (p.163)

when, after a further comment to Andrew, there is a similar movement forward in this kind of mental activity again. There is an important sense in which the dramatic features of this kind of prose distracts, as it were, from the actual meaning, converting as it does the apparently insignificant, even trivial, into the homogeneity of what Virginia Woolf wished to convey as the 'moment'. Thus, consciousness of this kind raises everything to the status of the "spiritual", and even the third person "she thought" is caught up and assimilated in the rhythmic movement as expressed here. The qualifying, alert, almost nervous quality of the language is a denial of rest and finality; hence the metaphor of the hawk is apposite, for "thought" is intended to "hover suspended". There is little chance that such a fluid application of language to represent a mental process could ever deal with the fixities and definites of the external world, as Conrad's Marlow attempts to; for whereas thinking in this sense, as a natural, instinctive expression of the human spirit, brings people together, reasoning, in its preoccupation with the kind of 'facts' typical of Mr Ramsay, sets them apart. There is a good example of this at the

close of To the Lighthouse, where Mr. Carmichael and Lily Briscoe reflect on the progress of the boat:

He stood by her on the edge of the lawn, swaying a little in his bulk, and said, shading his eyes with his hand: "They will have landed," and she felt that she had been right. They had not needed to speak. They had been thinking the same things and he had answered her without her asking him anything. (p.319)

Thinking as an inner process, an expression of truth, establishes, as here, its priority over the language of explicit meaning which would be limiting, external. That is why our acknowledgment of the pattern of language, as a possibly infinite and associative process in Virginia Woolf, is the controlling force behind her major characters in their capacity as 'unifiers', for it endorses the validity of what they attempt to do.

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In Ulysses, however, language as the 'stuff' of fiction is exposed in that very light, as Joyce tackles head on those two important critical issues that the writers in this thesis have been concerned with: firstly, the relationship of the writer to his work, and secondly, the relationship of that work to time and reality. In

Conrad and Virginia Woolf we have seen that the traditional omniscient author has been ousted by the kind of time-dominated narrative technique, which draws attention away from any preoccupation with narrative control. Moreover, certain syntactical devices have been employed, particularly by Virginia Woolf, in order to simulate the randomness of consciousness and thus to deny the unreality of language. But Joyce, as we know, was always interested in the role of the artist, so that language as artistic performance is an important element in his work, and particularly preeminent in Ulysses. Hence there is often a kind of double focus in his work, as in the Portrait where Stephen is both subject and object of the narrative. Language, for Joyce, reflects, as it were, the attention bestowed upon it by the user. It functions, therefore, as a particular interpretation, encapsulating human performance, just as in Ulysses the multiplicity of styles are so many "voices" (116) that we can hear and recognise as authentic "ritualised" uses of language. In the Portrait Stephen's retort to Cranly's taunting question on whether he fears the God of the Roman Catholics would strike him dead if he made a sacrilegious communion is revealing:

- The God of the Roman Catholics could do that now, Stephen said. I fear more than that the chemical action which would be set up in my soul by a false homage to a symbol behind which are massed twenty centuries of authority and veneration. (p.247)

How far the ritual approximates to 'reality', whatever that might be, is something else, perhaps irrelevant. The thing itself, for Joyce, is the best possible formulation of it in language, and in fiction it is supremely only what there is - once it has been brought to our attention. In Ulysses that is precisely what Joyce asserts.

Many commentators, however, have variously divided attention between the Bloom-Stephen plot and the language uses which threaten to submerge these characters. E.R. Steinberg is fairly typical in this approach. His observations on Molly's monologue in the Penelope episode are as follows:

She thinks a lot about the past and a little of tomorrow's meal and of a possible future as Stephen's mistress, but she seems to have little or no awareness of progression or change due to time. Unlike Stephen and Bloom, however, she is concerned with the immediate, for Boylan keeps appearing in her thoughts. (117)

Such a commentary is what we might feel necessary to satisfy our need to place Stephen and Bloom's relationship, or Molly's infidelity; but this information is sought behind what Hugh Kenner calls "screens of language",⁽¹¹⁸⁾ those language uses which do, after all, provide the reader with the most vivid experience of the work.

Steinberg does indeed turn his attention to analyse the rhetorical devices and concludes that, in the Scylla and Charybdis episode, a change comes about with:

a display of virtuosity that reminds us that the author, who seemed to have all but refined himself out of existence, is back there behind his characters after all. (119)

In truth, however, the manifestation of the artist has always been there, in the claim that language makes on our attention, whether in the comparatively unobtrusive style of the first half of the book - a style that Kenner describes as "co-operating with character" in rapidly flickering effects, much in the style of Dubliners, and which he sees as changing fundamentally at the Sirens episode when:

The language is what we now confront, as in Dubliners we had confronted the characters. A list of some fifty-eight linguistic fragments opens the episode. A thematic index? The skeleton of an overture? Not a narrative continuity, anyhow. And as the episode develops the language is doing very much what the characters had done; playing roles, striking postures, contorting itself into expressive patterns which offer to clarify what is going on and instead, like Gabriel Conroy's speech mislead: introducing dissonance into the ancient doctrine of stylistic decorum. (121)

In effect, Joyce makes us aware of a certain desire for autonomy in language, in its predilection for certain formations, once it is invested with the vivifying force of human attention, and the associative formation, as in Virginia Woolf, is simply one from the encyclopaedic range, in Joyce, that gives back an image of man, through the self-referential nature of language. The characteristic double reading of Ulysses, therefore, is that ^{by} which we see Bloom and Stephen wrestling with the language of their thoughts at the same time as they are being reduced to the constituents of which they are composed - those fictional shapes that language creates. In fact, the autobiographical and fictional sources that have been proposed for Ulysses, as a testament to Joyce's obsession with the reality of his own experiences, are certain proof that, if they ever did exist, they exist for us only through the language, in the same way that Dublin on the 16th June, 1904, will always be there, now, for the reader.

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