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Hawthorne's Ontological Models: Daguerreotype and Diorama

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HAWTHORNE'S ONTOLOGICAL MODELS: DAGUERRETYPE AND DIORAMA

by

John J. Dolis, Jr.

A Dissertation Submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School
of Loyola University of Chicago in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

January

1978

For my parents: John Joseph Dolis, Sr. and Anna Marie (Bonelle) Dolis

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VITA

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
DEDICATION	ii
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.	iii
VITA	iv
FOREWORD	vi
CHAPTER.	
I. DAGUERREOTYPE AND WORLD-VIEW: THE FRAME	1
II. EXPRESSIVE SPACE AND BEING-SITUATED: THE FIELD.	97
III. HAWTHORNE'S DIORAMIC GAZE: PERCEPTION	189
IV. HAWTHORNE'S ONTOLOGICAL ABODE: THE INTERIORITY OF BEING	291
SUMMARY.	382
SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY.	401

FOREWORD

Hawthorne's oeuvre is decisively modern. It arrives out of the future and speaks to us today. It is audacious.¹ In so far as it speaks against the unquestioned perceptual and metaphysical bias of the age, a bias immediately contingent upon the scientific-technological world-view which had exhaustively informed the most basic posture of Western civilization since the Renaissance, Hawthorne's work affectively articulates a counter-environment or "world" in opposition to the tradition from whence it obtains. Over and against the predominantly transparent "rationalism" of his day, and its divergent conspicuousness in both idealism and transcendentalism, Hawthorne's fiction discloses a revolutionary moment in its discovery of the world, a moment liberated from the scientific-technological objectification of Being in order to become apparent. Thus articulated, the world no longer constitutes the transparent reflection of a consciousness whose "content" is already determined ahead of itself, but rather becomes an indivisible part of the opaque and situated unitary structure, being-in-the-world. At the same time, Hawthorne's work performs an ontological reduction of Being, disclosing the bankruptcy of an intelligence which ignores its own affective basis or "ground" in pre-reflective understanding. In its most radical

¹Cf. David Michael Levin, "The Novelhood of the Novel: The Limits of Representation and the Modernist Discovery of Presence," Chicago Review, 48 (Spring 1977) : 87--"The modernist novel is a scandal. Not even the boldest of the old masters, excepting, perhaps Laurence Sterne (consider Tristram Shandy) and Nathaniel Hawthorne (consider 'Rappaccini's Daughter,' 'Dr. Heidegger's Experiment' and 'My Kinsman, Major Molineaux' [sic]), would have dared the audacities of our modernist writers."

manifestation, this reduction of Being in Hawthorne's oeuvre takes the form, "head" versus "heart." But how, specifically, does this articulation come about, and to what does it point?

Although it seems that Hawthorne never developed a systematic philosophy, his own comments in the notebooks, as well as the fiction itself, reveal a persistent concern with the complex tradition out of which the oeuvre arises. Like the present, Hawthorne's age was besieged by rapid technological advances whereby it became increasingly more difficult to situate one's "self" in the world. Eminently, as a man of his time, Hawthorne felt the necessity to transact the perceptual and ontological issues raised by the cultural milieu in which he lived. Thus, Hawthorne's fiction displays, throughout, a marked fascination with two predominant media which attained to their fullest development at this time: daguerreotype and diorama. In the following work I am suggesting that Hawthorne discovered in the daguerreotype and diorama two descriptive models which would accommodate the reciprocal postures "head" and "heart." Similarly, both models reflect a set of perceptual and ontological assumptions about the world which they portray. "Daguerrean" time and space, for example, are fixed and frozen. Here the percipient is without, looking upon a static moment and "perspective" space. He sets himself apart from and against the world in order to objectify its "content;" and to this extent, the world becomes a comprehensive picture or view. Hawthorne's villains, without exception, assume such an attitude. In effect, Hawthorne's scientists, reformers, and "intellectuals" in general seek not so much to dis-cover the world, but rather to verify their own presuppositions. "Dioramic" time and space,

on the other hand, are fluid, transpositional, metamorphic. Here the percipient is within or "situated," looking upon an unframed perception where both "subject" and "object" equiprimordially constitute the phenomenal structure, being-in-the-world. Thus, the dioramic point of view is always ambiguously incomplete, and constitutes an authentically open bearing toward the existent as a whole. Metaphysically speaking, Hawthorne's oeuvre implicitly translates both the daguerrean attitude of the "head" and the dioramic attitude of the "heart" into the realm of "subjectivity" as analogous models of logic. In Heideggerian terms, that mode of consciousness proper to the daguerrean model corresponds to the logic of calculating reason: Descartes' consciousness of the ego cogito. That mode of consciousness proper to the dioramic model corresponds to the world's inner space: Pascal's logic of the heart. In Hawthorne's work, an ontological conversion of consciousness ensues whenever the daguerrean manipulation and objectification of Being is turned toward the dioramic interior of the heart's inner space: such is the case with Roderick Elliston. For only when the "scientific" or self-assertive attitude (Hawthorne's "unpardonable sin") is turned toward the heart's interior does man appropriate the existent as a whole. The converted consciousness engages in "saying" without the self-imposing willing of desire--without calculating reason and its objectification of Being. It is to say Being; it is to be; it is to care. Thus, man accomplishes this conversion with language: witness Dimmesdale's final "revelation." In speaking the truth of his heart, Dimmesdale returns to the fullness of Being, the very fullness of the existent itself wherein Being is always situated--that is, Being-there (Da-sein). Conversely, the self-imposing

attitude characteristic of Hawthorne's villains never turns this conversion; it violates the human heart; it turns away from the heart; it makes of the heart an object; such is the case with Ethan Brand. To repose in this attitude is to stand apart from Being, to stand outside Being: witness Chillingworth, Hollingsworth, and Westervelt.

Furthermore, located within the tradition from whence this dichotomy between head and heart originates, its ground is discernible in nothing less than the subject-object dichotomy itself, a dichotomy which had informed the most elemental presuppositions concerning the nature of "reality" throughout the history of Western civilization as a whole. Thus, the subject-object dichotomy, and its "artistic" delineation in Hawthorne as head versus heart, points to an historical context which Hawthorne's oeuvre disrupts. Because Hawthorne's work implicitly sets out to destruct or de-construct the referential surface of the metaphysical world-picture which had so unequivocally articulated the subject-object dichotomy ever since the Renaissance, I have felt it necessary to explore the background of that tradition in some detail. Thus, the first two chapters of the present work investigate the uniquely Western and essentially philosophical tradition which Hawthorne's oeuvre affectively destroys. Similarly, the two complimentary chapters which conclude the present work specifically address the Hawthorne canon in terms of the aforementioned context. In other words, the dissertation generally takes the form of a structural "gestalt," wherein Chapters I and II constitute the "ground" or background, while Chapters III and IV constitute the "figure" itself, that is, Hawthorne's oeuvre. Hence, although Hawthorne rhetorically abhorred the lifeless abstractions of

philosophy as such, it is my sincere hope that the following discussion will disclose Hawthorne's work in a way which will make it appear to us again, for Hawthorne's work is out of the future and speaks to us today.

Finally, in so far as the present work essentially constitutes a phenomenological approach to Hawthorne's oeuvre, it assumes on the part of the reader at least a passing familiarity with certain contemporary thinkers--specifically, the basic writings of Martin Heidegger and Maurice Merleau-Ponty. The obvious limitations of time and space prohibit a more detailed philosophical explication of the terms herein employed other than what is explicitly set forth in the first two chapters. Unavoidably, that explication will be inordinate for some, and insufficient for others. Throughout, however, I ask the reader to bear in mind that whenever the terms "subject" and "object" are utilized, they refer to the single, unitary structure "being-in-the-world," which is never divisible ontologically and which signifies the primordial structure from whence the possibility of the subject-object dichotomy misunderstandingly originates in the first place. Otherwise, it is hoped the following schema will clarify some of the basic distinctions already taken for granted in the present work.² Whenever an inquiry is "ontological," its object is Being (Sein); its terms are designated as "existentials;" the status of occurrence is designated as "factual;" and the type of self-awareness which accompanies the inquiry is "existential." Reciprocally, whenever an inquiry is "ontic," its object is some Entity (Das Sciende); its terms are designated as "categories;" the status of

²Cf. Michael Gelven, A Commentary on Heidegger's "Being and Time," (New York: Harper and Row, A Harper Torchbook, 1970), pp. 19-24.

occurrence is designated as "factual;" and the type of self-awareness which accompanies the inquiry is "existentiell." In so far as the present investigation seeks to phenomenologically disclose the ontological ground of Hawthorne's oeuvre, it is always directed toward the "existential" self-awareness which the world of Hawthorne's work figures forth, the very self-awareness toward which the villains that populate Hawthorne's fictional world have already closed themselves off. To the extent that Hawthorne's villains treat Dasein as merely another object in objective space, they characteristically articulate the type of "ontical attitude" which Hawthorne's work brings to account. It is precisely this ontological bearing that grounds the world of Hawthorne's work and, at the same time, speaks to us today in its own significant voice, a voice which is both silent and alien because it is too near. The authentically reticent discourse of Hawthorne's oeuvre echoes the void between Being and nothingness, and re-soundingly calls us to care.

CHAPTER I

DAGUERREOTYPE AND WORLD-VIEW: THE FRAME

The eighteenth century explicitly articulated an attitude constitutive of the most elementary vector of Western civilization since the Renaissance. Cartesian metaphysics had already solidified this position when it defined the existent as objectivity of representation, and truth as certainty of representation;¹ as such, the existent is only in so far as it is set before us as an object, as something calculable. By defining the existent as that which is re-presented "objectively," man simultaneously sets himself up as the real and uniquely meaningful subject independent of a world in which he finds himself situated. He subsequently appropriates the meaning of the existent merely as a superfluous footnote to himself. He becomes, in fact, the center of the world, the center of the existent as a whole, the "measure" of all things. This process whereby man "sets up," "sets before," and "sets apart" at the same time discloses the most basic exercise of modern history: "the more completely and thoroughly the conquered world stands at our disposal, the more objective the object seems to be, the more subjectively--that is, the more prominently--does the subjectum rise up, and the more inevitably do contemplation and explanation of the world and doctrine about the world turn into a doctrine of man, into anthropology."² Only when man

¹Martin Heidegger, "The Age of the World View," trans. Marjorie Grene, Boundary 2 4 (Winter 1976) : 349.

²Ibid., pp. 352-53.

sets himself apart from the existent do the resultant subjective and objective postures mutually condition one another so that "reality" becomes a problem. Hence, in an attempt to solve this pseudo-problem, the dichotomy between subject and object, man, metaphysically cut off and isolated from the world qua world, consequently adopts an attitude or view towards the world whereby it exists only to the extent that it is determinate. Moreover, this prospect of the world, as an object of transcendental inquiry about which absolute knowledge is possible, represents an attitude peculiarly and voluntarily maintained by man himself. This anthropological analysis of the world, which attained exclusive prominence at the end of the eighteenth century, persists today more vigorously than ever before and is essentially characterized, thus, by having a "world-view" (Weltanschauung).

As the subject of a world-view--that is, as that existent who has an entirely determinate frame of reference and to whom no "objective" domain is inaccessible--man thereby constitutes the "norm" of truth, the absolute standard by which something is said to be certain or not. Man simultaneously gets himself "into the picture" as that cogitatio whose positing consciousness can re-present the whole picture to itself, a third person process determining every modality of the res extensa.³ By being in the frame of his own view, as another object in an object-world, man acquires a specific view of the world which in its most radical significance means simply a completed view of man. This implies that he is able to deal with the existent; he is equipped to negotiate it and, similarly, to determine it.

³Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Phenomenology of Perception, trans. Colin Smith (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1962), p. 80.

But in so far as man thus puts himself into the picture, he puts himself into the setting, that is, into the open horizon of the universally and openly represented. Therefore man posits himself as the setting, in which the existent must from now on represent itself, present itself, that is, be a view or picture. Man becomes the representative of the existent in the sense of the objective.

What is decisive is that man himself takes this viewpoint as produced by himself, maintains it voluntarily as that taken by himself, and as the basis of a possible development of humanity. Now, for the first time, there is such a thing as a viewpoint of man. Man takes on himself the manner in which he is to stand to the existent as the objective. That type of being-a-man begins which uses the sphere of human powers as the place for measuring and accomplishing the mastery of the existent as a whole. The age which is determined by this event is not only for retrospective reflection a new one as against the preceding one, but it asserts itself specifically as the new one. To be new is peculiar to the world which has become a view.⁴

Thus, by placing itself in the forefront of the frame as subjectum, second-order consciousness paradoxically encloses a world delinquently withheld from ambiguity, a world whose total space encompasses not only the view, but the viewer as well in so far as he transparently transfers himself back upon the very frame of reference itself. But to the extent that man maintains this over-view, he simultaneously over-looks the more primordial phenomenon of experience and focuses exclusively on the world as an "object" of experience. Indeed, "the existent holds as existent only in so far as and to the extent that it is drawn into and back to this life, that it is lived through or experienced and becomes experience."⁵ Because he thus entertains a view of life, man brings his own life into the picture as the norm, a posture universally susceptible to truth; he subsequently posits objectivity or "correctness" as the standard of truth itself. As a concept mutually agreed upon, the truth of the world becomes a representable fact. And as that existent which

⁴Heidegger, "World View," pp. 351-52. ⁵Ibid., p. 353.

goes about determining the content of this factuality, man "brings into play the unlimited power of calculation, planning, and cultivation of all things. Science as research is an indispensable form of this adjustment in the world, one of the paths on which the modern age races to the fulfillment of its nature with a velocity unknown to the participants."⁶

Like Descartes' meditating Ego, the impartial spectator (uninteressierter Zuschauer) of scientific observation makes no attempt to discover, or rediscover, an already given rationality, but establishes itself by an act of initiative which has no guarantee in Being, "its justification resting entirely on the effective power which it confers on us by taking our own history upon ourselves."⁷ The scientific method unquestioningly accepts perception as a kind of window which opens onto things, an act directed towards a truth-in-itself "in which the reason underlying all appearances is to be found."⁸ Tacitly implied in this assumption is the belief that the perspective of individual consciousnesses can ultimately be co-ordinated, removing all contradiction in so far as "what is now indeterminate for me could become determinate for a more complete knowledge, which is as it were realized in advance in the thing, or rather which is the thing itself."⁹ The scientific attitude thus schizophrenically deserts its ontological ground and ceases to recognize its "place" in its determinate view of the world. Repressively isolated not only from itself but also the world it seeks to frame, scientific consciousness, like the world-view, thus levels down all

⁶Ibid. ⁷Merleau-Ponty, Phenomenology, p. xx.

⁸Ibid., p. 54. ⁹Ibid.

experience: "in face of the constituting I, the empirical selves are objects."¹⁰ Moreover, because it frames a view of the world solely constituted by the res extensa, the history of science represents nothing less than a history of the thing perceived.

The ideality of the object, the objectification of the living body, the placing of spirit in an axiological dimension having no common measure with nature, such is the transparent philosophy arrived at by pushing further along the route of knowledge opened up by perception. It could be held that perception is an incipient science, science a methodical and complete perception, since science was merely following uncritically the ideal of knowledge set up by the perceived thing.¹¹

It is in this sense that Heidegger speaks of the "battle" of world-views taking place today. Because the basic process of modern times has come to mean the conquest of the world as picture, the world view now means the product of representational building: "In it man fights for the position in which he can be that existent which sets the standard for all existence and forms the directive for it."¹² Furthermore, this battle for supremacy rages "not between world views at random, but only between those which have already taken extreme basic positions of man with the last decisiveness."¹³ Even today, this opposition is chiefly characterized by the kind of attitude Kepler displayed toward Fludd when he was attacked for his strict adherence to scientific measurement and objectivity: Kepler replied, "Caudam ego teneo sed manu, tu caput amplectaris mente, modo ne somnians"--"You may embrace the head (of the universe) but you do so only in your mind, nay, in your dreams; I have

¹⁰Ibid., p. 56.

¹¹Ibid.

¹²Heidegger, "World View," p. 353.

¹³Ibid.

merely the tail, but that I hold in my hand."¹⁴ Unfortunately, neither thinker sought the "whole" on the hither side of this ingeminated distinction.

The traditional subject-object dichotomy continues to inform various contemporary world-views, although in physics the discovery of the quantum of action has initiated a general collapse of this foundation. The category "natural object" was, perhaps, the first to disappear; for its part, the organism no longer presents physico-chemical analysis "with the practical difficulties of a complex object, but with the theoretical difficulty of a meaningful being."¹⁵ As the Nobel Prize-winning physicist, W. Pauli, has remarked:

Though we now have natural sciences, we no longer have a total scientific picture of the world. Since the discovery of the quantum of action, physics has gradually been forced to relinquish its proud claim to be able to understand, in principle, the whole world. This very circumstance, however, as a correction of earlier one-sidedness, could contain the germ of progress toward a unified conception of the entire cosmos of which the natural sciences are only a part.¹⁶

Whatever may be eventually resolved from such a recognition, it remains true, even today, that science for the most part tenaciously adheres to its traditional view of the world, whereby the scientific concept fixes phenomena objectively. It orders the world by virtue of a rationalism which ignores the phenomenal experience of chaos, defining a theoretical state of bodies not subject to the action of any force, and

¹⁴Apologia adversus demonstrationem analyticam Roberti de Fluctibus, quoted in Erwin Panofsky, "Artist, Scientist, Genius: Notes on the 'Renaissance-Dammerung,'" in The Renaissance: Six Essays (New York: Harper and Row, Inc., Harper Torchbooks, 1962), pp. 181-82.

¹⁵Merleau-Ponty, Phenomenology, p. 56.

¹⁶"The Influence of Archetypal Ideas on the Scientific Theories of Kepler," quoted in Panofsky, The Renaissance, p. 182.

thus ipso facto defining force itself.

The notion of geometrical space, indifferent to its contents, that of pure movement which does not by itself affect the properties of the object, provided phenomena with a setting of inert existence in which each event could be related to physical conditions responsible for the changes occurring, and therefore contributed to this freezing of being which appeared to be the task of physics. In thus developing the concept of the thing, scientific knowledge was not aware that it was working on a presupposition.¹⁷

And though a few may recognize today that nature "is not in itself geometrical, and it appears so only to a careful observer who contents himself with macrocosmic data,"¹⁸ the scientific pre-supposition continues to structure the majority view which sees the world as the completed picture of its own conceptual frame. Yet, in order to explain the upsurge of reason "in a world not of its making and to prepare the substructure of living experience without which reason and liberty are emptied of their content and wither away," we must see rationalism itself" in a historical perspective which it set itself on principle to avoid."¹⁹

I

The Middle Ages had conceived of a picture as "a material, impenetrable surface on which figures and things are depicted."²⁰ Similarly, what it had called perspectiva was merely optics, that is, "an elaborate theory of vision which attempted to determine the structure of the natural visual image by mathematical means but did not attempt to teach the artist how to reproduce this image in a painting or

¹⁷Merleau-Ponty, Phenomenology, p. 54.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 56. ¹⁹Ibid., pp. 56-57.

²⁰Panofsky, The Renaissance, p. 124.

drawing."²¹ It was not until about 1420 that Filippo Brunelleschi defined the painting as "a plane cross section through the pencil of rays connecting the eye of the painter (and the beholder) with the object or objects seen,"²² so that by around 1435 Leone Battista Alberti was able to formulate the picture as a "pariete di vetro" or "an imaginary window-pane through which we look out into a section of space."²³ Because the Renaissance predicated its radically new approach to the visible world upon this neoteric definition of artistic construction and representation,²⁴ the world itself became uniformly spatial in so far as it could be geometrically articulated. Indeed, this revolutionary technique for graphic representation created the very possibility of an objective science; and it is fair to say that the subsequent development of all the sciences during the Renaissance was directly contingent upon it: perspective laid the foundation for advances in botany, palaeontology, physics, zoology, and both projective and analytical geometry.²⁵ But above all, this new pictorial or "artificial" perspective enabled the science of anatomy to explore the interior space of the human body with an objective precision hitherto impossible. Leonardo's Situs drawings, for example, not only co-relate perspective images with vertical and horizontal sections, but also demonstrate the internal organs in transparency;²⁶ and his "serial sections" represent "a concrete, surgical application of a method of geometrical projection developed by Piero della Francesca and later on adopted by Dürer: the plotting of a

²¹Ibid., pp. 131-32. ²²Ibid., p. 133. ²³Ibid., p. 124.

²⁴Ibid. ²⁵Ibid., pp. 140 and 133, respectively.

²⁶Ibid., p. 148.

series of cross-sections through the human body preparatory to exact perspective construction."²⁷ In this respect, Andreas Vesalius' De humani corporis fabrica (1543) marks the inception of a new era in anatomical investigation.²⁸ Science had securely commenced its transparent mission of seeing through the world.

At the same time that anatomy negotiated the transparency of the individual object, the human body and its parts, another science was breaking fresh ground on a reciprocal front. In the very same year that Vesalius published his Fabrica, Copernicus unequivocally formulated the new astronomy; by placing the earth in its "proper" perspective, he articulated the geometrically "correct" space of the world. And like anatomy, the external world demonstrated its own theory of proportions which would henceforth locate the res extensa within a transparent view uniformly ingressive to all by virtue of its mathematical constitution. To the degree that the world had become geometrically spatial, man had become an observer--the dis-interested spectator of his view. Once the Renaissance had introduced perspective into painting, the art work necessarily engaged man as a spectator through the instrumentality of its visual uniform space. Having ceased to participate in the world, man henceforth negotiates the existent in terms of its geometric continuity; for what, after all, constitutes scientific observation but an attitude which varies the point of view while keeping the object fixed?²⁹ The object, as such, represents an invariable structure

²⁷Ibid., pp. 153-55.

²⁸George Sarton, "The Quest for Truth: Scientific Progress During the Renaissance," in The Renaissance, p. 70.

²⁹Merleau-Ponty, Phenomenology, pp. 90-92.

existing in a theoretical space so that between the subjectum and the existent as a whole there abides a spatial continuum which, focused in the predetermined depth of an "objective" vanishing point, not only requires 20/20 vision for its epistemological certainty, but also constitutes a "psychological" inter-action. Indeed, once the existent becomes that upon which man "reflects" he has already separated himself from the existent as a whole. In this sense, the twentieth-century rhetoric of alienation is by no means indigenous to the century itself; its origin extends as far back as the Renaissance: witness Hamlet and Lear, or for that matter--Oedipus. Because our thinking is so irretrievably established in spatial perspective, we are always "subject" to being out of place; that is, alienated. Consequently, we even think of time as a function of perspective space, for who would care to qualify my previous statement that alienation extends as "far back" as the Renaissance? Pictorial perspective thus successfully transferred a transparent consciousness onto the world itself in so far as man now possessed the fiducial means of seeing through it. Confidently poised outside the world, the scientific vision macrographically guaranteed that man could, once and for all, get a view of the world, a picture of the whole thing. Even today, such an eminent scientific figure as the late George Sarton could say with a straight face:

Many people misunderstand science, and hence one can hardly expect them to have a fair idea of its history. The history of science might be defined as the history of the discovery of objective truth, of the gradual conquest of matter by the human mind; it describes the age-long and endless struggle for the freedom of thought

The history of science is one of the essential parts of the spiritual history of mankind; the other main parts are the history of art and the history of religion. It differs from these other parts in that the development of knowledge is the only development

which is truly cumulative and progressive. Hence, if we try to explain the progress of mankind, the history of science should be the very axis of our explanation.³⁰

Copernicus would have agreed; and it remained for Kepler to establish the new world picture, vis-a-vis advancing technological developments, with finality.

By virtue of its naive anopia, however, science simultaneously developed a tell-tale symptom characteristic of its historical motivation up to, and including, the present. At the very time when man was beginning to "conquer" nature, Copernicus ironically shoved him out of the center of the picture. The repercussions from this infantile trauma have haunted the scientific vision ever since; for a lurking doubt astigmatically disrupts the superficial correctness of this view, the doubt, be it ever so small, that the world might just be slightly larger than itself. Beneath its bravado-exterior there persistently dwells a cancerous anxiety, an anarthric apprehension that someday the world will fool it, just as it manipulatively "fools" with the world. And as its April-fool mentality nonchalantly manipulates the world and steals the object from a setting, it reciprocally fears that at any moment its cleptobiotic joke may back-fire. By framing its view, moreover, toward a transparent cross-section of theoretical space, science paradoxically negates the very over-view it claims to appropriate. Since science can only manipulate its objects within the conceptual frame of an ideal space, it de-limits its own capacity to see in terms of the very frame it requires in order to freeze being. Thus, to the extent that it sees through the opacity of things by virtue of

³⁰Sarton, The Renaissance, p. 55.

its frame, science, in effect, peeps at the world. It peeps at the world in order to catch it by surprise in the same way that it "listens" to the world in order to "over-hear" the secrets of the universe, its transparent design. Wordsworth's indictment of "One that would peep and botanize/Upon his mother's grave"³¹ perhaps expresses it best. By divorcing its objects, as well as itself, from the situation, from incarnate being, science simultaneously severs the thing from matter itself, and its "ideas" from the form of its own "body" (of knowledge). This is why science is always in the act of cutting off its own head; but in the process it goes blind, of course. In order to avoid this discomfort, it subsequently enlisted the aid of technology which courteously obliged to become its handmaiden, though in outward posture only. For ever since, technology has led it by the hand. Together, these two make a charming but dangerous couple.

Science manipulates things and gives up living in them. It makes its own limited models of things; operating upon these indices or variables to effect whatever transformations are permitted by their definition, it comes face to face with the real world only at rare intervals. Science is and always has been that admirably active, ingenious, and bold way of thinking whose fundamental bias is to treat everything as though it were an object-in-general--as though it meant nothing to us and yet was predestined for our own use.³²

In so far, then, as the new representational technique of perspective delineated the space of an "objective" world and created the basis for an "objective" science during the Renaissance, it subsequently fostered the metaphysical world-picture whereby the subjectum negotiates the world

³¹Wordsworth: Poetical Works, ed. Thomas Hutchinson, rev. ed. Ernest de Selincourt (London: Oxford University Press, 1966), p. 380.

³²Merleau-Ponty, The Primacy of Perception, ed. James M. Edie (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1964), p. 159.

from an un-situated, theoretical point of view; that is, outside of it. Once the world became transparent, it ceased to be that space where man comes up "against" things, and became, instead, the luminous reflection of consciousness. Yet, the metaphysical picture itself required its own articulation; and Descartes filled the bill.

Throughout the greater part of the sixteenth century, art and science had evolved together, but by the end of that century the "divine madness" of Neo-Platonism had inspired such art theorists as Raffaele Borghini, Gregorio Comanini, and Federico Zuccari to openly attack science, especially mathematics, as an enslavement of the spirit.³³ The fact that the world of science was "increasingly dominated by telescopic and microscopic instrumentation served to estrange it from the world of the artist;"³⁴ and via the Neo-Platonic gospel of supra-rationalism, art itself turned away from the imprisonment of all "rational" rules: "It was realized that the numerous planes which the Renaissance had projected onto one surface were, in fact, distinct and had to be separated again--according to principles which could become evident only once the projection had been performed."³⁵ Descartes' metaphysics unequivocally framed the completed picture of this separation between Neo-Platonic "subjectivity" and scientific "objectivity;" vis-a-vis the "cogito" and "res extensa," Descartes fixed the world in its proper perspective; that is, he saw it as a view. Taking his lead from mathematics, Descartes defined the existent in terms of that continuous and uniform space constituted by a reflecting

³³Panofsky, The Renaissance, p. 175.

³⁴Ibid., p. 178. ³⁵Ibid., p. 175.

subject; and from this geometrically transparent consciousness he concluded to the existence of God and of the world itself. To negotiate the world in this fashion subsequently became "rational;" so that even today we speak of having a "rational" perspective on the thing in the sense that we see it "correctly," in its objectively proper place with respect to a complete continuum or whole picture, detached from our own "subjective" bias, that is, outside of our "self." And once the world is thought outside us, it has already become conceptual--an observation. From its disinterested vantage point, rationalism refuted the situation in favor of an all-encompassing view of the spectacle of the world; but to the extent that it constitutes a view at all, it is all-encompassing not in the sense that it sees "around" any thing, but rather in the sense that it sees from a certain perspective--the rational or theoretically ubiquitous point of view. Rationalism represents the only perspective from which one can correctly observe the truth, for it fixes the object before it varies the point of view. Grounded in the single horizon of the object itself, rationalism holds the whole world before a gaze simultaneously everywhere and nowhere. Paradoxically, however, this ubiquitous vision always remains invisibly de-limited by the limitations of its frame; because it necessarily envisions its world outside itself, it exclusively appropriates a single horizon, a vanishing point which unambiguously adheres to its objects without exception. Like the Renaissance painting, it thereby sees through its invisible "windowpane" onto the world. It can only know the world, then, in so far as it sets itself apart from it by virtue of a theoretical frame; whatever cannot be framed cannot be known; that is, it does not really exist. To the degree that object and frame constitute center and margin, rationalism

merely comes into the possession of an equally determinate peripheral vision;³⁶ but this is nothing more than the distinction between object and subject expressly delineated via the perspective of the world-view itself.

In his effort to define certainty in terms of quantitative measurement or "correctness," Descartes thus ascribed the "reality" of the world to "rational" space alone. In effect, then, re-presentation (Vor-stellen) bestows an intelligibility upon the epistemological distinction between subject and object, and the pseudo-problem of "reality," by accommodating both the external and internal world in such a way that they make "sense."

The Lear landscape in Shakespeare offers a close counterpart to the Dürer illustration showing a perspective drawing being made through a transparent screen. The artist fixes himself in position, allowing neither himself or his model to move. He then proceeds to match dots on the picture plane with corresponding dots on the visual image, a rather bizarre anticipation of the head clamps of Daguerre. This is the kind of "single vision" that William Blake later deprecated as "single vision and Newton's sleep." It consists basically in a process of matching outer and inner representation. That which was faithfully represented or repeated has ever since been held to be the very criterion of rationality and reality.³⁷

Similarly, Descartes' severation between subject and object set in motion a subsequent explanation of both "entities" along historical lines which further isolated the one from the other,

We have become accustomed, through the influence of the Cartesian tradition, to jettison the subject: the reflective attitude simultaneously purifies the common notions of body and soul by defining the body as the sum of its parts with no interior, and the soul as a being wholly present to itself without distance. These definitions make matters perfectly clear both within and outside ourselves: we have the transparency of an object with no secret recesses, the transparency of a subject which is nothing but what it thinks it is. The object is an object through and through, and

³⁶Marshall McLuhan and Harley Parker, Through the Vanishing Point: Space in Poetry and Painting (New York: Harper and Row, Inc., 1968), p. 20.

³⁷Ibid., p. 16.

consciousness a consciousness through and through. There are two senses, and two only, of the word 'exist': one exists as a thing or else one exists as a consciousness.³⁸

For Newton the existent became known as correct or true to the extent that it was represented as a refractive condition of the eye; for Kant the existent became known as correct or true in so far as it was represented either as a determinate concept, that is, through the instrumentality of the a priori forms of the categories of the understanding, or as an indeterminate concept of an "aesthetic" object. Thus, both the "scientific" and "intellectual" attitude came to be predicated on the analogous operation of re-presentation. With respect to Newton's eye and Kant's mind's eye, the subjectum knows, in fact "experiences," the existent according to the perspective-view precisely because he is already positioned outside the existent itself.

Writing to Francis Bacon in 1620, Sir Henry Wotton told of a visit to Kepler, where he saw a "draft of a landscape on a piece of paper, methought masterly done;"³⁹ and to Wotton's surprise, Kepler remarked that he had made the picture from,

a little black tent . . . exactly close and dark, save at one hole, about an inch and a half in the diameter, to which he applies a long perspective trunk, with a convex glass fitted to the said hole, and the concave taken out at the other end . . . through which the visible radiations of all the objects without are introduced, falling upon a paper . . . and so he traceth them with his pen in their natural appearance.⁴⁰

Kepler's "little black tent" was, of course, a camera obscura; and it became his visible model for the human eye. Although Giambattista della

³⁸Merleau-Ponty, Phenomenology, p. 198.

³⁹The Life and Letters of Sir Henry Wotton, ed. Logan Pearsall Smith, 2 vols. (London: Oxford University Press, 1907), 2:205.

⁴⁰*Ibid.*, p. 206.

Porta had popularized it in the sixteenth century, the first published account appeared in Vitruvius' Architecture (1521). While others before Kepler had remarked its analogies to the human eye,⁴¹ Kepler was the first to fully demonstrate its resemblance to vision; and it remained for Scheiner to prove the hypothesis at his exhibition in Rome, 1625, where he "cut away the coats of the back parts of eyes of sheep and oxen, and, holding objects before them, saw the images of the objects clearly and distinctly inverted upon the naked retina."⁴² Descartes' geometrical vision was thus substantiated by these "pictures" painted on the eye, or so it seemed. Many thinkers of the period entertained the notion that in the structure of the eye could be found that intermediary term or missing link between the cogito and res extensa. Of course, this represented nothing more than a sophisticated rendition of the Cartesian pineal gland, for positing an intermediary in any single part of the body still pre-supposes unsituated Being. In his Essay Concerning Human Understanding (1690), Locke's dark-room analogy of the camera obscura extends this kind of thinking toward the epistemological problem, his famous "closet-simile" expresses it thus:

methinks, the Understanding is not much unlike a Closet wholly shut from light, with only some little opening left, to let in external visible Resemblances, or Ideas of things without; would the Pictures coming into such a dark Room but stay there, and lie so orderly as to be found upon occasion, it would very much resemble the Understanding of a Man, in reference to all Objects of sight, and the Ideas of them.⁴³

⁴¹Marjorie Hope Nicolson, Newton Demands the Muse (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1966), p. 78.

⁴²Ibid., p. 79.

⁴³John Locke, An Essay Concerning Human Understanding, ed. Peter H. Nidditch (London: Oxford University Press, 1975), p. 163.

As the link between subject and object, the camera obscura thoroughly conditioned both philosophical and scientific attitudes during the seventeenth century so that Plato's figure in the cave, vigilantly observing the shadows on the wall, became the dominant symbol of the age.

Newton's Opticks (1704) solidified the theoretical implications of the previous century, confirming scientific corroboration that the pictures of external objects are, indeed, "propogated by Motion along the Fibres of the Optick Nerves into the Brain," and constitute the very "cause of vision."⁴⁴

Light which comes from the several Points of the Object is so refracted by the transparent skins and humours of the Eye . . . as to converge and meet again in so many Points in the bottom of the Eye, and there to paint the Picture of the Object upon that skin . . . with which the bottom of the Eye is covered. For Anatomists, when they have taken off from the bottom of the Eye that outward and most thick Coat called the Dura Mater, can then see through the thinner Coats, the Pictures of Objects lively painted thereon.⁴⁵

Nevertheless, such questions as why we see in single vision, not double, and why we see color, shape, and magnitude remained ambiguous; for Newton's theory demonstrated how we "see," but failed to show us how we "perceive." This was a problem which had perplexed not only Newton, but also Descartes, Kepler, and Locke as well. Newton's answer was characteristically naive, and no more addressed the fundamental issue than Descartes' Dioptric. We perceive, said Newton, via the "Sensorium:" "Is not the Sensory of Animals that place to which the sensitive Substance is present, and into which the sensible Species of Things are carried through the Nerves and Brain, that there they may be perceived

⁴⁴Sir Isaac Newton, Opticks, based on 4th ed. London, 1730 (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1952), p. 15.

⁴⁵Ibid.

by their immediate presence to that Substance."⁴⁶ Yet, try as he might, Newton's "eye" could discern neither the situation of perception in the subject, nor "Light and its Effects upon the Frame of Nature;" but then, it did not have to: there remained that incorporeal, omnipresent Being "who in infinite Space, as it were in his Sensory, sees the things themselves intimately, and thoroughly perceives them, and comprehends them wholly by their immediate presence to himself."⁴⁷ It was not until the nineteenth century, however, that God's "sensorium" became the explicit vision of science: witness Mary Shelley's Frankenstein. At any rate, the great Newton's authority now stood behind that view of the world which envisioned man as the dis-interested spectator of a vast and comprehensive mathematical system or "picture," as Edwin Arthur Burtt put it,

whose regular motions according to mechanical principles constituted the world of nature. The gloriously romantic universe of Dante and Milton, that set no bounds to the imagination of man as it played over space and time, had now been swept away The world that people had thought themselves living in--a world rich with colour and sound, redolent with fragrance, filled with gladness, love and beauty, speaking everywhere of purposive harmony and creative ideals--was crowded now into minute corners in the brains of scattered organic beings. The really important world outside was a world hard, cold, colourless, silent, and dead; a world of quantity, a world of mathematically computable motions in mechanical regularity.⁴⁸

Or as Alfred North Whitehead similarly remarked, speaking of the seventeenth-century scientific world-view, whatever theory you chose "there is no light or colour as a fact in external nature. There is

⁴⁶Ibid., p. 370.

⁴⁷Ibid., pp. 405 and 370, respectively.

⁴⁸Metaphysical Foundations of Modern Physical Science, rev. ed. (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd., 1932), pp. 236-37.

merely motion of material:" thus, "Nature is a dull affair, soundless, scentless, colourless; merely the hurrying of material, endlessly, meaninglessly."⁴⁹ Such was the world of Descartes, Kepler, Locke, and Newton.

At the other extreme, a certain mental disposition, ideologically similar, had been simultaneously negotiating a theoretical world "out there," but from the opposite point of view. Rather than interrogate the res extensa as such, this reciprocal attitude emphasized the problematic character of the cogito itself; yet, the basic pre-supposition of a theoretical space framed by the perspective view continued to inform the subject-object disjunction. In his Discourse on Metaphysics (1686), Leibniz argued against the possibility of conceiving an irregular event since the mind is always able to construct or formalize a "regular" design for it:

let us suppose for example that some one jots down a quantity of points upon a sheet of paper helter skelter, as do those who exercise the ridiculous art of Geomancy; now I say that it is possible to find a geometrical line whose concept shall be uniform and constant, that is, in accordance with a central formula, and which line at the same time shall pass through all of those points, and in the same order in which the hand jotted them down. Moreover, if a continuous line be traced, which is now straight, now circular, and now of any other description, it is possible to find a mental equivalent, a formula or an equation common to all the points of this line by virtue of which formula the changes in the direction of the line must occur. There is no instance of a face whose contour does not form part of a geometric line and which can not be traced entire by a certain mathematical motion.⁵⁰

Like Descartes, Leibniz once again assigns a transparent consciousness

⁴⁹Science and the Modern World (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1925), pp. 76 and 77, respectively.

⁵⁰Gottfried Wilhelm Von Leibniz, "Discourse on Metaphysics," in The European Philosophers: from Descartes to Nietzsche, ed. Monroe C. Beardsley (New York: Random House, The Modern Library, 1960), pp. 254-55.

onto the world; by treating an event as though it were a geometrical form, Leibniz, in effect, conceives of temporality in terms of a perspective space whose uniform continuity accomodates the whole picture at once. Because the world is ultimately theoretical, we can always have a whole view of it via a lineal series of equations. In such a way, the mind is able to frame a regular or perspectived view, whereby everything assumes its proper place. Thus, time takes its place along-side the other objects in a world where everything is only in so far as it can be re-presented to us; and since it is essentially spatial, time becomes determined by the spatial perspective itself--that is, the succession of individual, isolated moments which regularly recede along a continuous line toward an objectively determinate "form." Again, Leibniz's account of the regularity contingent upon the fact of mathematical "motion" reminds us of the Dürer illustration, whose contour can be traced entirely by virtue of its representational correctness.

Hume fell into the same trap. His distinction between Memory and Imagination is literally "drawn" in terms of their respective representational ability to produce a lively "image" or picture (Hume sometimes uses the word "idea" for what we commonly mean by "image") to the mind's eye.

We find by experience, that when any impression has been present with the mind, it again makes its appearance there as an idea; and this it may do after two different ways: either when in its new appearance it retains a considerable degree of its first vivacity, and is somewhat intermediate betwixt an impression and an idea; or when it entirely loses that vivacity, and is a perfect idea. The faculty, by which we repeat our impressions in the first manner, is called the MEMORY, and the other the IMAGINATION. 'Tis evident at first sight, that the ideas of the memory are much more lively and strong than those of the imagination, and that the former faculty paints its objects in more distinct colours, than any

which are employ'd by the latter.⁵¹

The diction itself reveals the metaphorical frame of mind in which Hume conceives of these faculties; they are defined in terms of their respective ability to "paint" the object in more or less "distinct colours." But there is more to it than this: consistent with the painting metaphor, Hume attributes to the imagination, vis-a-vis its ability to grasp the object, a certain facility for positioning our "self." This perspective on our self, in relation to the imagination's perspective on its object, is both contingent upon time and space. The imagination always relates its object to the present time and place. The more remote the object in time or space, the more difficult is the task for the imagination, and the greater the pleasure we derive from its use. And though Hume admits "the consequences of a removal in space are much inferior to those of a removal in time,"⁵² he nevertheless conceives of the function of imagination primarily in spatial terms, for the removal in time is thought of as a distance between individual successive moments. In effect, then, the imagination positions man with respect to its object as a relation of perspective, that is, outside the existent itself.

'Tis obvious, that the imagination can never totally forget the points of space and time, in which we are existent; but receives such frequent advertisements of them from the passions and senses, that however it may turn its attention to foreign and remote objects, it is necessitated every moment to reflect on the present. 'Tis also remarkable, that in the conception of those objects, which we regard as real and existent, we take them in their proper order and situation, and never leap from one object to another, which is distant from it, without running over, at least in a cursory manner, all those objects, which are interpos'd betwixt them.

⁵¹"A Treatise of Human Nature," in David Hume: The Philosophical Works, ed. Thomas Hill Green and Thomas Hodge Grose, 4 vols. (Darmstadt, Germany: Scientia Verlag Aalen, 1964), 1:317-18.

⁵²Ibid., 2:206.

When we reflect, therefore, on any object distant from ourselves, we are oblig'd not only to reach it at first by passing thro' all the intermediate space betwixt ourselves and the object, but also to renew our progress every moment; being every moment recall'd to the consideration of ourselves and our present situation.⁵³

The specific discussion of the effect of spatial distance further indicates that for Hume the imagination re-presents its objects as a function of perspective:

'tis evident that the mere view and contemplation of any greatness, whether successive or extended, enlarges the soul, and gives it a sensible delight and pleasure. A wide plain, the ocean, eternity, a succession of several ages; all these are entertaining objects, and excel every thing, however beautiful, which accompanies not its beauty with a suitable greatness. Now when any very distant object is presented to the imagination, we naturally reflect on the interpos'd distance, and by that means, conceiving something great and magnificent, receive the usual satisfaction. But as the fancy passes easily from one idea to another related to it, and transports to the second all the passions excited by the first, the admiration, which is directed to the distance, naturally diffuses itself over the distant object.⁵⁴

Because Hume, like all the others, pre-supposes that the world is objectively spatial, he can never get around the subject-object dilemma; the world is known only to the extent that we can re-present it as a picture or view outside the "self" or cogito.

Even Kant's "copernican revolution" was not sufficiently liberated from this kind of thinking to free the object from its theoretical manipulation, for Kant equally frames the world by making it immanent in the subject, as Husserl observed. His distinction between the empirical "reproductive" Imagination and the transcendental "productive" Imagination remains tied to the object as that concerning which we form or "frame" an image. By extending Hume's theory of imagination from the empirical realm to the transcendental, Kant defined the imagination as

⁵³Ibid., pp. 205-06. ⁵⁴Ibid., pp. 209-210.

that faculty which not only makes "sense" of the object immediately in our presence and enables us to re-present an image of the object to our mind when the object itself is absent, but also determines the form of our sensations a priori. Imaginative activity is one of "apprehension," that is, it mediates between sensation and intellection. It consequently contributes to our awareness of the world via its representational power in so far as it forms images. Because of its aesthetic significance, however, we sometimes tend to forget the proposed function of the Third Critique; yet, Kant's primary purpose in the Critique of Judgment (1790) was to link up Understanding to Reason by way of Judgment, specifically the "reflective judgment," which from a particular "given" appropriates a universal. In ordinary perception, the imagination informs our sense data and presents it to the understanding as a concept; and this conceptualization, as the form of an object, for example, provides the very possibility of representation in so far as it is constituted by "regularity." As Kant saw it, "The regularity which leads to the concept of an object is indeed the indispensable condition (conditio sine qua non) for grasping the object in a single representation and determining the manifold in its form."⁵⁵ Thus, Kant's epistemological revolution continues to negotiate the object in spatial terms, for we come to know the object in so far as it always presents itself to us in the same conceptual "position." In seeking to find a universal pattern or "form" from a particular "given," the aesthetic judgment, as a specific kind of reflective judgment, employs the transcendental concept of the "purposiveness of nature." This, of course, does not mean that

⁵⁵Critique of Judgment, trans. J. H. Bernard (New York: Hafner Publishing Co., 1968), p. 79.

nature itself has a purpose or end, but rather that we assume some kind of universal pattern in things prior to our seeking such a pattern.

"The purposiveness of nature is therefore a particular concept, a priori, which has its origin solely in the reflective judgment."⁵⁶ As such, it is entirely subjective, and attributes nothing to the object whatsoever.

This transcendental concept of a purposiveness of nature is neither a natural concept nor a concept of freedom, because it ascribes nothing to the object (of nature), but only represents the peculiar way in which we must proceed in reflection upon the objects in nature in reference to a thoroughly connected experience, and is consequently a subjective principle (maxim) of the judgment.⁵⁷

When the aesthetic judgment perceives this form in an object, and does so with a contiguous pleasure derived from the harmonious inter-relation between the understanding and the imagination, the object is said to be "beautiful." The transcendental concept of the purposiveness of nature leads us then, as a subjective principle, to perceive the "purpose" in the object itself--its form as an end internal to that object, and not as a concept for the understanding. Yet, what is the specific relation between imagination and the aesthetic judgment? How does the role of the imagination as a function of aesthetic judgment differ from its role as that representational faculty which presents images of the objects of sensation to the understanding under a determinate concept?

When the imagination frames an image for the understanding, in our ordinary perception of the world, it brings that object before the understanding precisely as a determinate concept; whereas, when the imagination frames an image for the understanding, in our perception of an object as "aesthetic," the understanding confirms its concept of the object as indeterminate. In the aesthetic judgment, the imagination is

⁵⁶Ibid., p. 17. ⁵⁷Ibid., p. 20.

not contingent upon the laws of association; it is free to focus on the visible form itself, independent of a concept. Indeed, the imagination is liberated of any prior concept whatsoever, and subsequently able to create its own. Thus, between the imagination and the understanding there is a subjective agreement only, and not an "objective" agreement as there would be with a determinate concept. In its freedom, then, the imagination is productive and spontaneous; and this is what constitutes its role in the aesthetic judgment. It is the cause of the pleasure derived from an aesthetic judgment at all times, regardless of whether or not that judgment is of the beautiful or the sublime. "Now, if in the judgment of taste the imagination must be considered in its freedom, it is in the first place not regarded as reproductive, as it is subject to the laws of association, but as productive and spontaneous (as the author of arbitrary forms of possible intuition)."⁵⁸ For Kant, then, the imagination is always distinguished as that faculty which "frames" images; and is further distinguished in the aesthetic judgment as that faculty which freely frames its images, "the author of arbitrary forms of possible intuition," independent of the determinate concepts of understanding. Furthermore, Kant explains the distinction between the "beautiful" and the "sublime" specifically in terms of the imagination's ability to frame the image. The beautiful is constituted or determined by that freely framed image of the imagination brought to bear upon the understanding as an indeterminate concept, and yet harmonious with it; whereas, the sublime is determined by an object presented to reason as an indeterminate idea, and, as such, the imagination is incapable of

⁵⁸Ibid., p. 77.

framing an image at all. The object suggests an idea of which no image can be formed; the image-making facility of imagination has before it the form of some object beyond which no further images are able to be produced; the object suggests certain indeterminate ideas for which no visible form can be created. In this respect, the sublime does not properly belong to nature at all, but constitutes a "pure" state of mind:

the sublime in nature is improperly so called and that, properly speaking, the word should only be applied to a state of mind, or rather to its foundation in human nature. The apprehension of an otherwise formless and unpurposeful object gives merely the occasion through which we become conscious of such a state; the object is thus employed as subjectively purposeful, but is not judged as such in itself and on account of its form (it is, as it were, a species finalis accepta, non data).⁵⁹

Generally speaking, then, the empirical imagination is determined by the "form" of sensation; on the other hand, the transcendental imagination creates or constructs its own forms, it determines the form of sense a priori. Yet, for Kant, the imagination always mediates between sensation and intellection according to its "formal" power; and to the extent that the imagination must always "frame" its images, it puts them in "perspective" in so far as it sets them before us within a single, uniform, and theoretical space.⁶⁰

Consciousness thus duplicates an absolute thought of the world;⁶¹ by de-limiting its objects, the only obstacle it encounters is chaos, which is clearly nothing at all.⁶² Because consciousness constitutes

⁵⁹Ibid., p. 121.

⁶⁰For a much more detailed discussion of how Imagination "frames" its objects, see Mary Warnock, Imagination (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976), pp. 41-66, to whom I am greatly indebted for the above interpretation of Kant.

⁶¹Merleau-Ponty, Phenomenology, p. xvii. ⁶²Ibid., pp. 27-28.

everything, eternally possessing the intelligible structure of all its objects, it never changes its structure with respect to the various objects it appropriates;⁶³ it merely de-lineates an entire pre-existing world--a single and constant exterior horizon. As with the scientific perception, idealism restricts the freedom of its vision through an artificial scope which, like the microscope and telescope, explains the world according to an analytic of "true" and "correct" data. "The precise and entirely determinate world is still posited in the first place, no longer perhaps as the cause of our perceptions, but as their immanent end. If the world is to be possible, it must be implied in the first adumbration of consciousness, as the transcendental deduction so forcibly brings out."⁶⁴ If science maintained absolute faith in the "object," representing a total picture of the world in terms of its temporal-spatial constitution, it simultaneously treated consciousness as the absolute transparency of the world. Idealism, on the other hand, represents the co-relative view, whereby the "subject" constitutes the absolute "idea" of a determinate world in so far as he comes into the possession of a completed system of "true" thoughts, "capable of co-ordinating all phenomena, a flat projection which clarifies all perspectives, a pure object upon which all subjective views open."⁶⁵ Because it is thus "familiar" with absolute being, consciousness snatches the on-ship from science in so far as it no longer needs to "observe" the world at all; by challenging the "illusion" as the illusion of illusions, consciousness proclaims that it can only see what is.⁶⁶ It is in this sense that Heidegger defines the world-view as a view of life, whereby

⁶³Ibid., p. 28. ⁶⁴Ibid., p. 31. ⁶⁵Ibid., p. 40. ⁶⁶Ibid., p. 41.

the existent holds as existent only to the extent that it is lived through or experienced; for, once the structure of consciousness is considered absolute, the view itself can never be distinct from an "experience" of the world, although, paradoxically, the view is always of a world "out there" which can only be lived conceptually.

Hence a philosophy with two guises, and observable in any doctrine of the understanding: a leap is taken from a naturalistic view, which expresses our de facto condition, to a transcendental sphere in which all bondage is theoretically removed, and we never have to wonder how the same subject comes to be a part of the world and at the same time its principle because the thing constituted exists only for the constituting agent. In fact, the image of a constituted world where, with my body, I should be only one object among others, and the idea of an absolute constituting consciousness are only apparently antithetical; they are a dual expression of a universe perfectly explicit in itself.⁶⁷

In principle, then, there is no essential difference between Newton's "eye" and Kant's "mind's eye:" in so far as the refractive condition of the eye enables the object to form an image or picture on the retina, it locates the object outside of us in a theoretical space; and in so far as the "formal" faculty of the imagination always mediates between sensation and intellection, it too locates the object outside of us in the conceptual space of the subjective analytic. Kant's imagination could no more accommodate the subject-object dichotomy than Newton's eye; for once Descartes had severed subject from object, the world was "real" only to the extent that it could be set before us. And as the product of that separation, epistemology subsequently became grounded in "de-lineation" vis-a-vis an abstract uni-form space. To the degree that man could frame an image of the world, that is, discern it as a view or picture, he could know it. And via this perspective on the world, the

⁶⁷Ibid.

existent is thus determined by its re-presentation in the subject.

World view, properly understood, therefore means, not a view of the world, but the world understood as a view. The existent as a whole is now so understood that it is existent when and only when and in the degree to which it is held at bay by the person who represents and establishes it. Where a world view arises, an essential decision takes place about the existent as a whole. The being of the existent is sought and found in the representational character of the existent.⁶⁸

II

For the eighteenth century, the world tarried as one anxious landscape, reticently waiting to be painted; indeed, the primary drift of eighteenth-century thought was "dedicated to the proposition that the outer world existed to end in a picture."⁶⁹ Through such writers as de Chambray, de Piles, and du Fresnoy, the first half of the eighteenth century appropriated its basically Italianate aesthetic, specifically its theory of painting which stressed "design" in the sense that William Aglionby's Painting Illustrated in Three Diallogues (1686) defined it: "Design is the Expressing with a Pen, or Pencil, or other Instrument, the Likeness of any Object by its out Lines, or Contours."⁷⁰ In this context, du Fresnoy's De Arte Graphica (1668) had already taken Michelangelo to task for presuming "Liberties against the Rules of Perspective."⁷¹ And though Michelangelo's reputation steadily gained favor in the second half of the eighteenth century so that Sir Joshua Reynolds, in his Discourses on Art (1769-90), could say of

⁶⁸Heidegger, "World View," p. 350.

⁶⁹McLuhan, Vanishing Point, p. 121.

⁷⁰quoted in Samuel Monk, The Sublime (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1960), p. 172.

⁷¹quoted in Monk, p. 173.

him that he was the "Founder and Father of modern Art," carrying it to the "highest point of possible perfection,"⁷² the posture of art criticism pertinaciously upheld representation as the most elemental criterion of truth. Only now, in conjunction with a parallel development in the concept of the "sublime,"⁷³ the painter is apprised to represent the "general" truth of nature rather than its specific detail: "To distinguish between correctness of drawing, and that part which respects the imagination, we may say the one approaches to the mechanical (which in its way too may make just pretensions to genius) and the other to the poetical."⁷⁴ Reynolds' distinction not only points backward to Newton (the "mechanical") and forward to Kant (the "poetical"), but also accomodates the successive gamut of eighteenth-century aesthetics. Yet, beneath this apparent theoretical opposition a radical pre-supposition informs the entire aesthetic continuum; whether the artist negotiates the "truth" of nature in terms of its specific or general detail, the art work always constitutes an imitation in so far as it is expected to represent the world.

In Newton, painters and poets of the first half of the eighteenth century discovered a world more objectively certain than that offered by Descartes:

Descartes thus, great Nature's wandering guide,
Fallacious led philosophy aside,
'Till Newton rose, in orient beauty bright,
He rose, and brought the world's dark laws to light,

⁷²Sir Joshua Reynolds, Discourses on Art (New York: Collier Books, 1966), p. 239.

⁷³For an extensive treatment of the historical development of this concept, see Monk, The Sublime.

⁷⁴Reynolds, p. 239.

Then subtle matter saw, and vanished at his sight.⁷⁵
 Newtonian light promised an absolute familiarity with the world in so far as the perfect symmetry of geometrical vision could guarantee "this outward Frame of Things/ Is what it seems;"⁷⁶ and it accomplished this to the extent that the optic nerve supplied the means of framing an image which resembles the object. In his Universal Beauty, Henry Brooke expressed the infallibility of this divine organ:

So temper'd wondrous by mechanic scheme,
 The Sovereign Geometrician knits the frame;
 In mode of organizing texture wrought,
 And quick with spirited quintessence fraught:
 When objects on the exterior membrane press,
 The alarm runs inmost through each dark recess,
 Impulsive strikes the corresponding springs,
 And moves th' accord of sympathetic strings.⁷⁷

But if the geometry of vision, "Where truth's eternal measures mark the bound/ Of circle, cube or sphere."⁷⁸ guaranteed the world, it simultaneously introduced metaphysical speculation concerning its origin:

But can corporeal forms, with so much ease,
 Meet in their flight a thousand images,
 And yet no conflict, no collisive force,
 Break their thin texture, and disturb their course?
 What fix'd their parts, and made them so cohere,
 That they the picture of the object wear?
 What is the shape, that from a body flies?
 What moves, what propogates, what multiplies
 And paints one image in a thousand eyes?
 When to the eye the crowding figures pass,
 How in a point can all possess a place,

⁷⁵Richard Oakley, "Will with a Wisp," in The Works of the English Poets: From Chaucer to Cowper, ed. Samuel Johnson and Alexander Chalmers, 21 vols. (London: J. Johnson et. al., 1810), 16:258. Chalmers mistakenly attributes this poem to Francis Fawkes.

⁷⁶Richard Jago, Edge-Hill (London: J. Dodsley, 1767), p. 83.

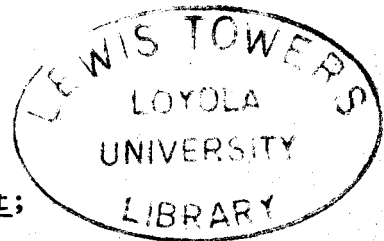
⁷⁷Works of the English Poets, 17:351.

⁷⁸Mark Akenside, The Pleasures of Imagination (London: R. Dodsley, 1744), p. 34.

And lye distinguish'd in such narrow space?⁷⁹

Here, as throughout his entire poem the Creation, Blackmore, like Brooke, reasons for design in the universe as a final proof of the Great Anatomist, generally opposing Epicureanism and the modern atomists of his own century who argued for chance: "Not thus he gave our optic's vital glance,/ Amid omniscient art, to search for chance,/ Blind to the charms of Nature's beauteous frame."⁸⁰ Similarly, Edward Young's Night Thoughts insisted on design, going so far as to attribute a certain "divinity" to man's senses as well as his reason:

Our senses, as our reason, are divine.
 But for the magic organ's powerful charm,
 Earth were a rude, uncolour'd chaos, still.
 Objects are but th' occasion; ours th' exploit;
 Ours is the cloth, the pencil, and the paint,
 Which nature's admirable picture draws;
 And beautifies creation's ample dome.⁸¹



Newton had earlier made the same concession with his analogy between the human and divine "sensorium;" and like Newton's optic world, the world of Young's Night Thoughts is void of color--there is nothing but light.

"Into the camera obscura of perpetual night Young retired in order that Reason, the godlike faculty of man, might see light pure, not discolored, refracted, and inflected."⁸² It was, indeed, the kind of world which the telescope had discovered on the moon.⁸³

Although Newton's "eye" apparently bridged the gap between internal and external worlds in so far as it "correctly" re-presented the object

⁷⁹Richard Blackmore, Creation, in Works of the English Poets, 10:376.

⁸⁰Brooke, Universal Beauty, in Works of the English Poets, 17:357.

⁸¹Works of the English Poets, 13:450.

⁸²Nicolson, p. 150. ⁸³Ibid.

to us, it simultaneously failed to appropriate the "truth" of the world; for the truth of an objective world necessarily exists beyond the naked eye, just as the truths of science can never ultimately be "seen". By definition, the very concept of an objective world outside our "self" reciprocally carries with it the implicit assumption that its truths are "noumenal," that is, beyond phenomena. As with the conceptual space of pictorial perspective, the world of Descartes, Locke, and Newton is primordially invisible; Kant merely articulated the other side of the coin. Yet, science could not concede the impossibility of knowing the world absolutely, and stubbornly maintained that its superficial investigation of phenomena could and would lead it to a final noumenal vision. For the eighteenth century, technological advances in telescopic and microscopic instrumentation encouraged this fiction not only among scientific cotereries but in the heart of the poets as well. Fanatically different from Arnold's narrator in "Dover Beach," Savage's "wanderer" turns his thoughts to telescopic lenses and similar Newtonian paraphernalia as he stands on the cliff over-looking the sea:

There lies obscur'd the ripening diamond's ray,
 And thence red-branching coral's rent away.
 In conic form there gelid crystal grows;
 Thro' such the palace-lamp, gay lustre throws!
 Lustre, which, through dim night, as various plays,
 As play from yonder snows the changeful rays!
 For nobler use the crystal's worth may rise,
 If tubes perspective hem the spotless prize;
 Thro' these the beams of the far-lengthen'd eye
 Measure known stars, and new remoter spy.⁸⁴

But though this artificial "far-lengthen'd eye" may geometrically fix the measurement of the universe, Savage's wanderer no more negotiates

⁸⁴Richard Savage, The Wanderer, in Works of the English Poets, 11:302.

the visible ambiguity of perception than does the reverse perspective of microscopical analysis. Like the transparent "cogito" of Cartesian metaphysics, both telescope and microscope factitiously accommodated the subjectum's bistouric desire to cleanly slice through a section of the world "naturally" hidden to the naked eye. If nature's secrets were to be unveiled, technology would assuredly have to come up with the artificial means of attaining a super-vision virtually capable of seeing through matter. Science had a considerable wait, however, before technology manufactured the X-ray; in the meantime, the microscopical discoveries of Leeuwenhoek, Swammerdam, and others encouraged metaphysical speculation about the world of the minute, and why God had denied to man the kind of vision he had given to other animals.⁸⁵ Though philosophers, especially Locke and Berkeley, had oxytocically delivered this question to theoretical supposition, Pope answered it handily and succinctly in a single sentence in his Essay on Man: "Why has not Man a microscopic eye?/ For this plain reason, Man is not a Fly."⁸⁶

Perhaps more than any other poet of his time, Pope opposed the growing tendency of the age to confer god-head upon the scientific mission; in The Dunciad he unequivocally indicted the arrogant posture of those who would make man the measure of all things, although his ultimate argument rested on theological ground.

"O! would the Sons of Men once think their Eyes

⁸⁵Nicolson, p. 102.

⁸⁶The Poems of Alexander Pope, Twickenham Edition, gen.ed. John Butt, 11 vols. (London: Methuen and Co., Ltd., 1961-69), 3-1:38-39. For a penetrating analysis of the controversy surrounding Pope's manipulation of ideas in the Essay on Man, see Douglas White, Pope and the Context of Controversy. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970.

And Reason giv'n them but to study Flies!
 See Nature in some partial narrow shape,
 And let the Author of the Whole escape:
 Learn but to trifle; or, who most observe,
 To wonder at the Maker, not to serve."

"Be that my task . . .

Let others creep by timid steps, and slow,
 On plain Experience lay foundations low,
 By common sense to common knowledge bred,
 And last, to Nature's Cause thro' Nature led.
 All-seeing in thy mists, we want no guide,
 Mother of Arrogance, and Source of Pride!
 We nobly take the high Priori Road,
 And reason downward, till we doubt of God:
 Make Nature still incroach upon his plan;
 And shove him off as far as e'er we can:
 Thrust some Mechanic Cause into his place;
 Or bind in Matter, or diffuse in Space.
 Or, at one bound o'er-leaping all his laws,
 Make God Man's Image, Man the final Cause⁸⁷

Of course, Swift's Tale of a Tub had previously enunciated the Scriblerian protest, but nowhere do we find a more devastating reply to the philosophic and scientific world-view than in the final section of The Dunciad, where universal darkness descends upon the pseudo-illumination proffered by the prevalent theoretical abstractions of philosophy, physics, metaphysics, and mathematics:

See skulking Truth to her old Cavern fled,
 Mountains of Casulstry heap'd o'er her head!
Philosophy, that lean'd on Heav'n before,
 Shrinks to her second cause, and is no more.
Physic of Metaphysic begs defence,
 And Metaphysic calls for aid on Sense!
 See Mystery to Mathematics fly!
 In vain! they gaze, turn giddy, rave, and die.⁸⁸

Even Voltaire hastened to turn aside the scientific usurpation by declaring that the geometry of Newtonian philosophy was not a proper subject for poetry; but he weakened the force of his own rhetoric by writing verse on Newtonian principles himself.⁸⁹ Pope too, despite his

⁸⁷Ibid., 5:385-88.

⁸⁸Ibid., 5:407-09.

⁸⁹Nicolson, p. 15.

frequent sorties against the securely entrenched certitude of scientific objectivity, fell prey to the intellectual climate responsible for the very attitudes he found so threatening; and the centrally implicit image behind the Essay on Man appropriates an equally total picture of the world, for the traditional idea of a great chain of being negotiates an abstract and theoretical space, no less "objective" than the linear perspective of a Renaissance drawing.

If the first half of the eighteenth century stressed what Reynolds termed the "mechanical" aspect of representation, the second half of that century experienced a gradual shift toward the "poetical," although the imbrication of reality continued to evade its theoreticians. And if the poets began to analyze the construction of reality in terms of certain faculties in man, the respective capabilities of these faculties simultaneously contracted the consonant view of scientific "objectification." Akenside's Pleasures of Imagination reflected the philosophic trend toward "subjectivity" which would culminate in Kant's Third Critique, although this subjectivity is no more situated than the Cartesian "cogito." "Mind," remarks Akenside in his poem, "Mind alone, bears witness, earth and heav'n!/ The living fountains in itself contains/ Of beauteous and sublime."⁹⁰ But if the mind contains the beauty and sublimity of the world "out there," how much more carefully man is cautioned to proceed in his survey of the world; Richard Jago's Edge-Hill warned of the dangers implicit in the imagination, recommending to the reader the visual certainty of Newtonian objectivity:

⁹⁰p. 36.

Shall we, 'cause Reason strives in vain to tell
 How Matter acts on incorporeal Mind,
 Or how (when Sleep has lock'd up ev'ry Sense,
 Or Fevers rage) Imagination paints
 Unreal Scenes, reject what sober Sense
 And calmest Thought attest? Shall we confound
 States wholly diff'rent? Sleep with wakeful Life?
 Disease with Health? This were to quit the Day,
 And seek our Path at Midnight. To renounce
 Man's surest Evidence, and idolize
 Imagination. Quit we rather then
 These Metaphysic Subtleties, and mark
 The curious Structure of these visual Orbs,
 The Windows of the Mind; substance how clear,
 Aqueous, or chrystalline! through which the Soul,
 As thro' a Glass, all outward Things surveys.⁹¹

Because Fancy and Imagination receive "The whole magnificence of heaven and earth,/ And every beauty, delicate or bold,/ Obvious or more remote, with livelier sense,/ Difussive painted on the rapid mind,"⁹² as Thomson's Seasons suggests, they may simultaneously distort the clear and perfectly transparent vision of Reason. To this effect, Akenside distinctly draws an analogy along the contemporary lines of Newtonian optics; because Fancy delineates a "form" which does not correspond to the actual object, it represents a false picture of the world, and thus constitutes an endogenous danger to man's ethical life:

Another tribe succeeds; deluded long
 By fancy's dazzling optics, these behold
 The images of some peculiar things
 With brighter hues resplendent, and portray'd
 With features nobler far than e'er adorn'd
 Their genuine objects.⁹³

⁹¹pp. 84-85.

⁹²James Thomson, "Summer," The Seasons, in The Complete Poetical Works of James Thomson, ed. J. Logie Robertson (London: Oxford University Press, 1908), p. 118.

⁹³Pleasures of Imagination, p. 98. An annotation to these lines in the first edition reads: "Ridicule from a notion of excellence in particular objects disproportion'd to their intrinsic value, and inconsistent with the order of nature."

But, "where the pow'rs/ Of fancy neither lessen nor enlarge/ The images
of things, but paint in all/ Their genuine hues, the features which they
wore/ In nature; there opinion will be true,/ And action right."⁹⁴

Akenside introduces, here, an aesthetic supposition which became increasingly popular throughout the latter part of the eighteenth century, that the truth of nature resides in its general forms, and not its specific detail--thus the falsity of "images of some peculiar things." Johnson's Rasselas aesthetically terminated this attitude, what Reynolds termed the "poetical" in painting: "The business of a poet . . . is to examine not the individual, but the species; to remark general properties and large appearances. He does not number the streaks of the tulip, or describe the different shades in the verdure of the forest; he is to exhibit in his portraits of nature such prominent and striking features as recall the original to every mind."⁹⁵ That Johnson defines the task of the poet in terms of visual representation is, of course, no accident, for Newtonian theory persistently informed aesthetic pre-suppositions concerning imitation throughout the entire century even if that aesthetic shifted its vision toward the mental constitution of the world. The eighteenth century adopted the doctrine of "Ut pictura poesis" flat across the board, whereby not only poetry, but all art aspired to the condition of painting; Uvedale Price went so far as to impute this condition to music. In this sense, the existent is only to the extent that it is "picturesque," that is, fit to be painted; indeed, this way of looking at the world corresponds to that attitude

⁹⁴Ibid., pp. 90-91.

⁹⁵Samuel Johnson, Rasselas (Great Neck: Barron's Educational Series, Inc., 1962), p. 49.

determined by having a view to such an hyperbolic degree that the existent as a whole becomes one vast prospect, suitable for framing. Nevertheless, Johnson's aesthetic reflects the increasingly sophisticated distinction between the "picturesque," the "beautiful," and the "sublime;" and like Kant's Third Critique, it historically represents an indefatigable attempt to unify the various aesthetic theories of the eighteenth century into a single coherent system or "picture."

Yet, throughout the second half of the eighteenth century, and despite the popular trend toward "subjectivity," poets continued to dispute the respective merits of Fancy and Imagination regarding their ability to appropriate the "truth" of nature. Akenside, for example, airs the cob-webs from Memnon's Harp in order to sing the one-to-one correspondence between Nature and Mind which exists when Imagination is properly "tuned." As Titan's rays evoke the harmonious response of the harp,

. . . ev'n so did nature's hand
 To certain species of external things,
 Attune the finer organs of the mind:
 So the glad impulse of congenial pow'rs,
 Or of sweet sound, or fair-proportion'd form,
 The grace of motion, or the bloom of light,
 Thrills thro' imagination's tender frame,
 From nerve to nerve: all naked and alive
 They catch the spreading rays: till now the soul
 At length discloses every tuneful spring,
 To that harmonious movement from without,
 Responsive.⁹⁶

Like the eye, imagination frames its images within the proportioned space of a perspective which catches the "spreading rays" of its view from "nerve to nerve." Indeed, the implicit distinction between subject and object in the eighteenth-century view provoked the isoclinal framing

⁹⁶Pleasures of Imagination, pp. 15-16.

of life to such an extent that the body itself was naturally thought of as a frame. Just as the mental image thrills through "imagination's tender frame," so does emotion insinuate the frame of the body.

Thomson's Seasons expressed the effect imagination produces on the body in terms of the usual cliché: "Deep-roused, I feel/ A sacred terror, a severe delight,/ Creep through my mortal frame."⁹⁷ Thus, the general framing of life indigenous to having a world-view continued to sustain the Cartesian severance despite the popular turn toward certain faculties of the mind; and though Fancy and Imagination entertain the danger of distorting the truth inherent in the objective forms of nature, they simultaneously disclose its unequivocal correspondence with the mind when functioning properly. Yet, the augmented intussusception of mind in aesthetic theory signaled a growing rift between science and poetry, and ophthalmoscopically prefigured the uniquely subjective vision of the Romantic movement. At the beginning of the century, Addison had already declared that the poet was at liberty to transcend the laws of optical representation since language often "gives us more lively ideas than the sight of things themselves," and can subsequently improve nature:

Words, when well chosen, have so great a force in them, that a description often gives us more lively ideas than the sight of things themselves. The reader finds a scene drawn in stronger colours, and painted more to the life in his imagination by the help of words, than by an actual survey of the scene which they describe. In this case the poet seems to get the better of nature; he takes, indeed, the landscape after her, but gives it more vigorous touches, heightens its beauty, and so enlivens the whole piece that the images which flow from the objects themselves appear weak and faint in comparison of those that come from the expressions. The reason probably may be, because in the survey of any object we have only so much of it painted on the imagination as comes in at the eye; but in its description the poet gives us as free a view of it as he pleases, and discovers to us several

⁹⁷"Summer," Complete Poetical Works, p. 73.

parts that either we did not attend to, or that lay out of our sight when we first beheld it. As we look on any object our idea of it is, perhaps, made up of two or three simple ideas; but when the poet represents it, he may either give us a more complex idea of it, or only raise in us such ideas as are most apt to affect the imagination.⁹⁸

Although Addison seems to endorse the poet's freedom vis-a-vis an aesthetic expressiveness, the heart of his argument reads like a preface to Hume; and the painting metaphor itself reveals a typical Newtonian preoccupation with the representation of an optically framed view, perspectively located outside the "self." Thus, Addison's theory of imagination no more questions the picture-world of eighteenth-century aesthetics than its other theoreticians; in fact, it was Addison who not only acutely realized the significance of Locke and Newton, but also popularized their theories for the masses. If imagination fascinated Addison, it was only because it alone colored a world objectively dull, sterile, and colorless in itself. Cartesian metaphysics defined a world where color was merely accidental, and Newtonian physics manipulated a world similarly bleak where color is nowhere to be found in external nature itself. Addison merely painted the picture for all to see:

Things would make but a poor appearance to the eye, if we saw them only in their proper figures and motions. And what reason can we assign for their exciting in us many of those ideas which are different from anything that exists in the objects themselves (for such are light and colours), were it not to add supernumerary ornaments to the universe, and make it more agreeable to the imagination? We are everywhere entertained with pleasing shows and apparitions, we discover imaginary glories in the heavens, and in the earth, and see some of this visionary beauty poured out upon the whole creation; but what a rough unsightly sketch of Nature should we be entertained with, did all her colouring disappear, and the several distinctions of light and shade vanish?⁹⁹

⁹⁸No. 416, The Spectator, ed. George A. Aitken, 8 vols. (London: John C. Nimmo, 1898), 6:100-01.

⁹⁹Ibid., No. 413, 6:83-84.

Pope, too, had remarked the subjective quality of perception, especially how Fancy "colors" our vision; his Moral Essays juxtapose the clear and pure light of Reason with the "color" refracted by passion:

. . . the diff'rence is as great between
The optics seeing, as the objects seen.
All Manners take a tincture from our own,
Or come discolour'd thro' our Passions shown.
Or Fancy's beam enlarges, multiplies,
Contracts, inverts, and gives ten thousand dyes.¹⁰⁰

But Pope gave credit where Newtonian optics denied it; for in our perception of the world, he declared that "Darkness strikes the sense no less than Light."¹⁰¹ His "Epitaph, Intended for Sir Isaac Newton," "Nature, and Nature's Laws lay hid in Night./ God said, 'Let Newton be!' and All was Light,"¹⁰² not only locates Newton within the Augustan-Cartesian-Galilean tradition of the "natural light" of reason, but ironically contrasts with the final lines of The Dunciad, where that tradition avariciously self-destructs:

Lo! Thy dread Empire, CHAOS! is restor'd;
Light dies before thy uncreating word:
Thy hand, great Anarch! lets the curtain fall;
And universal Darkness buries All.¹⁰³

But if the eighteenth-century "school of night" found solace in this subfuscous interior, it simultaneously appropriated the achromatic shades of Newtonianism from whence the anti-logos might descend. Indeed, Young's Night Thoughts adopts a similar posture, and yet reads like a single and continuous annotation of the Opticks:

Let Indians, and the gay, like Indians, fond
Of feather'd fopperies, the Sun adore:
Darkness has more divinity for me;
It strikes thought inward; it drives back the soul

¹⁰⁰"Epistle I," The Poems of Alexander Pope, 3-ii:17.

¹⁰¹Ibid., 3-ii:23. ¹⁰²Ibid., 6:317. ¹⁰³Ibid., 5:409.

To settle on herself, our point supreme!
There lies our theatre! there sits our judge.
Darkness the curtain drops o'er life's dull scene;
 'Tis the kind hand of Providence stretch'd out
 'Twixt man and vanity; 'tis reason's reign,
 And virtue's too¹⁰⁴

For most of the poets, however, darkness was not singularly individual, but rather an association, as Burke expressed it, "of a more general nature, an association which takes in all mankind;"¹⁰⁵ it was this general fear of darkness which prompted, for the most part, the "rational" mind of the Age of Enlightenment to seek the secure light of Reason. Walter Harte's "Essay on Reason" relates a somewhat modified version of the Lockean account of the development of this faculty:

How stretch'd like Kneller's canvas first it lies,
 'Ere the soft tints awake, or outlines rise;
 How till the finishing of thrice sev'n years,
 The master figure Reason scarce appears
 Sensation first, the ground-work of the whole,
 Deals ray by ray each image to the soul;
 Perception true to every nerve, receives
 The various impulse, now exults, now grieves.
 Thought works and ends, and dares afresh begin. . .
 Experience slowly moving next appears,
 Wise but by habit, judging but from years;
 Till Knowledge comes, a wise and gen'rous heir,
 And opes the reservoir, averse to spare;
 And Reason rises, the Newtonian Sun,
 Moves all, guides all, and all sustains in one.¹⁰⁶

And yet, beneath this certitude, there persistently remained the lurking fear that the light of reason was ultimately grounded in darkness itself; in his "Essay on the Weakness of Human Knowledge," Henry Jones, who changed his rhetorical posture to suit the popular attitudes of the age

¹⁰⁴Works of the English Poets, 13:439.

¹⁰⁵Edmund Burke, A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful, facsimile reproduction, 2nd ed., 1759 (Menston, England: The Scholar Press Ltd., 1970), pp. 273-74.

¹⁰⁶Works of the English Poets, 16:354.

like a weather-vane, mimicked Pope in his attack on science and philosophy:

Our prying Eyes would pierce all Nature's store,
 Unlock her Secrets, turn her Treasures o'er;
 Yet far within she shows the searching Ray;
 Her mighty Master keeps the Mystick Key;
 A nearer View's deny'd to mortal Sight;
 Newton's transcendent Day must bound in Night.¹⁰⁷

But Jones, like all the rest, whether looking at the world in terms of its "subjective" or "objective" constitution, assumes that Newtonian achromaticism correctly describes being-in-the-world, or more precisely the existent as such. The world of science is invariably black and white. Blake knew it only too well: "Art is the Tree of Life," he proclaimed, "Science is the Tree of Death."¹⁰⁸

"Blake delighted in nothing more than in his ability to forge verbal thunderbolts to hurl against Bacon, Locke, and Newton."¹⁰⁹ In his "Island in the Moon," he states the case in Hamletesque satire:

To be, or not to be
 Of great capacity,
 Like Sir Isaac Newton,
 Or Locke, or Doctor South,
 Or Sherlock upon death?
 I'd rather be Sutton.¹¹⁰

Blake's disgust with the tradition of Locke and Newton represents a radical break with the eighteenth-century aesthetic, a break which "adumbrated a complete revolutionary philosophy, including a psychology, a moral and social doctrine, and a metaphysic. In his transvaluation of

¹⁰⁷quoted in Nicolson, pp. 137-38.

¹⁰⁸"The Laocoön," in Blake: Complete Writings, ed. Geoffrey Keynes (London: Oxford University Press, 1969), p. 777.

¹⁰⁹Nicolson, p. 168.

¹¹⁰Blake: Complete Writings, p. 57.

values Blake in some respects anticipated Nietzsche."¹¹¹ Had the nineteenth century understood the existential significance of Blake's vision, it might have avoided the cultural transmission of a devastating world-picture which continues to dominate the scientific and technological visual field of our own age. He not only lived during the most violent age in English history, but witnessed the birth of the world as we know it today;¹¹² the imagery of the prophetic books reflect this process in so far as it increasingly darkens as we read on toward the true horror of a vision more vivid than the naked eye can glimpse.¹¹³

I stood among my valleys of the south
 And saw a flame of fire, even as a Wheel
 Of fire surrounding all the heavens: it went
 From west to east, against the current of
 Creation, and devour'd all things in its loud
 Fury & thundering course round heaven & earth.¹¹⁴

Blake inveighed against the scientific and technological objectification of the world, and its attendant divination of the five senses, which had, by his time, already initiated the destruction of the earth: "Man's perceptions are not bounded by organs of perception; he perceives more than sense (tho' ever so acute) can discover."¹¹⁵ With respect to the technological manipulation of man, "Blake saw the machine grow larger

¹¹¹Louis I. Bredvold, The Literature of the Restoration and the Eighteenth Century, 1660-1798, vol. III, in A History of English Literature (New York: Collier Books, 1962), p. 191.

¹¹²Jacob Bronowski, William Blake and the Age of Revolution (New York: Harper and Row, 1965), pp. 173-74.

¹¹³Ibid., p. 176.

¹¹⁴"Jerusalem," Blake: Complete Writings, p. 717.

¹¹⁵"There is No Natural Religion," second series, Blake: Complete Writings, p. 97.

than man, to make him stunted, ignorant, and beastly;"¹¹⁶ yet, no one seemed to want to hear the voice of the bard,

Who Present, Past, & Future sees;
Whose ears have heard
The Holy Word
That walk'd among the ancient trees,

Calling the lapsed Soul,
And weeping in the evening dew;
That might controll
The starry pole.
And fallen, fallen light renew!

'O Earth, O Earth, return!'¹¹⁷

Against the representational theory of "aesthesis," and sensation in general, Blake's fairy in "Europe" proclaimed the opacity of a world wherein beauty was specifically embodied in the singularity of each situation, rather than constituted by either the subjectum or an abstract correspondence to the "truth" of nature--"So sang a Fairy, mocking, as he sat on a streak'd Tulip."¹¹⁸ When asked, "what is the material world, and is it dead,"

He, laughing, answer'd: "I will write a book on leaves of flowers,
If you will feed me on love-thoughts & give me now and then
A cup of sparkling poetic fancies; so, when I am tipsie,
I'll sing to you to this soft lute, and shew you all alive
The world, when every particle of dust breathes forth its joy."¹¹⁹

In Reynolds' Discourses, moreover, Blake discovered the aesthetic synthesis, via Burke, analogous to the scientific and metaphysical thought he so detested in Bacon, Locke, and Newton. His "Annotations to Sir Joshua Reynolds' Discourses" summarizes the connectedness of the eighteenth-century world-view in general, and discloses the termination

¹¹⁶Bronowski, p. 176.

¹¹⁷"Songs of Experience," Blake: Complete Writings, p. 210.

¹¹⁸Blake: Complete Writings, p. 237. ¹¹⁹Ibid.

of that picture in so far as it accommodates a framed prospect of the whole "world."

Burke's Treatise on the Sublime & Beautiful is founded on the Opinions of Newton & Locke; on this Treatise Reynolds has grounded many of his assertions in all his Discourses. I read Burke's Treatise when very Young; at the same time I read Locke on Human Understanding & Bacon's Advancement of Learning; on Every one of these Books I wrote my Opinions, & on looking them over find that my Notes on Reynolds in this Book are exactly Similar.¹²⁰

Blake alone perceived the peculiar frame of mind which informed eighteenth-century aesthetic, philosophic, and scientific theory, as well as its universal indebtedness to Newton; and if initial over-emphasis on the "res extensa" of Newtonian objectivity prompted Kant to revive the Cartesian "cogito" at the end of the century, Blake knew only too well the single visage which prowled beneath this Janus-faced exterior. With his prism Newton had

first separated light into colors in his darkened room; then he had fused the particolored divergent thought of the age into a single beam of pure light, the light of Reason, "the Newtonian Sun." Pope wrote the perfect epitaph for that Newton: "God said, 'Let Newton be!' and all was Light!" Blake's epitaph was equally succinct: "The Song of Los is ended. Urizen wept."¹²¹

Blake was no more eccentric than John Bull himself; indeed, his thought "rested squarely on the world in which he lived."¹²² Whenever the definitive gesture of a single life is grounded in the situation, that life is inevitably public; we find it eccentric only when we miss the context:

If we give our fancy to the privacy of a man who gave his mind to living in public, we shall needs find him eccentric; but the eccentricity is ours. The context of Blake's writings is the context of a man who gave his mind to speaking to a public world; and the man was of a piece. The public did not listen. But it stood about the speaker.¹²³

¹²⁰Ibid., pp. 476-77. ¹²¹Nicolson, p. 174.

¹²²Bronowski, p. 177. ¹²³Ibid.

Blake knew: "A Last Judgment is Necessary because Fools flourish."¹²⁴

Eighteenth-century thought remained thoroughly conditioned to the theories of Locke and Newton, and the uncritical acceptance of Cartesian dualism; and as for its poets,

The world "out there," the mind "in here," remained to many of them separate and distinct; try as they would, they could not bridge the gap. Even "Imagination," of which they made so much, was unable to go far, "cabin'd, cribb'd, confined, bound in" to one part of man's "soul"; passive rather than active, its place was predetermined, its functions limited. To the school of common sense, the way out of the dilemma seemed simple: let man leave his mental dark-room on the blank walls of which nature was shown only by reflection; let him go forth into the world outside and face reality for himself.¹²⁵

Romanticism embraced the opposite extreme. Conditioned as it was by German idealism, especially the post-Kantianism of Schelling, the subject-object dichotomy continued to inhere in any investigation of "reality;" the question of an external world merely became predicated on the subjectum and his natural tendency "to bury the 'external world' in nullity 'epistemologically' before going on to prove it."¹²⁶ Romanticism merely transfers the transparency of an isolated "cogito" onto the external world itself, and henceforth negotiates the "truth" of that world in terms of a symbolic "insight" which sees "through it," just as its own reflection illuminates the ultimate reality of "mind." "After the primordial phenomenon of Being-in-the-world has been shattered, the isolated subject is all that remains, and this becomes the basis on which

¹²⁴"A Vision of the Last Judgment," Blake: Complete Writings, p. 612.

¹²⁵Nicolson, p. 164.

¹²⁶Martin Heidegger, Being and Time, trans. John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson (New York: Harper and Row, 1962), p. 250.

it gets joined together with a 'world'."¹²⁷ Yet, to the extent that this "symbolic" insight is still envisioned in terms of an absolute "form," and that the inward glance toward a particular state of consciousness is still constituted by a theoretical and unsituated frame, the romantics unconsciously propounded the same kind of visual, spatial continuity of a perspective drawing even though that "form" now becomes "mind" or "self" as the mirror of nature. Although romantic poets rhetorically rejected "rationalism" in favor of "feeling," they continued to employ its perceptual bias in so far as they appropriated perspective in order to isolate single emotional states.¹²⁸ Newton is somehow still in the picture, and we can detect the influence of his Opticks on nineteenth-century painting as well. "His revelation of the natural power of the eye to refract the visual world encouraged artists to select outer landscapes that isolated a particular mood or feeling from the emotional spectrum. . . . The external world was studied for its powers to select and to refract particular qualities of experience."¹²⁹ In this regard it was especially the habit of American painters to delight in picturing the "mood" of a landscape,

particularly when its moods were expressed in atmospheric effects of light, twilight, or morning haze. . . . Whatever the mood, however, these painters sought to engage the eye of the viewer deeply enough to lead his vision beyond the basic subject matter. They hoped keen observation of the mists over the hills would lead the viewer beyond the physical limits of the hills.¹³⁰

But it was chiefly the romantic poets who thoroughly exploited the

¹²⁷Ibid.

¹²⁸McLuhan, Vanishing Point, p. 21. ¹²⁹Ibid., p. 22.

¹³⁰Richard Rudisill, Mirror Image: The Influence of the Daguerreotype on American Society (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1971), p. 16.

symbolic function of nature; Coleridge's expropriation of German idealism, following his flirtation with empiricism, convinced him of the transparency of the world, whereby a close observation of nature leads one to the vision of its general forms, its "significance." And we arrive at this symbolic insight directly in proportion to the transparency of our "gaze"--"as I have stood,/ Silent with swimming sense; yea, gazing round/ On the wide landscape, gaze till all doth seem/ Less gross than bodily."¹³¹ Nature somehow points to a "reality" beyond itself; and though we can perceive this significance in a nebulous fashion, we can never explicitly express it. Similarly, Wordsworth disclosed the superordinate desire to see beyond the thing itself, to see with a "spiritual eye" the truth of ordinary objects of perception.

By penetrating the specific form or "shell" of the object, we formulate the general truth of nature; we see into the life of things. This post-Kantian attitude by which the eye informs its object finds its clearest expression, perhaps, in "Tintern Abbey."

These beauteous forms,
Through a long absence, have not been to me
As is a landscape to a blind man's eye:
But oft, in lonely rooms, and 'mid the din
Of towns and cities, I have owed to them,
In hours of weariness, sensations sweet,
Felt in the blood, and felt along the heart;
And passing even into my purer mind,
With tranquil restoration

Nor less, I trust,
To them I may have owed another gift,
Of Aspect more sublime . . .
that serene and blessed mood,
In which the affections gently lead us on,--
Until, the breath of this corporeal frame

¹³¹"This Lime-Tree Bower My Prison," in Selected Poetry and Prose of Coleridge, ed. Donald A. Stauffer (New York: Random House, Inc., The Modern Library, 1951), p. 61.

And even the motion of our human blood
 Almost suspended, we are laid asleep
 In body, and become a living soul:
 While with an eye made quiet by the power
 Of harmony, and the deep power of joy,
 We see into the life of things.¹³²

Obviously, the framing of life persists; only in so far as these "beauteous forms" affect a mental eye do they lead us to the transparency of the world. Matter remains superfluous, just as the frame of the corporeal body hinders our perception of the world rather than grounding it; in order to see the world as it "really" is we must appropriate its mental transparency. The world is only to the extent that it is in thought; and in this sense, the romantic attitude adheres to the Cartesian projection whereby any resemblance between nature and mind belongs to thought alone. Like a Cartesian, the romantic poet does not see "himself" in the mirror;

he sees a dummy, an "outside," which, he has every reason to believe, other people see in the very same way but which, no more for himself than for others, is not a body in the flesh. His "image" in the mirror is an effect of the mechanics of things. If he recognizes himself in it, if he thinks it "looks like him," it is his thought that weaves this connection. The mirror image is nothing that belongs to him.¹³³

So much for the insufficiency of "this corporeal frame" which must be shed if man is to perceive the truth of the world; thus, Wordsworth could say of the poetic mission, in the concluding lines of The Prelude, that it must nucleonically reveal

. . . how the mind of man becomes
 A thousand times more beautiful than the earth
 On which he dwells, above this frame of things
 (Which, 'mid all revolution in the hopes
 And fears of men, doth still remain unchanged)

¹³²Wordsworth: Poetical Works, p. 164.

¹³³Merleau-Ponty, Primacy, p. 170.

In beauty exalted, as it is itself
Of quality and fabric more divine.¹³⁴

Yet, this "eye" which sees into the life of things is clearly not the "eye" of Kant, which can never ascertain the noumenal thing-in-itself. For Wordsworth, however, the possibility of knowing the noumenal world stipulates the life-long task of the poet, whose mind, more than any other, possesses the power for seeing through the opaque materiality of things. And what is this power or faculty of X-ray vision? It is, again, the Imagination.

For the romantics, imagination implied a mental facility considerably different from the context in which Kant had defined it; but we can follow the development of this new meaning in so far as it primordially derived from the Kantian distinction between the beautiful and the sublime. For Kant, the beautiful constituted that framed image presented to the understanding as an indeterminate concept; as such, the form of the object is represented to us in such a way that the imagination and the understanding mutually derive a specific pleasure from their harmonious inter-action. The sublime, on the other hand, was constituted by an object which the imagination presents to reason as an indeterminate idea, so that the object can not be represented as an image at all; the imagination is incapable of forming one, for an "idea" is the very opposite of an "image." Yet, we continue to obtain a certain pleasure from the anti-purposiveness of the object; the very formlessness of the image of the idea presented by the object provides a certain satisfaction. Though it is beyond representation, the mind somehow apprehends something in the object beyond its appearance. Precisely because we can in some

¹³⁴Wordsworth: Poetical Works, p. 588.

way apprehend an object other than under the restricted categories of understanding, as an idea of reason, we thus approach, in our perception of the sublime, the very limit of thought--knowledge of the thing-in-itself. In other words, by our recognition of the sublime we vaguely experience an idea of reason, although that experience is fated to remain indistinct and indeterminate. Moreover, in the sense which Kant defines it, the object itself can never be sublime; rather it is the mind which is sublime in recognizing it. And yet, to the extent that we may call an object sublime, we simultaneously attribute a subsequent quality to the object which "exists" beyond the object, and to which the object itself points. Nature thus becomes significant, that is, "symbolic." The imagination, then, can present us with an idea, though never directly; and that idea, which is "aesthetic" and not an idea of reason, is presented as such in its symbolic form. Apparently Kant was pushed to this position in light of his admittedly limited classification of those things which can be "actually" beautiful in terms of pure form. Because of this, the Third Critique seems to weaken the First wherein Kant explicitly denied the possibility of ever attaining to an idea of reason in any way since an idea, by definition, represented that limit of thought beyond which we can never go. Knowledge of an "ultimate" reality, the thing-in-itself, endured forever inaccessible. Strictly speaking, however, a Kantian "idea" is neither in the mind nor in nature, but rather that which mediates subject and object. Yet, the post-Kantian German idealists, especially Schelling, predicated the "idea" in nature itself so that all of nature became energized by a "Rational Idea;" Nature was Mind. For Schelling, Imagination became that faculty which virtually creates the world. As an idea, nature is

merely the unconscious expression of spirit; the "objective" world, as idea, like the eighteenth-century landscape, patiently awaits interpretation in so far as it is symbolic, that is, the concrete form of an infinite idea. Obviously Schelling turned to Kant for his interpretation of symbol (Sinnbild)--that which embodies a universal (idea) in a particular (image); but he went further, by making the Kantian impossibility of knowing the idea a practical possibility. Imagination perceives the essence of a thing, an infinite idea, in the concrete articulation of the form as an "object;" in this regard, imagination appropriates symbols as an expression of the ultimate reality, the idea itself. Even for Schelling, imagination functions as a representational power; it delineates the ideas as a form, the form of a form as it were. And to the extent that imagination is formational; it "pictures" the existent in terms of a spatial perspective whereby man now has a view of the world in so far as it constitutes an "idea."

Coleridge adopted this position, and was largely responsible for its introduction to England. Because nature is mind, the imagination came to be that faculty which frames ideas rather than images; and it does so in such a way that the idea becomes significant with respect to its symbolic expression. "An IDEA, in the highest sense of that word, cannot be conveyed but by a symbol; and, except in geometry, all symbols of necessity involve an apparent contradiction."¹³⁵ Coleridge probably adopted the notion that the symbol contains a contradiction directly from Schelling; but even as that faculty which both perceives and creates the world, the imagination remains an abstract and formative

¹³⁵Biographia Literaria, in Selected Poetry and Prose, p. 185.

power. It re-presents; it shapes; it reconciles; it combines. Coleridge called this power "esemplastic," although its essentially spatial connotations apply more properly to a mental activity "in here" rather than the way in which it takes up an object world "out there."

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. The secondary Imagination I consider as an echo of the former, co-existing with the conscious will, yet still as identical with the primary in the kind of its agency, and differing only in degree, and in the mode of its operation. It dissolves, diffuses, dissipates, in order to re-create; or where this process is rendered impossible, yet still at all events it struggles to idealize and to unify. It is essentially vital, even as all objects (as objects) are essentially fixed and dead.¹³⁶

Again we find a similarity to Newton's "sensorium;" because perception is judged to be primarily spiritual and mental, it naturally follows that the object itself lacks a life or a world of its own, that it is essentially "fixed and dead." Thus, the infinite repetition of imaginative activity always looks back toward a theoretical and ideal correspondence in order to formally unify its vision. Grounded in the infinite and eternal, it necessarily "struggles to idealize" because it sets itself apart from the world it negotiates in order to perceive the whole picture. The "in order to" of its activity already dictates an a priori absolute standard divorced from what the activity itself discloses and to which the activity must always address itself; and if the priority of its content is ever to be fully delineated, imagination must ultimately disregard the manner of its own expression in order to describe an ideal world, a non-personal space, where everything transparently "makes sense" according to its proper place.

¹³⁶Ibid., p. 263.

The poet, described in ideal perfection, brings the whole soul of man into activity, with the subordination of its faculties to each other, according to their relative worth and dignity. He diffuses a tone and spirit of unity, that blends, and (as it were) fuses, each into each, by that synthetic and magical power, to which we have exclusively appropriated the name of imagination. This power, first put in action by the will and understanding, and retained under their irremissive, though gentle and unnoticed, controul (laxis effertur habenis) reveals itself in the balance or reconciliation of opposite or discordant qualities . . . and while it blends and harmonizes the natural and the artificial, still subordinates art to nature; the manner to the matter; and our admiration of the poet to our sympathy with the poetry.¹³⁷

Despite its "transcendental" qualities, Coleridge's definition of imagination retains something indigenous to the Newtonian spirit; the notion that one idea attracts another pervades his thinking here, and we are led to suspect that perhaps Coleridge could never entirely relinquish the influence of Hartley and empiricism in general. Nonetheless, for Coleridge the imagination concretizes the ideas of reason by combining its "objects" in such a way that it presents us with a symbol of that which lies beyond the immediate forms of nature. But in so far as its symbols re-present "another" reality, imagination sets the existent before a theoretical gaze which not only subordinates "the manner to the matter," but also delegates the correspondence between external and internal worlds to the lineal perspective of a single rational Idea. Because the world is thus constituted by such a comprehensively transparent picture, knowledge of the world is tantamount to knowledge of the "self." Little wonder, then, that Wordsworth could only "reassure" himself of the materiality of nature by touching it. For how else can the blind see?

For the romantics, following the direction of post-Kantian

¹³⁷Ibid., p. 269.

idealism, it was natural that the focus of imagination turned inward. But in effect, romanticism killed the very kind of Being it sought to emulate; by viewing the object as something "fixed and dead," romanticism could only come up to it by looking back in the same way that we treat a friend who has died as merely a "memory." The death of an object is the beginning of a subject. This change-over in Being, whereby the entity is able to be encountered only in the mind, signals the birth of an entirely new way of "living" the world, a way that both avoids the present, via a subliminal sentimentality, and the future, via its implicit failure to negotiate a genuine choice--it is "to remember." Romanticism visually delineated an inward gaze toward basic states of consciousness, a particular feeling or emotion, by employing the prevalent perceptual bias ever since the Renaissance. In looking back toward an historical subjectivity, romantic poetry frames a whole life in terms of isolated and sequential emotional states, little pictures placed in a theoretical perspective. It thus represents an ideal view, as much removed from the world as it is from its "self," for "The order of the sequence in which Experiences run their course does not give us the phenomenal structure of existing."¹³⁸ The creative function of imagination remained identical, in principle, to that representational organ which forms an image, whether or not that power historically derived from Newton's refractive condition of the eye or Kant's image-framing faculty of the mind. The truth of the existent is determined to the extent that it is either reproduced or constructed as an "objective" form occupying an ideal space. Romanticism temporarily "covered up" the subject-object

¹³⁸Heidegger, Being and Time, p. 337.

dichotomy in so far as it appropriated a psychological perspective in assessing its relation to nature; yet this repressive activity disclosed an even deeper duality. By thinking it could "create" nature, as a product of mind, romanticism merely externalized the interiority of its poets. This self-deceptive attempt on the part of the poets to manipulate their own psychological aberrations historically articulated the hyperbolic posture of scientific objectivity--but at the opposite extreme. In fact, it was inevitable:

There is a type of mind, and not necessarily of an inferior order, which finds it impossible to accept the sum of parts as a substitute for the whole, the quantitative as a substitute for the qualitative, a series of equations as a substitute for significance; and there is no denying that the reduction of nature to a system of numerical relations, so uncompromisingly demanded and put into practice by Galileo, was bound to leave a kind of psychological vacuum.¹³⁹

In so far as it reflects the mind, romanticism ironically represents the ultimate "rational" posture--psychoanalytical self-analysis; carried to its logical extreme, it has become, in our own time, inextricably bound up with conducting the business of life in the most practical, inexpensive, and least time-consuming fashion possible, that is, "You, too, can analyze yourself in one simple lesson." Indeed, today's advertizing has us so "psyched" that we uncritically accept the "mind-over-matter" sales pitch in order to avoid the "situation" at all costs. "Everydayness takes Dasein as something ready-to-hand to be concerned with--that is, something that gets managed and reckoned up. 'Life' is a 'business', whether or not it covers its costs."¹⁴⁰ Today we more or less accomodate this implicit consequence of romanticism as something included in the rent, like

¹³⁹Panofsky, The Renaissance, p. 181.

¹⁴⁰Heidegger, Being and Time, p. 336.

the water bill; but for the nineteenth century the cost of romanticism was dear. The failure of the "objective" or "scientific" analysis of private interior states to find a "law" or general maxim was finally evidenced in the necessity of Freud. The romantics had isolated single emotional states without interrogating their relationship to a whole world. And without a world, man is unavoidably doomed to "insanity."

Between Romanticism and Transcendentalism lies the straight and narrow path. We might add, that path is extremely short; so short, in fact, that if one closes his eyes he is there, for Emerson's transparent eyeball is irreparably blind as well. Like romanticism, transcendentalism is largely the product of post-Kantian idealism. Just as romanticism could talk about the truth of nature as a reflection or image of the "self" or mind, so too could transcendentalism speak of a spiritual "insight" based on close observation of nature. For Emerson, each moment is uniquely transcendent in the perception of the object; and if we see it "correctly" we are led to the truth of nature itself. Yet Emerson was no more systematic in his thinking than Coleridge; and though it seems that he sincerely envisioned himself as a counter-gradient to the perceptual bias of his age, his thinking remained inextricably tied to the age's most fundamental prejudice. In his essay "Nature," Emerson invariably relies on the traditional epistemological metaphor of picture-thinking; his diction is saturated with the word "picture." Describing the correspondence between "visible things and human thoughts," Emerson remarks, "Every natural fact is a symbol of some spiritual fact. Every appearance in nature corresponds to some state of the mind, and that state of the mind can only be described by presenting that natural appearance as its

picture."¹⁴¹ And elsewhere he says, "To the attentive eye, each moment of the year has its own beauty, and in the same field, it beholds, every hour, a picture which was never seen before, and which shall never be seen again."¹⁴² That Emerson uses the word "picture" to such an excess suggests that he recognizes the moment of vision as a fixed organized image, anticipating the daguerreotype by three years.¹⁴³ In order to see nature correctly, "I become a transparent eyeball; I am nothing; I see all; the currents of the Universal Being circulate through me."¹⁴⁴ In seeing all, the perceiver becomes a transparent eyeball by escaping the frame of his body as well as the situation of perception itself; such a disembodied being must surely be "nothing," as Emerson would have it. Of course, this does not frighten Emerson any more than Homais in Flaubert's Madame Bovary; as he remarks to Madame Lefrancois: "Nothingness does not frighten a philosopher."¹⁴⁵ Even so, before this transparent eyeball becomes a nothingness in order to discern the reciprocal transparency of nature and of the universe itself, it must condescendingly address the "forms" of nature. As an object of the intellect, "The beauty of nature re-forms itself in the mind, and not for barren contemplation, but for new creation."¹⁴⁶

Such is the constitution of all things, or such the plastic power

¹⁴¹Nature, "Language," in The Complete Works of Ralph Waldo Emerson, ed. Edward Waldo Emerson, Centenary Edition, 12 vols. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1903-21), 1:29 and 26, respectively.

¹⁴²Ibid., "Beauty," p. 18.

¹⁴³Rudisill, p. 17. ¹⁴⁴Nature, "Nature," p. 10.

¹⁴⁵Gustave Flaubert, Madame Bovary, trans. Paul de Man (New York: W. W. Norton and Co., Inc., A Norton Critical Edition, 1965), p. 242.

¹⁴⁶Nature, "Beauty," p. 23.

of the human eye, that the primary forms, as the sky, the mountain, the tree, the animal, give us a delight in and for themselves; a pleasure arising from outline, color, motion, and grouping. This seems partly owing to the eye itself. The eye is the best of artists. By the mutual action of its structure and of the laws of light, perspective is produced, which integrates every mass of objects, of what character soever, into a well colored and shaded globe, so that where the particular objects are mean and unaffecting, the landscape which they compose is round and symmetrical.¹⁴⁷

Nature is thus "the integrity of impression made by manifold natural objects. . . . There is a property in the horizon which no man has but he whose eye can integrate all the parts."¹⁴⁸ Again, that specific property of the eye which is able to unify the manifold, to integrate the objects of nature into a uniformly continuous space, is characterized by perspective. Emerson envisions the existent as a picture.

Spatial perspective so permeates Emerson's thinking that he defines Memory in similar terms: "Visible distance behind and before us, is respectively our image of memory and hope."¹⁴⁹ We are reminded of Hume. But Emerson rhetorically espouses an all-inclusive posture to the extent that he facilely accomodates all other systems in so far as they contain a partial truth, a kind of mental "aspect" of nature. Because idealism glibly negotiates all angles simultaneously, sees through the angular distinctness of matter in terms of a perspective somehow beyond perspective like Leibniz's perspectiveless posture, Emerson judiciously concedes all points of view: "The dawn is my Assyria; the sunset and moonrise my Paphos, and unimaginable realms of faerie; broad noon shall be my England of the senses and the understanding; the night shall be my Germany of mystic philosophy and dreams."¹⁵⁰ Although he appears to

¹⁴⁷Ibid., "Beauty," p. 15. ¹⁴⁸Ibid., "Nature," p. 8.

¹⁴⁹Ibid., "Language," p. 26. ¹⁵⁰Ibid., "Beauty," p. 17.

oblige both empiricism and idealism in this remark, Emerson, like Coleridge, believed that truth reposed ultimately in the mind. The imagination mediates between reason and sensation in order to arrive at the transparency of the world: "The Imagination may be defined to be the use which the Reason makes of the material world."¹⁵¹ In a passage somewhat reminiscent of Kant's definition of the sublime, Emerson describes this process; it is interesting, here, that he speaks of the "eye" of reason, although it seems that a pure "vision" of reason is beyond form--a transparency which approximates Kant's formlessness of the sublime:

When the eye of Reason opens, to outline and surface are at once added grace and expression. These proceed from imagination and affection, and abate somewhat of the angular distinctness of objects. If the Reason be stimulated to more earnest vision, outlines and surfaces become transparent, and are no longer seen; causes and spirits are seen through them.¹⁵²

In fact, Emerson specifically mentions the sublime several times in the essay; yet, regardless of whether or not he has Kant's concept of the sublime distinctly in mind here, it is obvious that Emerson's thinking is dominated by the desire to see through to the noumenal world. We can only arrive at the ultimately unframed vision of reason by cutting down the angular distinctness of matter in so far as it shapes and forms the object; but in order to do this, the imagination must somehow alter our point of view. By changing the point of view we get a new perspective on things; this, of course, means that we must catch nature in the act, amidst its fleeting variety of shapes and forms:

Nature is made to conspire with spirit to emancipate us. Certain mechanical changes, a small alteration in our local position, apprises us of a dualism. We are strangely affected by seeing the

¹⁵¹Ibid., "Idealism," p. 52. ¹⁵²Ibid., "Idealism," pp. 49-50.

shore from a moving ship, from a balloon, or through the tints of an unusual sky. The least change in our point of view gives the whole world a pictorial air. A man who seldom rides, needs only to get into a coach and traverse his own town, to turn the street into a puppet-show. The men, the women,--talking, running, bartering, fighting,--the earnest mechanic, the loungeur, the beggar, the boys, the dogs, are unrealized at once, or, at least, wholly detached from all relation to the observer, and seen as transparent, not substantial beings. What new thoughts are suggested by seeing a face of country quite familiar, in the rapid movement of the railroad car! Nay, the most wanted objects, (make a very slight change in the point of vision,) please us most. In a camera obscura, the butcher's cart, and the figure of one of our own family amuse us. So a portrait of a well-known face gratifies us. Turn the eyes upside down, by looking at the landscape through your legs, and how agreeable is the picture, though you have seen it any time these twenty years!¹⁵³

For Emerson, changing the point of view "unrealizes" the world, it idealizes in so far as the vision is "wholly detached from all relation to the observer;" like the unsituated attitude of scientific "observation," Emerson's observer ideally perceives the object from everywhere at once. In theory, only when the imagination presents the object from every point of view is reason then disposed to see the transparency of nature. But does this, in fact, mean that the vanishing point ceases to inhere in the object? Does man finally abdicate his spectatorial throne? Does Emerson disown the theoretically ubiquitous perspective? Not at all. Man still determines the existent in so far as his vision constitutes a perspective; but instead of being in the form of the object, as such, the vanishing point now nebulously inheres in the formlessness of the "truth" of nature as a whole. "Every universal truth which we express in words, implies or supposes every other truth. Omne verum vero consonat. It is like a great circle on a sphere, comprising all possible circles; which, however, may be drawn and comprise it in

¹⁵³Ibid., "Idealism," pp. 50-51.

like manner. Every such truth is the absolute Ens seen from one side. But it has innumerable sides."¹⁵⁴ In order to see the truth, then, man must be outside the existent, for it is only from the ubiquitous point of view that man can perceive an entirely determinate picture of the whole truth of being: "A Fact is the end or last issue of spirit. The visible creation is the terminus or the circumference of the invisible world."¹⁵⁵

Like the scientific consciousness, Emerson's reason would define its scope in terms of the infinite; because it fails to recognize the very situatedness of being, it dis-locates itself from the world it seeks to see and, henceforth, ascribes to mind what was once the task of the body. But truth remains objective in the sense that it is "there" for all to see, it is the object of the mind; and man can know the truth only in so far as he sets it before himself. But to the extent that truth is mind, and not determined as an internal or external form, what man sets before himself is, in fact, himself. Only because mind terminates the mirror of truth can nature, in turn, become a "discipline"--again, mind over matter. At times, Emerson's essay reads like a gloss on Addison: when man's thoughts are the equal of nature so that he can get the better of her, beat her at her own game, "the frame will suit the picture. A virtuous man is in unison with her works, and makes the central figure of the visible sphere."¹⁵⁶ Nature thus frames man, who in turn frames the truth of the world which is nothing more than the disembodied image of himself. Interestingly, this self-portrait is

¹⁵⁴Ibid., "Discipline," p. 44.

¹⁵⁵Ibid., "Language," pp. 34-35. ¹⁵⁶Ibid., "Beauty," p. 22.

never seen in profile, but always in full "view." In general, idealism does not do away with the distinction between subject and object, but rather makes the subject the object of his own observation. Like the seventeenth-century portrait, which gazes in full view upon the observer, idealism establishes a psychological vanishing point in the viewer.¹⁵⁷ "Idealism acquaints us with the total disparity between the evidence of our own being and the evidence of the world's being. The one is perfect; the other, incapable of any assurance."¹⁵⁸ Yet, the viewer is still divorced from the view precisely because it is a view, even if only a mirror-view or self-view; and as a view at all, the "visual" vanishing point remains outside the subject.

We are taught by great actions that the universe is the property of every individual in it. Every rational creature has all nature for his dowry and estate. It is his, if he will. He may divest himself of it; he may creep into a corner, and abdicate his kingdom, as most men do, but he is entitled to the world by his constitution. In proportion to the energy of his thought and will, he takes up the world into himself.¹⁵⁹

Reason thus determines the world, constitutes the world, indeed creates the world; through it we learn that "man has access to the entire mind of the Creator, is himself the creator in the finite. This view . . . carries upon its face the highest certificate of truth, because it animates me to create my own world through the purification of my soul."¹⁶⁰ Indeed, the world belongs to those who think it best, and life becomes the thinking of a history, or better, the history of a thought, for only the rational perspective is correct: "In inquiries

¹⁵⁷McLuhan, Vanishing Point, p. 13. ¹⁵⁸Nature, "Spirit," p. 62.

¹⁵⁹Ibid., "Beauty," p. 20.

¹⁶⁰Ibid., "Spirit," p. 65.

respecting the laws of the world and the frame of things, the highest reason is always the truest."¹⁶¹ The manifold in unity, "il piu nell' uno," subsequently exists as something tacked on to reason whereby nature merely becomes "an appendix to the soul."¹⁶² This attitude represents a logical extension of Cartesian metaphysics, wherein the existent as a whole is set before us in so far as it loses its opacity and becomes visibly transparent; in such a way man gets a view on it, a picture of the whole thing. He subsequently concentrates all his efforts into the solution of this picture-puzzle; he interrogates the world by demanding that it show itself. Discontent with the "appearance" of a world, man demands that things reveal themselves for what they "really" are beneath the surface of their form. Because he adds an "aspect" to the thing which he cannot "see," an invisible quale over and above the quantum, he spends the remainder of a life searching for a transparency in the thing which was never there to begin, never attested by the thing, but somehow posited as necessarily-there by himself. Man's quaquaversal vision seeks transparency as something payable on demand. George Santayana expressed the absurdity of such an attitude, and of idealism in general, in his satirical little poem which appeared in the Journal of Philosophy, 1952, but written around 1926:

"I thought, before I learned to think,
That bread was food and water drink,
But now I know that drink and food
Are simple phases of the good.
My need of nourishment makes meat
Out of such things as I can eat;
Only that drink is drink in act
Which irrigates my thirsty tract;
And because I am slaked and fed
Water is water and bread bread.

¹⁶¹Ibid., "Prospects," p. 66. ¹⁶²Ibid., "Idealism," p. 56.

Pips, bones, and gristle and the rest,
 Express my failure to digest.
 My mind, with all in thought comprised,
 Is just digestion realized;
 The whole world else, beyond all question,
 Is my projected indigestion.
 How came it that so bright a youth
 Ever could doubt this limpid truth?
 Because, concerning food and drink,
 I thought before I learned to think."¹⁶³

In effect, Emerson no more wished to transact the truth of vision than did Descartes; rather than investigate the phenomenon, Emerson would chase the specters of Reasons, which negotiates form-less, object-less perceptions "on the edge of a world that doesn't equivocate!"¹⁶⁴ Like Descartes' Dioptric, Emerson's "Nature" represents "the breviary of a thought that wants no longer to abide in the visible and so decides to construct the visible according to a model-in-thought."¹⁶⁵ By handling the existent in this way, man secures a position free from doubt, Descartes' very starting point. By calculation and manipulation man imposes his will on nature as the very representation of its "truth", and thus determines the existent in so far as it becomes his servant.

The exercise of the Will, or the lesson of power, is taught in every event. From the child's successive possession of his several senses up to the hour when he saith, "Thy will be done!" he is learning the secret that he can reduce under his will not only particular events but great classes, nay, the whole series of events, and so conform all facts to his character. Nature is thoroughly mediate. It is made to serve. It receives the dominion of man as meekly as the ass on which the Saviour rode. It offers all its kingdoms to man as the raw material which he may mould into what is useful. Man is never weary of working it up. . . . One after another his victorious thought comes up with and reduces all things, until the world becomes at last only a

¹⁶³quoted in Dialogue on George Santayana, ed. Corliss Lamont
 (New York: Horizon Press, 1959), pp. 105-06.

¹⁶⁴Merleau-Ponty, Primacy, p. 169.

¹⁶⁵Ibid.

realized will,--the double of the man.¹⁶⁶

Such a willful im-position is irreparably doomed to failure; because he is naturally "out of position," man can only continue to make those costly errors which will finally cost him the ball game. As soon as he becomes the frame of reference by which the existent as a whole is judged, man de-limits his vision to that high-lighted area and its peripheral frame through which he stares at the reflection of himself. By seeing the world as that which stares back at him, the reflection of himself, he logically concludes that the existent as a whole does so also; but the syllogism is based on a false premise, and the results are devastating. "The greatest delight which the fields and woods minister is the suggestion of an occult relation between man and the vegetable. I am not alone and unacknowledged. They nod to me, and I to them. . . . Nature always wears the colors of the spirit."¹⁶⁷ The universe recognizes man's presence; it reassures him he is there. Man needs this kind of formal acknowledgment once he locates himself outside the existent as an observer.

III

"It is no exaggeration to say that in the history of modern science the advent of perspective marked the beginning of a first period; the invention of the telescope and the microscope that of a second; and the discovery of photography that of a third."¹⁶⁸ And it is no accident that the history of these three inventions constitutes the history of the

¹⁶⁶Nature, "Discipline," pp. 39-40.

¹⁶⁷Ibid., "Nature," pp. 10-11.

¹⁶⁸Panofsky, The Renaissance, p. 147.

solidification of the world-view. Today, that world-view bespeaks the enormous value attached to "specialization" vis-a-vis research, a procedure thoroughly different from seventeenth-century "experimentation." Yet, both experimentation and research presume that their projected area is able to become "objective" only in so far as they already possess a view of the world "ahead" of their activity.

Every science is, as research, founded on the projection of a limited object area and is therefore necessarily specialized science. But, in the development of the projection, every specialized science must, through its procedure, separate itself into definite fields of investigation. But this separation or specialization is by no means only the unavoidable concomitant of the increasing vastness of the results of research. It is not a necessary evil, but the necessary essence of science as research. Specialization is not the consequence, but the cause of the progress of all research.¹⁶⁹

Characterized by its "busy-ness," modern science is able to incorporate the projection of its object area in the existent; but this is nothing less than to grant the procedure itself definitive precedence over Being, which research objectifies.¹⁷⁰ "On the basis of this business character, the sciences provide themselves with the appropriate coherence and unity," which in turn forms men of an entirely different stamp: "The scholar disappears. He is replaced by the research man who is engaged in research projects. This, rather than the pursuit of scholarship, gives his work its keen atmosphere. The research man no longer needs a library at home. Besides he is always moving about. He does business at meetings and gets information at congresses."¹⁷¹ The total picture of the sciences today is grounded in this kind of motility; with respect to the objectification of Being, modern science has erected a "system"

¹⁶⁹Heidegger, "World View," pp. 346-47.

¹⁷⁰Ibid., p. 347. ¹⁷¹Ibid., pp. 347-48.

which offers the "greatest possible ability to switch its research--freedom of research, yet regulated mobility of transference and integration of activities with respect to whatever tasks happen to be of paramount importance."¹⁷² In this way, research "holds the existent to account on the question of how and how far it can be put at the disposal of available 'representation.' Research has the existent at its disposal if it can either calculate it in advance, in its future course, or calculate it afterwards as past."¹⁷³ Of course, this aspect of research, the transformation of truth into certainty of representation, had originated with Descartes, and had thoroughly serrated the perceptual field by the seventeenth century with the propagation of the "new science."¹⁷⁴ But it takes a uniquely different course in our own century. It is in the most varied guises that science, as research, specifically appears as "the gigantic," and it is in this connection that the gigantic announces the infinitesimal.¹⁷⁵ At the same time that technology produces such things as the skyscraper and the atomic bomb, it lays the ground for the emergence of that which makes such quantitatively gigantic phenomena possible: "Think of the numbers of atomic physics. The gigantic presses forward in a form which appears precisely to make it vanish."¹⁷⁶ Yet, beneath the superficially quantitative exterior of the gigantic there lurks, in our own time, a shadow darker than night; for the gigantic naturally tends to hide that through which the quantitative is trans-

¹⁷²Ibid., p. 348. ¹⁷³Ibid., p. 349.

¹⁷⁴Cf. Patrick Cruttwell, The Shakespearian Moment. London: Chatto and Windus, 1954, and Hallett Smith, Elizabethan Poetry. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1952.

¹⁷⁵Heidegger, "World View," p. 354. ¹⁷⁶Ibid.

formed into a peculiar quality, and subsequently becomes a distinctive type of greatness.¹⁷⁷

Every historical period differs from others not only in its greatness; it has also in each case its own concept of greatness. But as soon as the gigantic in planning and calculation and organization and affirmation shifts from the quantitative to a peculiar quality, the gigantic and that which can apparently be completely and continually calculated becomes, precisely because of this, the incalculable. This remains the invisible shadow which is cast over all things everywhere when man has become subjectum and the world a view.¹⁷⁸

Today, this menacing specter appears not only against the backdrop of an immanent nuclear catastrophe, but also hovers over the more threatening consequences of contemporary genetic research. When the International Council of Scientific Unions feels it necessary to form a watch-dog committee in order to regulate and monitor, as well as promote, recombinant DNA research, the incalculable has unmistakably become, indeed, a distinctive type of greatness, that peculiar quality about which Heidegger speaks. Unfortunately, there is no reason to believe this new Committee on Genetic Experimentation will be able to do any more than what certain individual governments are already trying to do alone.

Yet, on other fronts, contemporary scientific objectification touches our daily lives more poignantly; the electronic revolution in mass media such as the telephone and television evidences an apparently decreasing ability to situate ourselves, whereby modern technology pushes forward toward the "annihilation" of time and space. We experience it in terms of transportation as well; witness the ever-decreasing time (and space) interval between any two points on the globe. Air flight, for example, makes its own unique demands on the passenger,

¹⁷⁷Ibid. ¹⁷⁸Ibid.

demands which must be addressed both physically and psychologically in order to remain somehow "oriented" toward a whole world:

Air flight involves an extension of the whole body. Once in the air a plane makes its own times and spaces, or perhaps one should say that it exists mainly in the dimension of time rather than space once it is off the ground. The passengers develop a "destination syndrome," as it were, as their contribution to the unique space created in the act of flight.¹⁷⁹

The new technological acceleration which we experience today in terms of fragmentation and isolation, however, is unique to the age only in so far as we approach the zero-limit of this interval as a lived experience.

The nineteenth century was a time of enormous technological innovation as well. Such inventions as the steamboat, the railroad, and the telegraph appreciably diminished the time-space factor. Among the numerous technological innovations of the age, Emerson lists five miracles which appeared in his own lifetime: the steamboat, the railroad, the telegraph, the application of the spectroscope to astronomy, and the photograph; a little ditty from Elton's Songs and Melodies for the Multitude humorously expresses what must have been a common sentiment of the time:

Oh, the world ain't now as it used to was,
The past is like a dream, sirs.
Every thing's on the railroad plan,
Though they don't all go by steam, sirs.

Expresses now are all the rage,
By steamboat and balloon, sirs,
In a year or two we'll get the news
Directly from the moon, sirs.

The electric telegraphs are now
Both time and distance mocking,
But then, the news which they convey
Is really very shocking. . . .

Short hand is now quite out of use,
For when the ministers preach, sirs,

¹⁷⁹McLuhan, Vanishing Point, p. 217.

Or politicians rise to spout,
 They "Daguerreotype" the speech, sirs.¹⁸⁰

To the extent that the above attitude addresses a new technological attitude, it also tells us specifically how that age was on the way towards a world-view, and how the inventions of the age supported the stipulation that man, as subjectum, envisioned himself as the norm of the existent as a whole. Among Emerson's five technological miracles, can we find one which stands out above the rest and articulates the public, technological bias more than any other?

More than any other invention of the age, the daguerreotype became the metaphor for technology in the public consciousness:

Along with the railroad and the electric telegraph, it had taken hold of popular imagination as an example of technology. Distinct from the railroad and the telegraph, the daguerreotype had implications of symbolic insight which made it an ideal agency for such use. It seemed to epitomize new means of reaching truth in a form acceptable to everyone.¹⁸¹

In general, the daguerrean view supported the publicly biased attachment to technology and its concomitant perceptual prejudice in so far as it helped "locate" man in the universe; it encouraged the fictive time and space which accompanies having a world-view. As that which is "real" only to the extent that it is set before us, the world became ultimately accessible when man could at last frame an image of it seemingly irrespective of his own position in that world, an image which appeared to co-incide with the object perfectly. Once man had captured the existent scientifically, and done so in a purely "objective" fashion divorced from the partial subjectivity inherent in microscopic and tele-

¹⁸⁰"Rhymes and Chimes," quoted in Rudisill, pp. 74-75.

¹⁸¹Rudisill, p. 73.

scopic instrumentation, the existent was assumed to be "there" before him once and for all; that is, in the sense we have previously defined as "rational." In 1849 Samuel Dwight Humphrey sent one of his plates of a multiple exposure of the moon to Jared Sparks, then president of Harvard University, who replied: "We here perceive the apparent motion of the Moon, or rather the actual motion of the Earth on its axis, distinctly measured for half a minute's time, within the space of one-tenth of an inch."¹⁸² Once time and space have been set before us as an entirely measurable function, as that kind of thing on which we can formulate a perspective, both time and space are demonstrated to be calculable and manipulable; they are, in fact, proven to be exclusively objective, and to be so "really." The daguerreotype's ability to record a direct image of man's location with respect to the moon and stars asserted man's presence in the universe, and pushed him further into the forefront of that frame of reference by which the existent as a whole would henceforth be envisioned, manipulated, and constituted. The daguerreotype made explicit the central thought of the age; once man no longer considered himself as situated in the world, as that existent which looks upon the world in order to dis-cover it, but rather as the central figure of the world by which truth is solely determined and appropriated in so far as it coincides with his representation of it, he ceased to "see" the world at all. Now it is the world which perceives man as he goes about the business of manipulating and calculating it. If man continues to "see" at all, it is to perceive that which is looking at him. As with Emerson's "Nature," everything bears witness to man's own actions, and

¹⁸²quoted in Rudisill, p. 85.

history becomes the record of man's presence in the universe.

Edward Hitchcock expressed the sentiment unreservedly:

Men fancy that a wave of oblivion passes over the greater part of their actions. But physical science shows us that those actions have been transfused into the very texture of the universe, so that no waters can wash them out, and no erosions, comminution, or metamorphoses, can obliterate them. . . . Our words, our actions, and even our thoughts, make an indelible impression on the universe.¹⁸³

Hitchcock further envisions the universe as one "vast picture gallery," and defines the universe, in essence, as nothing less than a huge daguerreotype of history which "encloses the pictures of the past, like an indestructible and incorruptible record, containing the purest and the clearest truth."¹⁸⁴ Considering the implications that all nature is pervaded by this photographic influence, he proceeds: "We do not know but it may imprint upon the world around us our features, as they are modified by various passions, and thus fill nature with daguerreotype impressions of all our actions that are performed in daylight."¹⁸⁵ Analogous to the perspective articulated in Whitman's interior picture gallery,¹⁸⁶ Hitchcock perceives history in essentially photographic terms; for all future generations the "truth" of history will be directly accessible. History, and truth in general, subsequently become that which can be visually perceived and accurately recorded as a representation. Only the represented "fact" is true, and it is true to the extent that its objectivity coincides with the rational.

¹⁸³The Religion of Geology and its Related Sciences (Boston: Phillips, Sampson, and Co., 1851), p. 410.

¹⁸⁴Ibid., pp. 410 and 418, respectively. ¹⁸⁵Ibid., p. 426.

¹⁸⁶Cf. Walt Whitman, Pictures: An Unpublished Poem. New York: The June House, 1927.

We have seen this collusion before in Emerson's "Nature," whereby nature coquettishly acknowledges man's presence in the universe. Man solicits this complicity whereby the universe reassures him he is "there;" he needs this kind of formal acknowledgment in so far as he locates himself outside the existent as an observer. Emerson's "Nature" had originally appeared in 1836, three years before the invention of the daguerreotype, and disclosed to what extent the stage had been set for its latest technological performance. Hitchcock's definition of the universe as a vast picture gallery, and history as the all-inclusive daguerreotype, merely constitute the daguerrean articulation, or "exposure" if you will, of Emerson's description of idealism, which "beholds the whole circle of persons and things, of actions and events, of country and religion, not as painfully accumulated, atom after atom, act after act, in an aged creeping Past, but as one vast picture which God paints on the instant eternity for the contemplation of the soul."¹⁸⁷ The daguerreotype terminated the emphasis which the age placed on visual representation, and its correlative ability to arrive at the "truth" of nature and reality in general. Consciousness thus comes to be constituted by its visual "data," a collection of mental contents representing a coincidence between subject and object; and rationality, in turn, is shown to be grounded in the immediacy of fact, the unequivocal relation between sensation and impression--indeed, "a fortunate accident bringing together dispersed sensations."¹⁸⁸ The ontological implications of idealism are thus seen to be grounded in the very same epistemological

¹⁸⁷Nature, "Idealism," p. 60.

¹⁸⁸Merleau-Ponty, Phenomenology, p. 60.

assumptions as rationalism. Idealism generally seeks to discover a "community in being" rather than a "community in meaning," as Cassirer denies to analytical reflection itself; yet, even an abstracted "community in meaning" destroys the significance of phenomena, for it places consciousness outside being.¹⁸⁹ Like the rational perspective, symbolic insight is fated to remain irreparably divorced from the phenomenon itself. Thus, the daguerreotype superficially articulated both the realistic and transcendental posture; for over and above its ability to accurately record the object as it "appears," the daguerreotype simultaneously accommodated the symbolic demand that we see "in" the object something "beyond" the object itself--that is, that we see "more." This seeing "more," however, contingently subsists in the accuracy by which we initially perceive the object as "objective;" we can appropriate the spiritual insight only in so far as it is grounded in accurate representation, that is, only to the extent that "what" we see before us (the visual data or content of consciousness) is "formal."

Axiomatically, the daguerreotype was quick to seize the "content" of painting as most properly germane to its own purpose and potential; within a single year after its invention such a distinguished figure as Samuel Morse had already forseen the daguerreotype's enormous possibility as a determining factor in the art world. In 1840, as president of the National Academy of Design, Morse declared: "The daguerreotype is undoubtedly destined to produce a great revolution in art, and we, as artists, should be aware of it and rightly understand its influence. This influence, both on ourselves and the public generally, will, I

¹⁸⁹Cf. Ibid., pp. 124-25.

think, be in the highest degree favorable to the character of art."¹⁹⁰ The thinking of Thomas Cole, at this time, reflects the "realistic" aspect of the American visual sense, and in it we may discern that aspect of representation which Reynolds termed "mechanical" as opposed to the "poetical." In his paintings, Cole seeks to present the object as a form of the "natural eye," rather than the "mind's eye;" in a letter to William Dunlap he remarks, "Although, in many respects, I was delighted with the English school of painting, yet, on the whole, I was disappointed: my natural eye was disgusted with its gaud and ostentation."¹⁹¹ He continues:

Turner is the prince of the evil spirits. With imagination and a deep knowledge of the machinery of his art, he has produced some surprising specimens of effect. His earlier pictures are really beautiful and true, though rather misty; but in his late works you see the most splendid combinations of color and chiaroscuro--gorgeous but altogether false--there is a visionary, unsubstantial look about them that, for some subjects, is admirably appropriate; but in pictures, representing scenes in this world, rocks should not look like sugar candy, nor the ground like jelly.¹⁹²

Yet, consummate painter that he was, Cole was cautious not to carry this position to the extreme; in a letter of 1844 he wrote that a painting "ought not to be a dead imitation of things without the power to impress a sentiment, or enforce a truth."¹⁹³ Indeed, his "L'Allegro" and "Il

¹⁹⁰quoted in M. A. Root, The Camera and the Pencil (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott and Co., 1864), p. 391.

¹⁹¹William Dunlap, A History of the Rise and Progress of the Arts of Design in the United States, rev. ed., ed. Frank W. Bayley and Charles E. Goodspeed, 3 vols. (Boston: C. E. Goodspeed and Co., 1918), 3:152.

¹⁹²Ibid., p. 153.

¹⁹³quoted in American Narrative Painting, Catalog notes by Nancy Wall Moure, Essay by Donelson F. Hoopes (Los Angeles: Los Angeles County Museum of Art, in association with Praeger Publishers, Inc., 1974), p. 54.

Penseroso" display a marked fascination with light although it could be argued that the themes dictate such an emphasis, while his "The Voyage of Life: Manhood" bears, in many respects, a genuine resemblance to Turner himself. Nonetheless, Cole's general attitude reveals how easily the daguerreotype was able to appropriate the realistic function of painting, a function not only sanctioned by many painters themselves, but also shared by a large portion of the general public.

Working men and artisans over the country formed a keenly critical audience able to spot an inaccuracy or a distortion of what they knew from experience; in this kind of image recording even more than with landscapes, Americans believed that a picture was "good" if it was "true." Perhaps more than any other form of visual record, the genre paintings illustrated a climate of interest that was favorable for the introduction of photography. Like the panoramas, these pictures prefigured a need for the recording accuracy of the daguerreotype.¹⁹⁴

In Paris, however, when Daguerre produced his first "sun-paintings," audience response was somewhat qualified; Daguerre's early pictures reflected a magical aura specifically in terms of their acutely represented detail. Yet, the initial rejoinder to the daguerreotype evinced the feeling that something was "missing."¹⁹⁵ The accuracy of

¹⁹⁴Rudisill, p. 12.

¹⁹⁵A passage from the Leipziger Anzeiger amusingly reflects an extreme reaction to the daguerreotype, as quoted in Rudisill, p. 50. The great generosity of the French government in presenting the process of the daguerreotype as a free gift to the world made the daguerreotype internationally known almost over night. Having failed to make a daguerreotype itself, the Anzeiger denounced Daguerre in the following terms:

"Wanting to hold fast to transitory mirror-pictures is not only an impossibility, as has been shown by basic German research, but even the wish to do so is blasphemy. Man is created in the image of God, and God's image cannot be captured by any man-made machine. . . . God has, to be sure, tolerantly forborne the mirror in His creation as a vain toy of the Devil. Most likely, however, He is regretting this tolerance, especially because many women are using mirrors to look at themselves in all of their vanity and pride. But no mirror, neither of glass nor of

these pictures intensified their magical mood,

by their eerie representation of Paris as a city complete to every brick yet totally devoid of life. Since even the most carefully detailed paintings of the age--such as those of David or Ingres--were still oriented to a central concern with humanity, people were used to thinking of pictures as centering on man. Since it was also the period of Romantic painting, pictures were expected to idealize the world by addition or suppression or interpretation. Now, suddenly, people in one of the most art-conscious cities of the world were confronted with pictures that were uncompromisingly acute in itemizing the details of the world but which simultaneously removed all trace of human life. The absence of color in such otherwise perfect representations further stressed this effect, as did the curious negative-positive character of the image on a perfect mirror surface that turned realistic scenes into ghostly negative images with the slightest change of viewing angle.¹⁹⁶

Unsurprisingly, then, feeling somehow left out of the frame, it was in order to compensate for this apparent void in the photographic "still-life" that man as subjectum re-positioned himself into the forefront once again by defining the daguerrean process as an art. Henceforth, the daguerreotypist becomes an "artist." This was especially necessary for an audience which could only think in terms of a visual conditioning centered around man, particularly so in painting itself; by comparison, the daguerreotype must have seemed peculiarly, if not frighteningly, devoid of the human "touch." Ironically, the painters were among the

quicksilver, has yet received permission from God to hold fast the image of the human face. . . . Now: Should this same God, who for thousands of years has never allowed that mirror-pictures of men should be fadeless, should this same God suddenly become untrue to His eternal principles and allow that a Frenchman from Paris should set loose such a devilish invention into the World!?? We must make clear, after all, how unChristian and Hellishly vain mankind would become if everyone could have his own mirror-picture made for filthy money and reproduced by the dozen. There would be such a mass epidemic of vanity that mankind would become godlessly superficial and godlessly vain. And if this "Mon-sewer" Daguerre in Paris maintains a hundred times that his human mirror-pictures can be held fast on silver plates, this must a hundred times be called an infamous lie, and it is not worthwhile that German masters of optics concern themselves with this impertinent claim."

¹⁹⁶Rudisill, p. 39.

first to recognize the daguerreotype's artistic significance: Delacroix, for example, made elaborate use of the photographic medium for his own drawings; and Paul Delaroche, in a remark singularly pertinent to the over-worked comparison to Rembrandt's etchings, said of the daguerreotype, "Color is translated with so much truth that its absence is forgotten."¹⁹⁷ Whatever mysterious meaning Delaroche may have intended, comparison with Rembrandt immediately became a general touchstone "for discussing the monochromatic continuous-tone subtleties of light and dark which had never been seen before, and the medium's acuteness of rendering of atmospheric conditions was a constant marvel."¹⁹⁸ Already, in 1839, the year of its birth, N. P. Willis, the "sunshine and summer" columnist as S. G. Goodrich called him in contra-distinction to the "chill, dark, and wintry" Hawthorne,¹⁹⁹ said of the daguerreotype:

All nature shall paint herself--fields, rivers, trees, houses, plains, mountains, cities, shall all paint themselves at a bidding, and at a few moment's notice. Towns will no longer have any representative but themselves. Invention says it. It has found out the one thing new under the sun; that, by virtue of the sun's patent, all nature, animate and inanimate, shall be henceforth its own painter, engraver, printer, and publisher.²⁰⁰

From such a passage as the above, one can justifiably understand how Willis would be counted among Hawthorne's bunch of "scribbling women;" nevertheless, Willis negotiates, here, the terms in which the daguerreotype generally came to be discussed. Rather than deny the daguerreo-

¹⁹⁷quoted in Rudisill, p. 41.

¹⁹⁸Rudisill, p. 38.

¹⁹⁹Recollections of a Lifetime, quoted in Hawthorne: The Critical Heritage, ed. J. Donald Crowley (New York: Barnes and Noble, Inc., 1970), p. 6.

²⁰⁰quoted in Rudisill, p. 43.

typist his "art," Willis' comment merely exhibits the difference between the European and American attitude toward painting at the time. Unlike the European reaction which focused on the creatively individual artist, the American attitude tended to emphasize the objects of nature as the "formal" constituents of art. In this respect, American painting principally attended to nature rather than the artist himself. Behind the theoretical divergence, however, one constant persistently emerged: the daguerreotype always tells the "truth" about nature, it cannot lie. In 1840, expressing a desire for this kind of absolute certainty, one of the great "rationalists" of the nineteenth century, Edgar Allan Poe, unequivocally stated the daguerreotype's superiority in this respect:

In truth the daguerreotype plate is infinitely more accurate than any painting by human hands. If we examine a work of ordinary art, by means of a powerful microscope, all traces of resemblance to nature will disappear--but the closest scrutiny of the photographic drawing discloses only a more absolute truth, more perfect identity of aspect with the thing represented.²⁰¹

Poe's "more perfect identity of aspect with the thing represented" might be said to describe the nineteenth-century scientific-technological attitude in general; but as we have seen, that perceptual bias was primordially grounded in the world-view itself, and more specifically, "rational" perspective. And whether or not that view focused outward upon the object or inward toward the subject, as an object of concern, it invariably employed representation as its criterion for "truth." The framed "prospectus" constructs a visually uniform space so that the view itself necessarily yields a formal resemblance between object and image. By taking over the "realistic" function of painting, the daguerreotype

²⁰¹quoted in Van Deren Coke, "Camera and Canvas," Art in America 49 (No. 3., 1961) : 68.

conferred a finality upon the existent in the sense that our certainty of the world was no longer confined, or forced to conform, to a physical or mental "organ." Man's picture of the world was no longer contingent upon the subjectivity inherent in microscopic or telescopic instrumentation, much less the extreme inaccuracies inherent in a painting or a drawing; the mirror-image correctly reflected the existent in its absolute truth. "A painting may omit a blemish, or adapt a feature to the artist's fancy, but a reflected image must be faithful to its prototype."²⁰²

Yet, this same kind of thinking simultaneously promoted the daguerreotype to a medium capable of symbolic insight precisely because of its essential ability to apprehend the object in the truth of its "form." In so far as the nineteenth-century perceptual bias demanded an absolute resemblance between external and internal worlds, phenomena merely represented the disclosure of an already pre-existent "reason;" formal identity thereby solved the problem of maximum coherence, the very condition for the possibility of the world.²⁰³ Whether or not this conformity represented the external world of Newtonian physics or the internal world of Kantian metaphysics, "form" itself invariably constituted the a priori model upon which the phenomena of structure are constructed. Rather than disclosing the very identity between external and internal world which it rhetorically sought, the world-view, because it assumes the ontological priority of space rather than time, "realizes" the world according to its norm to the extent that it projects the internal in the external, or vice versa. Both empiricism and idealism,

²⁰²J. M. Whittemore, prospectus for The Daguerreotype: A Magazine of Foreign Literature and Science, quoted in Rudisill, p. 73.

²⁰³Merleau-Ponty, Phenomenology, pp. 60-61.

no matter what guise they may assume, are compelled to do this in order to get the whole "thing" before its gaze, just as a child, placing the final piece of a puzzle into place, comes up with the whole picture. With transcendentalism, too, consciousness exists solely for the forms, and stands outside Being in order to see it in a single glance; the transcendental ego equally belongs to others as well as myself. In this sense, knowing other people can never be a problem, for in determining the general conditions which make a world possible we have already discovered the "other" as well. Only as pure consciousnesses can we have the world and its completed "history" transparently before us.²⁰⁴ Contemporary advertizing attests that this "view" largely persists to the present, and its inordinate success in creating a group consciousness tells us to what extent we think the world rather than live it. Similarly, the daguerreotype's symbolic function derived from its potential to define and perpetrate a national image which at once became "historical" and "true," a symbolic "reality." The possibility of publicly recording, for all times and places, an event or personality instigated a national or group consciousness:

When bodies of people taking part in noteworthy events were so deliberately involved with pictorial situations, a form of group consciousness of communication with later generations was activated. . . . The commonality of public experience in the picture-making situation from one part of the United States to another tended to universalize the responses of the people into national behavior and attitudes held in general.²⁰⁵

Public response to the daguerreotype consequently revealed a sense of historic iconology: "Merely by its presence, such a body of pictures

²⁰⁴For a more detailed explanation of the above, see Merleau-Ponty, Phenomenology, pp. 60-63.

²⁰⁵Rudisill, p. 224.

conditioned the process of visual perception along particular lines of development so that people came to conceive of certain kinds of visual images as being true, or permanent, or typical."²⁰⁶ Functioning on this level, the daguerreotype became more meaningful in terms of its image rather than its "subject matter," so that "the value attached to the subject of a picture was often transferred to the picture itself in a way that allowed the picture not only to reflect attitudes or feelings but to affect them in terms of what people saw and how they saw it."²⁰⁷ In the same way, we have seen that American landscape painters often sought to portray the "mood" of the landscape, desiring to lead the eye of the viewer beyond the physical limitation of the subject matter itself.

It was particularly in their attempt to represent light through an "atmosphere" that landscape painters imitated this "mood;" the eighteenth-century poet, Samuel Boyse, in his "Triumphs of Nature," expressed it thus:

As darts the Sun oblique his varied rays,
When through the fleecy cloud his lustre plays,
Here deepens to a gloom the varied green,
There beams a light--and shifts the shadowy scene:
But when the obvious vapour melts away,
The boundless prospect brightens into day.²⁰⁸

Similarly, nothing contributed more to the symbolic function of the daguerreotype than its relation to light. In "Nature," Emerson had remarked on the efficacy of light in perception: "And as the eye is the best composer, so light is the first of painters. There is no object so foul that intense light will not make beautiful. And the stimulus it affords to the sense, and a sort of infinitude which it hath, like space

²⁰⁶Ibid., p. 225. ²⁰⁷Ibid., p. 32.

²⁰⁸Works of the English Poets, 14:536.

and time, make all matter gay."²⁰⁹ With the daguerreotype, however, nature could immediately paint herself; as the direct and absolute image of light, these "sun-paintings" represented a "shadow" cast across the instant of eternity. The daguerreotype was thus unique in so far as it scientifically exemplified the Newtonian "divinity" of light. Much was made of the truth of this direct image of light, and the daguerreotype machine itself became a kind of mystical medium capable of asserting its own agency in the production of this truth. Speaking of his daguerreotype machine, James F. Ryder expressed the sentiment ingenuously: "The box was the body, the lens was the soul, and an 'all-seeing eye,' and the gift of carrying the image to the plate."²¹⁰ Indeed, this symbolic function has endured to the present. Edward Weston's photographic aesthetic merely reformulates the posture of Emerson's transcendental vision, whereby direct experience can lead to spiritual insight, and extends that kind of thinking into the twentieth century. Weston's repeated goal as a photographer, "To see the Thing Itself,"²¹¹ insists that the "thing itself" possess a significance beyond its explicit representation; and yet, the insight remains contingent upon accurate representation. "This then: to photograph a rock, have it look like a rock, but be more than a rock.--Significant presentation--not interpretation."²¹² We are reminded of Cole's remark on Turner, and his own

²⁰⁹Nature, "Beauty," p. 15.

²¹⁰Voigtlander and I (Cleveland: Cleveland Printing and Publishing Co., 1902), p. 16.

²¹¹quoted in Edward Weston: Photographer, ed. Nancy Newhall (Rochester: Aperture, Inc., 1964), p. 39.

²¹²Ibid.

belief that imitation should enforce some truth. And in a recent commentary on Edward Weston, Willard Van Dyke reinforces this kind of confused thinking about perception as a cogent value for the present age. Concerning the presentation of Weston's subject, Van Dyke says, it "is deceptively simple; it challenges the viewer to make his own interpretation. In his pictures the object is all there, complete within the confines of the frame; it is clearly what it is Yet it is more. Whatever it may be, it also partakes of all other things because Weston saw its universal qualities."²¹³ Again, as the translator and divine agent of light, the photograph appropriates the general truth of a thing. But surely, to perceive the "universal qualities" of a thing is to abstract it, to form-alize it. At any rate, it is clearly not to see the thing itself. In fact, it is nothing more than Emerson's transparent eyeball which, in its ability to capture the general effect as well as the specific detail, sees through the transparency of the world itself to its symbolic meaning. Weston defined his photographic aesthetic precisely in these terms:

The photographer's power lies in his ability to re-create his subject in terms of its basic reality, and present this re-creation in such a form that the spectator feels that he is seeing not just a symbol for the object, but the thing itself revealed for the first time. Guided by the photographer's selective understanding, the penetrating power of the camera-eye can be used to produce a heightened sense of reality--a kind of super realism that reveals the vital essence of things.²¹⁴

Thus, the photographer, due to his superior "selective understanding" of the existent and in conspiracy with the "penetrating power of the

²¹³quoted in "Photo Exhibition a Testimony to Weston's Skills," The Denver Post, 1 February 1976, "Roundup Section," p. 22.

²¹⁴"What is Photographic Beauty?" quoted in Rudisill, p. 141.

camera-eye," unabashedly guarantees the truth of his presentation. In effect, then, the photograph no longer even represents the object, but becomes the representation of how well the photographer understands the object before he objectifies it. This kind of patting oneself on the back does nothing more than typify a modified version of Edward Hitchcock's initial response to the medium: henceforth, all nature attests to man's presence in the universe. Weston's attitude further "develops" that diorthotic objectification of the world, whereby the thing exists only in so far as it is set before us, or "brought to light." Yet, this is anything but the Heideggerian "clearing" of aletheia, for there is no room here for the "shadow" of concealment in truth. Its own historian, light reveals the world as some sort of mysterious agent in subtle and unexpressed complicity with man. Once man has placed himself "in the picture," he tenaciously holds onto this view whereby he constitutes the world as subjectum. The more man pursues the calculation, manipulation, and objectification of the existent, the more prominently he places himself in the forefront of the frame. Indeed, "That the world becomes a view is one and the same process with that by which man, within the existent, becomes a subjectum."215

With the very inception of the daguerreotype, then, it was inevitable that man should become the subject for his own picture. The daguerrean portrait, by "objectively" placing man in the picture, literally terminated the anthropological tangent of nineteenth-century hero worship. Emerson's early thinking in the lectures on Biography (1835) reiterated Carlyle's On Heroes, Hero-Worship, and the Heroic in

215Heidegger, "World View," p. 352.

History, and the nineteenth-century approach to history in general. And his Representative Men (1850), though somewhat tempered by a growing emphasis on dialectic so that society as well as the individual is given a positive role in the historical synthesis, denotes a contiguous attitude in so far as man abides as "representative."²¹⁶ Man represents the determination of historical events; he represents the age. And in the sense that he represents it at all, he does so in terms of a fixed and static vision of a moment in time. Even if that moment now resides in either the dialectical thesis or antithesis, which taken as a relation is always "moving on" toward a new synthesis, the vision itself remains permanently fixed in its truth. In other words, the "face" of man represents the existent as a whole in no less a dogmatic sense than Swedenborg's theory of correspondences. And though it seems fair to say with Charles Feidelson that Swedenborg "was Emerson's favorite whipping boy"²¹⁷ regarding the stasis of Swedenborg's doctrine of symbolism, Emerson's view in Representative Men is equally as retrospective or static in so far as we can discover the dynamics of an age by looking back at an individual as representative at all--and framing that perspective, moreover, as one which will be correct and true for all future generations who subsequently look back. In such a way the "meaning" of history never belongs to the present, much less the future, but remains the counterfeit property of the past. The interpretation of history is in no way "subject" to change because the subject has become

²¹⁶For a detailed analysis of the role of dialectic in Emerson's historical thinking, see Gustaaf Van Cromphout, "Emerson and the Dialectics of History," PMLA 91 (January 1976) : 54-64.

²¹⁷Cf. Charles Feidelson, Jr., Symbolism and American Literature (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, Phoenix Books, 1959), p. 318.

an object for study, a "discipline." Whenever we look back, the subject is always "there," staring back at us from the exact same posture. Anchored in the past, these fixed lines of force secure man's position in the present--forever. In order to avoid this kind of historical attitude, we must keep in mind that these stereotypes in no way constitute a "destiny,"

and just as clothing, jewellery and love transfigure the biological needs from which they arise, in the same way within the cultural world the historical a priori is constant only for a given phase and provided that the balance of forces allows the same forms to remain. So history is neither a perpetual novelty, nor a perpetual repetition, but the unique movement which creates stable forms and breaks them up.²¹⁸

Of course, by its very nature the portrait is retrospective; as a view into the past, the portrait frames or isolates a moment which represents the "subject" of history as a timeless object, an object out of time. It was only with the daguerreotype, however, that "everyman" could become a hero; though, to be sure, this is no return to medieval non-perspectivism. Rather, the daguerreotype offered the opportunity for every man to have an "objectified" perspective on his private life, able to be exhibited at will to anyone else, thereby substantiating the claim that every life participates in the existent "significantly."

In very little time, then, the portrait became the bread and butter of the daguerreotypist's trade, and portrait galleries sprung up in every major city. While the European tradition of daguerreotype portraiture emphasized aesthetic composition, the general or "formal" view, the American portrait stressed a central figure. The typical method presented the subject in direct light against a dark background. This,

²¹⁸Merleau-Ponty, Phenomenology, p. 88.

in effect, toned down the purely "realistic" or compositional aspect of the portrait while simultaneously playing up the "symbolic." Thus, European daguerreotypes, in general, seem "more timeless and self-contained than is the immediate moment hacked out of the passing scene often shown in American pictures. This sort of jagged directness tends to emphasize the 'truth and reality' of the American picture in a way suggesting that the picture is less a distinct entity than a view into the world beyond it in an almost Emersonian sense."²¹⁹ Once again, daguerrean portraiture, by presenting the high-lighted subject set off against a dark background, reminds us of Rembrandt's own technique which, as we have seen, sustained innumerable comparisons with the daguerreotype throughout its development. Similarly, at the photographic exhibit for the London World's Fair, the jury reported:

America stands alone for stern development of character, her works, with few exceptions, reject all accessories, present a faithful transcript of the subject and yield to none in excellence of execution The portraits stand forward in bold relief upon a plain background. The artist, having placed implicit reliance upon his knowledge of photographic science, has neglected to avail himself of the resources of art²²⁰

Rather than paint-in a scene or background ("the resources of art"), American daguerreotypists preferred the more direct contrast between light and dark as a significant commentary on the subject. Concerning his own technique, Gabriel Harrison explained: "In daguerreotyping, as well as in painting, the artist should endeavor to secure three distinct and marked peculiarities that can hardly fail of making his production a superior work of art. These three points are the high lights, the middle

²¹⁹Rudisill, p. 161.

²²⁰quoted in James D. Horan, Mathew Brady: Historian with a Camera (New York: Bonanza Books, 1955), p. 18.

tints, and the shadow."²²¹ He further remarked that when tonal gradations define the effect in this way, the daguerreotypist will insure himself of a picture "whose deep and Rembrandt-like shadow contrasts finely with the clear distinct tone of the high light, while the middle tints exhibit an elasticity of appearance so pure and lifelike, that the flesh seems imbued with motion, and the dull, frosty, death-like representation, that is so detestable in a work of art is studiously avoided."²²² Thus, like the philosophical posture of idealism, the daguerrean portrait pictorially gets man "in the picture" objectively in so far as it treats the body as part of a single, continuous object-space. Thus isolated from him-"self," the subject is henceforth able to perceive the truth of his subjectivity apart from its fictive opacity in the world. By placing his subjectivity in "front of" himself, out there, the subject simultaneously becomes the spectator of his own view; like the world, he becomes transparent.

²²¹"Lights and Shadows of Daguerrean Life," Photographic and Fine Art Journal 7 (January 1854) : 8.

²²²Ibid. Harrison deliberately emphasized this potentially "dramatic" aspect of the daguerreotype as a literary technique in his own writings. In fact, like science, the literary world at large was quick to adopt the daguerreotype to its own purposes. Nearly ten years prior to Hawthorne's use of the daguerreotype as one of his organizing metaphors in The House of the Seven Gables, as Rudisill remarks (pp. 221-22), Francis Osgood had employed the daguerreotype as a kind of framing device for a series of character sketches in her short story, "Daguerreotype Pictures." And in 1847, a new literary magazine, The Daguerreotype, was established in order to create "verbal pictures," a new visual approach to literature which indicates to what extent the literary world was willing to appropriate the new technology to its own domain. Henceforth, the daguerreotype appeared in numerous short stories and novels either as some kind of plot device or metaphor for moral commentary. Such works as Fred Hunter's The Daguerreotype: or Love at First Sight, Dion Boucicault's The Octoroon, Augustine Duganne's The Daguerreotype Miniature or Life in the Empire City, and many others made extensive use of the daguerreotype as a literary technique, especially as a framing device for characterization or "portraiture."

In conclusion, then, because it uniformly frames the space of its image, the world-view positions the object in such a way that its form is always determined by the whatness of its "vision." But what we see is nothing more than the "content" isolated and set apart from its structure so that the vision never constitutes the phenomenon itself. This priority of content can only be brought to account once we interrogate the possible relation of "meaning" to the vision. Although the structure of a phenomenon changes or alters its content, this can never be "true" of a world which is convinced of the unchangeability of its objects and their consequent absolute determinability in the mind as "concept." My idea of a geometrical space, for example, can never co-incide with the meaning of the space of my body as incarnate being-in-the-world. This space discloses a vanishing point in my "self" as a perceiver, and not in the object as a spectacle. Since I am always in the world as the articulation of a posture, perspective can never represent the space of that world, but only an ideal world whose space conforms to geometrical concepts incapable of framing anything other than a fixed and pre-determined significance. The daguerreotype, moreover, not only objectified the thing, but the subjectum as well; the daguerrean portrait transformed people into things in so far as it extended and multiplied the human image to the proportions of mass-produced merchandise.²²³ Nevertheless, whatever "object" it captures, the photograph, like the world-view, sets its image before us as a view; the spectator simultaneously sets himself apart from the view in so far as it represents a privileged consciousness anterior to perception itself. To the extent

²²³Marshall McLuhan, Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man (New York: The New American Library, A Signet Book, 1964), p. 170.

that the photograph objectified the world, it further evidenced the "correctness" of Cartesian metaphysics whereby the subjectum knows the object as extended and separate from him in a continuous and uniform space according to an a priori rationality or fixed perspective. Scientifically, of course, the photograph culminated the age of mechanical industrialism. "It was this all-important quality of uniformity and repeatability that had made the Gutenberg break between the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. Photography was almost as decisive in making the break between mere mechanical industrialism and the graphic age of electronic man."²²⁴ Strictly speaking, however, it was not until the "motion" picture that the electronic age could be said to have begun; yet, these photographic "dots" for the eye graphically terminated the thinking of an age, just as their corresponding "dots" for the ear implied the beginning of a new age: "Within a year of Daguerre's discovery, Samuel F. B. Morse was taking photographs of his wife and daughter in New York City. Dots for the eye (photograph) and dots for the ear (telegraph) thus met on top of a skyscraper."²²⁵ Perspective had created the very possibility of an "objective" science; Leonardo's Situs drawings and the subsequent science of anatomy were predicated on this new pictorial technique which could now describe the interior of the body as well as the external world itself. Telescope and microscope had further magnified the scientific objectification of the world. But with the photograph, the scientific mission had entered a new era which would extend the ubiquitous deceit of the camera-eye far into the twentieth

²²⁴Ibid., p. 171.

²²⁵Ibid.

century itself. In so far as the photograph was able to capture the interior gestures of both matter and mind, it constituted the foundation not only for sub-atomic physics, but for the new worlds of endocrinology and psychopathology as well.²²⁶

²²⁶Ibid., p. 181.

CHAPTER II

EXPRESSIVE SPACE AND BEING SITUATED: THE FIELD

Because perspective pays absolute homage to the object through the vanishing point, securing its place in a fixed uniform space in which the perceiver is situated objectively as well, it delineates an object-world already there, a world in which the perceiver passively identifies the truth of its content. Since it is an object itself, the world makes itself known to the extent that it is determinate and measurable, a space wherein every thing has its proper place via a calculus of objects--a calculus, moreover, which encourages the "delta" as the means of transcending the purely geometrical in order to ground the world in an abstract infinity. As that ultimate object, entirely calculable, the world is to the extent that it is incremental, objectively representable. In short, the world becomes the "notion" that I have of it, an idea. Only in this way can we ever have it in our view. Because perspective articulated the very frame for an objective scientific method, it simultaneously delimited the world of that frame, its content, as a view, and henceforth appropriated the world-view as its product. In order to insure its future, however, a world-view is necessarily compelled to repress the more primordial aspect of its epistemology, as a product of scientific and technological thinking wherein consciousness posits a priority of content in the sense that its view is significant only in so far as it is framed. For if it were to reflect on how it is that it "knows" its content, it would be forced to re-think the entire

a priori of its methodology, an aspect which at any rate it considers superfluous. For a world-view always orients itself toward a theoretical space in which it is unnecessary that it be perceived in order to be, since the ready-made world, as object, presents itself as the setting or frame for every possible event wherein perception is merely one of those events.¹ As long as "vision" merely negotiates the objective space of the thing perceived, either constituted or constituent, this kind of seeing stubbornly transforms its own activity into a perspicuous exchange between an epistemological subject and object. Because the perceptual "something" is never "in the middle of something else"² it can never form part of a field, but rather gives me information or in-forms me of the content of its frame--a magic show which truly represents a performance "out of this world." It is in this sense that its perspective is always "framed."

Indeed the natural world presents itself as existing in itself over and above its existence for me; the act of transcendence whereby the subject is thrown open to the world runs away with itself and we find ourselves in the presence of a nature which has no need to be perceived in order to exist.³

Since, then, the object exists before we perceive it, there is no necessity that we take hold of it or "take it up" in order to know it. Because the object exists in a pre-determined conceptual space, all that remains is to reveal its geographical or geometrical location with respect to other objects, irrespective of the objectless subjectivity of our own body which makes the birth of Being possible. Thus, the "truth" of the world-view inheres in the assumption that our body is simply

¹Merleau-Ponty, Phenomenology, p. 207.

²Ibid., p. 4. ³Ibid., p. 154.

another object in the world, a commodity with the ability to pay for itself. By framing its perspective, the world-view delineates an unequivocal correspondence between subject and object without any intermediary term. It judges the truth of its vision by an abstract impression: between perceiver and perceived there resides an absolute nothingness, as though the "something" perceived, its "whatness," constitutes a flat content which through the mystical agency of a fixed line of force projects the near-infinite number of points on its surface back onto a vision which receives them as impressions in the form of local stimuli and, in a durationless moment, reduplicates them--Presto!--into the completed form of a picture. Since perceiver and perceived exist as one object to another, this deliberate posture nullifies the object-horizon structure in the sense that the peripheral vision of its focus is as equally determinate as the central vision itself.

Like pictorial perspective, the scientific-technological world-view objectifies by making every object within the gaze of its frame centrally focused without any peripheral indeterminateness; it represents a gaze which has simultaneously come to rest on every thing, thereby appropriating an absolute focal figure accompanied by a subsequent loss or negation of any background whatsoever--a flat projection without "depth." Within this gaze, objects rescind their ability to establish a horizon for other objects. What this amounts to, then, is not a gaze at all, but a framed representation, the mental picture of a whole world, a world constituted solely by objects as though the object were for-itself. In effect, this kind of perspective paradoxically represents an unlimited point of view, one which sees from every angle simultaneously because it ignores the subject of its perception by vanishing in the single horizon

of the object. Objectivity or representation is intransigently forgetful of the non-objective space necessary for there to be a representation or object-space at all; it disregards the bodily space of the perceiver; in short, it ignores Being.⁴ Because it presents a world of thoroughly focused objects through the fixed lines of force constituting, via the vanishing point, a continuous uniform space, it traces the outline of its gaze by a geometry in which the subject of the gaze plays no role other than already being there as another object in an objective space already made, a theoretical world of ready-made objects. In this kind of representation, an object is that which is seen from everywhere at once; the object itself can be none of the individual points of view from which my body is able to perceive it at any given moment, but rather constitutes the flat projection of all possible perspectives, Leibniz's perspectiveless posture, the object seen from nowhere, or rather the object seen from everywhere. "The completed object is translucent, being shot through from all sides by an infinite number of present scrutinies which intersect in its depth leaving nothing hidden."⁵ Because the object is always transparent once we have thus identified it, and because perspective in the sense that we have defined it, as a flat projection which replaces the angularity of the world with the illusion of a self-sufficient content, articulates a world of focal figures without a background or field, the world itself subsequently forfeits its opacity. It can thus no longer display itself, for there no longer exists the possibility of "relief." Where nothing is hidden, nothing can be seen.

⁴Cf. Martin Heidegger, An Introduction to Metaphysics, trans. Ralph Manheim. Garden City: Anchor Books, 1961.

⁵Merleau-Ponty, Phenomenology, p. 69.

We are left with the Cartesian-Newtonian world, an invisible universe, an abstraction. By going beyond the experience of perception,

I regard my body, which is my point of view upon the world, as one of the objects of that world. My recent awareness of my gaze as a means of knowledge I now repress, and treat my eyes as bits of matter. They then take their place in the same objective space in which I am trying to situate the external object and I believe that I am producing the perceived perspective by the projection of the objects on my retina.⁶

By positing an absolute object I negate my "own" experience and, like Melville's Ahab, monomaniacally attach myself to the idea which presumes itself "true," as does an absolute object, for all times, places, and Dasein. By expressing a universal validating power which forever closes off my ante-predicative knowledge of the world, I simultaneously "come up to" the world and every thing in it only in so far as it represents or refers me to an idea. As Descartes expressed it, perception is "solely an inspection by the mind;" and further on in the "Second Meditation" he continues, "I comprehend, solely by the faculty of judgment which resides in my mind, that which I believed I saw with my eyes."⁷

Yet, phenomenally speaking, we do not come up to the thing in perception, but rather we live it by taking "hold of it," by making it our own. Hence, the non-objective situated space of my body makes it possible to define perception and Being analogously; for each, in its own way, constitutes the "disclosure of appropriation,"⁸ or as Hofstadter

⁶Ibid., pp. 70-71.

⁷René Descartes, "Discourse on Method" and "Meditations," trans. Laurence J. Lafleur (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Co., Inc., 1960), pp. 88-89.

⁸Martin Heidegger, "The Origin of the Work of Art," Poetry, Language, Thought, trans. Albert Hofstadter (New York: Harper and Row, Harper Colophon Books, 1975), p. 86.

interprets Heidegger's "das Ereignis," enownment.⁹

Perception, for instance, is an enownment between man, Being, and time, in which the world opens up for man in his seeing, hearing, touching, smelling, tasting. In perception, what is other to the individual human being appears as enowned in its otherness. The house we see over there is seen as the dwelling place, whose entrance beckons or repels, which harbors within it the family, the hidden place of love and hate, conflict and healing. Saying, in uttering "house," has allowed this structure of enownment to appear and has opened up the possibility of ourselves grasping it and even entering into it to partake of the mode of life-presencing and -absencing which it makes accessible.¹⁰

By embracing the world with our body, then, we make it our own, whereas the scientific world of objects situated in a geometrically abstract space can never interoscultate the perceptual field, remaining fated to a desiccative world in which every thing has its uniquely proper "place" as the necessary condition for its being. And though the enunciation of this ready-made world represents the fixed end of a process which is only possible because in the world, as it is experienced or lived-through, my body is able to move around things, this motility is decisively overlooked in favor of a pseudo object-horizon structure which slyly evades its interior dialectic, peremptorily identifying the priority of its content without a single interpellant gesture, never interrogating how it came to be or why it is at all. Thus, objective or scientific thought cunningly exerts an omnipotence which purports, with a money-back guarantee, to "save" us from the opaque and angular shadow-world of our own experience. The bargain, however, is only apparent, and ultimately expensive. True to its promise, this edulcorated object-world, shot through and through with the transparency of finest plate glass

⁹Albert Hofstadter, "Enownment," Boundary 2 4 (Winter 1976) : 369.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 374.

unceasingly bringing its content "to light," elucidates a completed picture of the world, but one which is fixed, static, forever consigned to a frozen image as though caught in a winter ice-storm; for "the absolute positing of a single object is the death of consciousness, since it congeals the whole of existence."¹¹

Fortunately my body always presents itself to me from the same "angle" and thus precludes the possibility of ever being an object solely in-itself, for an object is precisely that thing on which I can have a multiple perspective and, in fact, move away from me until it disappears from view. I can move an object "in" and "out" of view at will, but I can never be absent from my own body, and it is this which secures its permanence from my point of view; it must always be with me, as my basic habit, since it can never be "in front" of me.¹² And as the tertium quid in the figure-background configuration, constituting a "double horizon of external and bodily space"¹³ in so far as the perceptual "something" is always in the middle of something else as part of a field, it constantly evades the treatment to which science would "subject" it as an object of study. It refuses to become a "discipline;" indeed, it refuses to take an un-situated "place" in universal Being. When something touches my body, for example, it does not present itself to me "as a geometrical outline in which each stimulus occupies an explicit position."¹⁴ So too with the visual experience; the phenomenal forces in my perceptual field, and not the "objective" forces, elicit my response or movement toward a potential world, so that it is "never our objective body that

¹¹Merleau-Ponty, Phenomenology, p. 71. ¹²Ibid., pp. 90-91.

¹³Ibid., p. 101. ¹⁴Ibid., p. 108.

we move, but our phenomenal body."¹⁵ This phenomenal space surrounding my body constitutes a perceptual field which makes it possible, in the first place, for there to be a world of objects. The fixed, uniform, homogeneous space I disclose in a perspective receives its meaning from the non-objective field of bodily space in which I am situated. It is the situation which brings a spatial organization into being and allows consciousness to "derealize" itself and subsequently "throw itself" into the object as an intention.¹⁶ In so far as consciousness is always a consciousness of something,¹⁷ as Husserl has defined it, its articulation and interpretation can never be expressed through inductive or causal thinking, as the relation of function to variable, but only as the interpenetration of intentional vectors. "Beneath intelligence as beneath perception, we discover a more fundamental function, 'a vector mobile.'"¹⁸ Of course, that which lies at the very center of this intentional reticulation is existence itself. Perceptual intentionality¹⁹ discloses a non-positing, non-representational consciousness which negates the absolute "truth" of representation (Vor-stellung) claimed by the positing consciousness, for "space may be given to me in an intention to take hold without being given in an intention to know."²⁰ The cerebellar patient, for example, can grasp a part of his body, but not be able to point to it. The phenomenal space of my body thus discloses a different kind of consciousness, consciousness of a world where the "object" does not

¹⁵Ibid., p. 106. ¹⁶Ibid., p. 121.

¹⁷Cf. Remy C. Kwant, The Phenomenological Philosophy of Merleau-Ponty (Pittsburg: Duquesne University Press, 1963), pp. 153-68.

¹⁸Merleau-Ponty, Phenomenology, p. 135.

¹⁹Cf. Ibid., p. 121. ²⁰Ibid., p. 104.

represent extension itself, but presents itself as an "extension" of my own body, just as the blind man's walking stick becomes a "bodily auxiliary, an extension of the bodily synthesis."²¹ In this "interior" space (in the sense of a non-objective space which negates the subject-object dichotomy) the object is not a flat projection or total system of simultaneous perspectives from "everywhere;" it is not an idea or representation; it is not a sign, but an "aspect" or extension of my own body co-inhabiting the intentional co-ordinates of a non-geometrical space, that "intentional arc"²² of expressive space habitually projected around me. In the same way, the structure of consciousness in general displays a prehensibility for apprehending an intelligible interior of meaning, just as the mass of ferromagnetic material inside a wire coil increases its external magnetic field. As Husserl expressed it: "Not every constitution has the schema: content of apprehension--apprehension."²³ In the visual field, then, objects do not impress themselves upon me as local stimuli, now being explicitly "here," now "there," but primordially occupy a phenomenal space in which I intend to move; and there could be no "objective" space at all without this intentional spatialization via my body--this "vector mobile" moving, as Hochheimer expresses it in Analyse eines Seelenblinden von der Sprache, "in all directions like a searchlight, one through which we can direct ourselves towards anything, in or outside ourselves, and display a form of

²¹Ibid., p. 152.

²²Ibid., p. 136.

²³Edmund Husserl, The Phenomenology of Internal Time-Consciousness, ed. Martin Heidegger, trans. James S. Churchill (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1964), p. 25.

behavior in relation to that object."²⁴

The analogy of the searchlight, however, as Merleau-Ponty remarks, is inadequate "since it presupposes given objects on to which the beam plays, whereas the nuclear function to which we refer, before bringing objects to our sight or knowledge, makes them exist in a more intimate sense, for us."²⁵ This intimate sense reflects my personal motor habit as an extension of my own existence, and bespeaks the way in which my perceptual habit brings me into the possession of a world.²⁶ Indeed, the style of my gaze, the execution of perception, becomes a behavioral gesture which creates the possibility for the meaning of my world, a meaning which I always grasp via my body and its motility although perception itself can never imbue my life with fresh significance since it is always in the mode of the impersonal "One."²⁷ Thus the "gaze," like the blind man's walking stick, provides us with a natural instrument which "gets more or less from things according to the way in which it questions them, ranges over or dwells on them. To learn to see colours is to acquire a certain style of seeing, a new use of one's own body; it is to enrich and recast the body image."²⁸ Science, however, ignores the object's carnality, intentionality, and the function of body-motility in perception, for it intrudes itself upon a transparently completed form of existence; as with childhood, science ignores those things which do not comfortably fit into its world. Like illness itself, then, science represents a pathological disturbance which employs an

²⁴quoted in Merleau-Ponty, Phenomenology, pp. 135-36.

²⁵Merleau-Ponty, Phenomenology, p. 136. ²⁶*Ibid.*, p. 153.

²⁷*Ibid.*, p. 240. ²⁸*Ibid.*, p. 153.

inflexible systematic set of procedures in order to compensate for certain deficiencies, a "repression" which continues to support its world despite the frequent creaking of its incomplete foundation. In effect, science

reduces the object to a collection of successive 'characteristics,' perception to an abstract account, recognition to a rational synthesis or a plausible conjecture, and strips the object of its carnal presence and facticity. Whereas in the normal person every event related to movement or sense of touch causes consciousness to put up a host of intentions which run from the body as the centre of potential action either towards the body itself or towards the object.²⁹

This is to espouse a synergism in which the whole is, indeed, greater than the sum of its parts. My body is not merely an aggregation of parts which extemporize themselves by a harmonious juxtaposition in space; rather, my body articulates a dynamic fluxion which continually "digests" the world, transforming it to energy and waste with every "bite." I nevertheless remain in undivided possession of it through a body image in which all the parts are included.³⁰ The possibility of a style, then, is the possibility of a non-objective body image, a completed "awareness" of posture not as the autonomous form of knowledge but as a kind of consciousness which trans-forms its "content" into the form of itself thereby giving structure and meaning to my "environment" and the objects which I "take up" in that environment. This intentional space provides the background against which my personal gesture or style stands out, and virtually signifies that my body, as a "subject," dwells face to face against the world.³¹ Here my personal bearing toward the world comes to light--a non-discursive significance which, like an art

²⁹Ibid., p. 109. ³⁰Ibid., p. 98.

³¹Ibid., p. 101.

work, discloses its meaning through an expressive time and space created by the "form."³² By "expressing" the world, my body takes "hold of it;" I come into the possession of a world by projecting a distinctly individual motility. And as the projection of a movement against the background of an integral structure of potential intentionality, this new configuration or field reveals that my body touches the world. I live being through my fingertips.³³ Thus, the spatiality of my body is clearly brought into being via its motility; it inhabits or dwells in a configuration constituted by both an "objective" and a "bodily" space. In this sense, perception itself is not even a deliberate act, but the background against which all my acts stand out; for the "content" of perception is always "inserted into a certain form of behaviour."³⁴ In this way, the world becomes an "expression" of my personal way of Being, the form of behavior; and world-structure becomes an expressive space.

I

Now an expressive space is precisely that kind of space which comes and goes. So long as we consider the space of the thing perceived, a framed space in so far as it constitutes an objectively total area which always gets fixed, we shall never expose the spatial relationship between the embodied subject and a world. Things can only begin to exist for us because we desire them; the affective life of the body

³²Cf. Susanne K. Langer. Feeling and Form. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1953, and Erich Heller. The Disinherited Mind. Cleveland: The World Publishing Co., Meridian Books, 1959.

³³William V. Spanos, "Heidegger, Kierkegaard, and the Hermeneutic Circle: Towards a Postmodern Theory of Interpretation as Dis-closure," Boundary 2 4 (Winter 1976) : 479.

³⁴Merleau-Ponty, Phenomenology, pp. xi and 208-09, respectively.

projects its own intentionality, one which consolidates a peculiar form of consciousness and expresses a typical structure incorporating other "forms" of behavior which reciprocally express it as well. As a constituent of this integrated network, the affective life underscores our distinctive way of taking up the world. We invite the world to us as we would a lover, gesticulating the appropriate postures in accordance with how we would have it. If we wish to surprise it, we encounter it with a feigned lack of awareness as the courtier who, knowing his mistress is scheduled to walk across a certain path in the woods, nonchalantly situates himself against a tree which she will pass, perhaps crossing his legs and leaning into the tree at an angle which will flatter him the most. He fastens his gaze away from the direction by which she will come so that in taking her by surprise she is forced to "discover" him. Although at first glance this attitude seemingly represents a "predetermined" pose, the fact of our body repudiates an entirely "postureless" attitude, for we are always situated expressively whether we wish it or not. Every event in life is thus internally determined by our "demeanor," the style by which we "court" the world as a projection of our own affective intentionality. As Merleau-Ponty points out, this is what Freud implied when he spoke of symptoms as always being "overdetermined." Because the body constantly transforms its "interiority" into de facto situations, it insures the world of an essential metamorphosis, one which substantiates the Ovidian universe and simultaneously confirms the meaning of existence. Similarly, it might be said that any myth, because it opens onto possible objectifications, grounds the de facto articulation of an "objective" world predicated on causality--not because it anticipates science, but because

its "noemata" can be set in a phenomenology which describes its function as a certain kind of consciousness which opens onto other possible consciousnesses. For example, the second law of thermodynamics singularly appropriates in scientific terms what the body had always "known" in phenomenal terms and existentially expressed as the "phoenix." Like the bird which rises from its own ashes, the second law of thermodynamics merely describes a set of phenomena which accounts for the birth of a sun provisional to the paradoxical process of burning itself out, whereby hydrogen is converted to helium and then to oxygen and carbon, and so forth. Science, however, tells us nothing of this world as an event wherein the incorporeal content belies a more primordial "form," that most general space expressing a structure of Being endowed with emblematic and physiognomic characteristics, the metamorphic nature of perception itself; science merely defalcates its "discoveries" from a world absolutely there, a world, moreover, which ironically beckons to be raped because of its beautiful "mind," and not its "body." This kind of embezzlement mirrors the promethean endeavor of science to lay bare a universe stripped of its matter, a de-natured view of an anatomy denuded to a set of purely objective phenomena via an induction which can never arrive at necessity from the order of contingent facts. Today's "science fiction" sharply defines this attitude, although such writers as Poe and, more recently, H. P. Lovecraft had already established the ground for such a vision in an abstract "gothic." "The true 'hero' of a marvel tale," remarks Lovecraft, "is not any human being but simply a set of phenomena. Over and above everything else should tower the stark, outrageous monstrousness of one chosen departure from

nature."³⁵ By denying the world an expressive space, science fixes its gaze upon a theoretical area entirely framed and demarcated, a space implacably there irrespective of an embodied perceiver, which appropriates a set of phenomena in terms of an idea whose truth is determined by the logical progression of a set of equations, and not the intentionality of an affective life.

Such a vision precludes the possibility of removing one's self at will, for the bodiless perceiver is condemned to the absolute truth of its vision as an abstract function of the equation itself. As a testimony to "objectivity" the perceiver relinquishes his will, becoming the slave to a world of self-sufficient "things" forever imprisoned in a space that lacks motility since it is always determined by an abstract system of co-ordinates which positions its objects with absolute finality. The bodiless observer can never go any "where" in this theoretical frame since no-"thing" can take up space. By forfeiting its sexuality this neutered entity can never come and go as it pleases, and subsequently forfeits the possibility of an "intercourse" with the world. A genuine subject, on the other hand, continually enjoys a freedom which not only transposes him upon the world effecting a "déplacement" toward various situations, but also allows him to withdraw from it in so far as he always has a body. Through this constant metamorphosis the body guarantees an inherited immunity to scientific thinghood, that fatal

³⁵Marginalia, quoted in Roger Shattuck, The Banquet Years: The Origins of the Avant Garde in France, 1885 to World War I, rev. ed. (New York: Random House, Vintage Books, 1968), p. 41. Cf. also, H. P. Lovecraft, Supernatural Horror in Literature (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1973), p. 87: "Serious weird stores are . . . made realistically intense by close consistency and perfect fidelity to Nature except in the one supernatural direction which the author allows himself."

disease by which an entity remains forever susceptible to itself and the world. Indeed, my body constitutes the possibility of discarding every-thing, including, if I so desire, my very existence. In this process, however, my body is never self-sufficient, but always alongside a void, between the poles of transformation, "a prey to an active nothingness."³⁶ It is through the body that existence begins to appear, as a message in invisible ink begins to make itself present before our very eyes; and in this sense Binswanger defines the body as the hidden form of being ourself.³⁷ In the sexuality of my body, then, existence announces its ambiguous character, an ambiguity which inter-penetrates it to such an extent that we can never determine "where" sexuality leaves off and existence begins, for existence is the act of taking up a sexual situation;³⁸ "The importance we attach to the body and the contradictions of love are, therefore, related to a more general drama which arises from the metaphysical structure of my body, which is both an object for others and a subject for myself."³⁹ This kind of transcendence, whereby the world becomes meaningful to the extent that I take up a position, not only testifies that science can never get the "whole picture," but also indicates that we have at last escaped the anthropologism of the traditional subject-object dichotomy. Though ontic relations within the world may initially obscure the "posture" or situation as an originating form of knowledge, I nevertheless discover

³⁶Merleau-Ponty, Phenomenology, p. 165.

³⁷Über Psychotherapie, quoted in Merleau-Ponty, Phenomenology, p. 166.

³⁸Merleau-Ponty, Phenomenology, p. 169.

³⁹Ibid., p. 167.

through my body the primordial way in which I come into the possession of a world. So too with language: "it is the subject's taking up of a position in the world of his meanings."⁴⁰ Thus, man's genius for ambiguity, as Merleau-Ponty refers to it, is disclosed through the experience of his own body, which refuses to be known in any way other than living it.⁴¹ To the extent that I possess experience at all, that experience inevitably bespeaks my body as the way I am:

at the same time my body is as it were a 'natural' subject, a provisional sketch of my total being. Thus experience of one's own body runs counter to the reflective procedure which detaches subject and object from each other, and which gives us only the thought about the body, or the body as an idea, and not the experience of the body or the body in reality.⁴²

By re-discovering the experience of my body and its basic structure, I re-discover, at the same time, the structure of the world, a structure, moreover, which like my body assumes a non-specific gravity, a density which continually evades the scientific transparency of objectification and, indeed, the world-view itself.

Just as the synthesis of my body guarantees the object prior to constructing an idea of it, so too does it guarantee the world. "The thing, and the world, are given to me along with the parts of my body, not by any 'natural geometry', but in a living connection comparable, or rather identical, with that existing between the parts of my body itself."⁴³ For example, the "orientation" of my body image constitutes the possibility of a co-related orientation in my visual field. Since my body is not determined by a transparent geometry but by an expressive

⁴⁰Ibid., p. 193.

⁴¹Ibid. Cf. also pp. 189 and 295-96, respectively.

⁴²Ibid., pp. 198-99. ⁴³Ibid., p. 205.

unity which I discover by taking it up, this structure pertains to the world as well. By reason of my "position," I thus gain access to a visual field, a system of entities with which my gaze can get in touch. Reciprocally, my gaze acquires a certain style, a technique for "laying its hand" upon this field, proportionate to the experience accrued from using it. Similarly, all the senses display the unity of a perceptual field which inosculates a common world, as when a piece of music expresses an audible "space" which belongs to the eye as well as the ear, a depth inherent in the volume of a tone which seems to occupy all the room between us and its source, as William James has remarked.⁴⁴ The eye here becomes an "auxiliary organ in order to concentrate attention upon the kinetic character of music."⁴⁵ Stravinsky goes so far as to express a disapproval of those who shut their eyes while listening to music:

I have always abominated listening to music with closed eyes, without the eye taking an active part. Seeing the gestures and motions of the different parts of the body that produce music is necessary and essential to grasping it in all its fullness. Those who claim to enjoy music fully only if their eyes are closed do not hear it better than if their eyes were open, but the absence of visual distractions allows them to abandon themselves, under the lulling influence of sounds, to vague reveries--and it is these which they love, far more than music itself.⁴⁶

Though such an eminent musician as Pablo Casals played and listened to music with his eyes shut, as Zuckerkandl points out, Stravinsky's remark aptly enunciates that primordially general space whence all perception transpires--the space, as Heidegger defines it, where things encounter us.

⁴⁴"The Perception of Space," quoted in Victor Zuckerkandl, Sound and Symbol: Music and the External World, trans. Willard R. Trask (New York: Pantheon Books, Bollingen Series XLIV, 1956), p. 275.

⁴⁵Zuckerkandl, p. 340.

⁴⁶Stravinsky, An Autobiography, quoted in Zuckerkandl, p. 340.

Indeed, perceptual experience is ambiguous to such an extent that "an audible rhythm causes cinematograph pictures to run together and produces a perception of movement whereas, without auditory support, the same succession of images would be too slow to give rise to stroboscopic movement."⁴⁷ In so far as the form of an object inter-penetrates all the senses so that it is never a geometrical shape which we perceive, the form itself articulates a whole world. Because perception displays a world common to all the senses, poets have recognized the synaesthetic experience long before science committed it to second-order reflection. Thus, Dante's Hell typifies "A place made dumb of every glimmer of light."⁴⁸ The sense configuration of the world adheres within the intentional unity of my body, just as the unity of the single object grasped by my visual field adheres within the intentional unity of my "gaze," which replaces diplopia or the double image that scientific colligation would describe as superimposition.

For my gaze to alight on near objects and to focus my eyes on them, it must experience double vision as an unbalance or as an imperfect vision, and tend towards the single object as towards the release of tension and the completion of vision. 'It is necessary to "look" in order to see.' The unity of the object in binocular vision is not, therefore, the result of some third person process which eventually produces a single image through the fusion of two monocular images. When we go from diplopia to normal vision, the single object replaces the two images, one is clearly not superimposed on the other: it is not of the same order as they, but is incomparably more substantial. The two images of diplopia are not amalgamated into one single one in binocular vision; the unity of the object is intentional. But--and this is the point we are trying to make--it is not therefore a notional unity. We pass from double vision to the single object, not through an inspection of the mind, but when the two eyes cease to function each on its own

⁴⁷Merleau-Ponty, Phenomenology, p. 228.

⁴⁸The Divine Comedy, 3 Vols., trans. Dorothy L. Sayers, vol. I: Hell (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1949), p. 98.

account and are used as a single organ by one single gaze.⁴⁹

The intentional synthesis of the phenomenal body projects around itself a certain setting "in so far as its 'parts' are dynamically acquainted with each other, and its receptors are so arranged as to make possible, through their synergy, the perception of the object."⁵⁰ In this way, then, normal vision negotiates both the double image and the single object in so far as we use it; we cannot explain it as the focus of an anatomical visual apparatus, but only as an intentional function. Furthermore, learning to look, that is, seeing in general, is an acquired habit so that I always get from my gaze what I "put into it." For example, the visual sensation of the infant or the blind person, whose sight has been restored, saliently attests that seeing in perspective is ancillary to the development of a vision, but not its initial condition. Initially, the person whose sight has been restored makes no styptic contraction from the world by positing an "out there," but freely bleeds upon it, as it were, as though he were in direct touch with it. It is only later, through practice, that he locates places through a visual distance which foments the pandemic demarcation of "within" and "without."

Thus, "the senses interact in perception as the two eyes collaborate in vision."⁵¹ The pre-conscious unity of the body image sustains the perceptual synthesis just as the intentional unity of my gaze sustains the object; for the body is a synergic system which constitutes the general situation of being, that is, being-in-the-world. Perception is thus a "form" of behavior only to the extent that my body "occupies"

⁴⁹Merleau-Ponty, Phenomenology, p. 232. ⁵⁰Ibid., pp. 232-33.

⁵¹Ibid., p. 234.

a phenomenal space, for all the forms belong to the phenomenal world.⁵² Because the world is formal only in so far as it is phenomenal, movement forms the basis for the synergic unity of the senses in perception as a "project" or potential movement, and not as a transference in objective space.⁵³ My body, then, is the very possibility of the world, a formal network of intentions co-inhabiting a phenomenal space; as such, my body expresses the world, conferring significance upon it by the fact of my situation. Now in so far as my body "occupies" space at all, as being-in-the-world, it always does so in terms of its "situation" and not its "location."⁵⁴ This is what is meant when we speak of the body as the "subject" of perception. Perception "occupies" me just as my body "occupies" space, by merging into it intentionally. For this reason I neither think the object nor myself thinking it any more than my body thinks its space; rather than being spread out before himself as a consciousness, the perceiver merges into the object thereby leaving his own subjectivity opaque and historical.⁵⁵ If it were otherwise, there could be no discrepancy between consciousness and the world, for intentionality would then "carry us to the heart of the object, and simultaneously the percept would lose the thickness conferred by the present."⁵⁶ Because perception constitutes an "enownment," an appropriation, the object invites my body to take it up in a certain way, to which my body

⁵²Ibid., p. 232, footnote 2. ⁵³Ibid., p. 234.

⁵⁴Obviously, "location" is not meant in the sense which Heidegger speaks of it in "Building Dwelling Thinking," Poetry, Language, Thought, p. 154.

⁵⁵Merleau-Ponty, Phenomenology, p. 238.

⁵⁶Ibid.

responds by assuming an attitude which, in turn, makes the object determinate.

The sensible configuration of an object or a gesture, which the criticism of the constancy hypothesis brings before our eyes, is not grasped in some inexpressible coincidence, it 'is understood' through a sort of act of appropriation which we all experience when we say that we have 'found' the rabbit in the foliage of a puzzle, or that we have 'caught' a slight gesture. Once the prejudice of sensation has been banished, a face, a signature, a form of behaviour cease to be mere 'visual data' whose psychological meaning is to be sought in our inner experience, and the mental life of others becomes an immediate object, a whole charged with immanent meaning.⁵⁷

The perceptual situation, then, neither posits the subject nor the object, but discloses that my body is both a subject for me and an object for others; it constitutes the lived experience of both a unified subject and the intersensory unity of the thing.⁵⁸ But how is this unification ultimately possible?

If temporality is the ground of Being, as Heidegger's Being and Time demonstrates, it must simultaneously be the ground of perception. The perceptual synthesis is temporal: "Subjectivity, at the level of perception, is nothing but temporality."⁵⁹ Temporality thus enables me to re-assign the object of my perception to the world, for I can,

by slipping into the future, throw into the immediate past the world's first attack upon my senses, and direct myself towards the determinate object as towards a near future. The act of looking is indivisibly prospective, since the object is the final stage of my process of focusing, and retrospective, since it will present itself as preceding its own appearance, as the 'stimulus,' the motive or the prime mover of every process since its beginning. The spatial synthesis and the synthesis of the object are based on this unfolding of time. In every focusing movement my body unites present, past and future, it secretes time, or rather it becomes that location in nature where, for the first time, events, instead of pushing each other into the realm of being, project round the present a double horizon of past and future and acquire a

⁵⁷Ibid., pp. 57-58. ⁵⁸Ibid., p. 239. ⁵⁹Ibid.

historical orientation.⁶⁰

The perceptual "moment" is therefore essentially characterized by its "present;" for it is in the present that the act of focusing, for example, projects a past and future which constitute a history. And in this sense, my body takes possession of time in so far as it "looks" at the world. But because perception, by definition, is actual only so long as it is perceiving, because seeing is actual only so long as it is looking, every act of seeing must continually be renewed. "The object remains clearly before me provided that I run my eyes over it, free-ranging scope being an essential property of the gaze."⁶¹ The synthesis "Can be recaptured only in a fresh act which is itself temporal."⁶² Thus, the perceptual claim to objectivity must perpetually be re-made. This failure of perceptual consciousness clearly reveals, then, how it is that my body can be both the subject of perception and yet an object for others, for it discloses that the subject of perception can never be an absolute subjectivity, but remains destined "to become an object for an ulterior I. Perception is always in the mode of the impersonal 'One.'⁶³ Its being in the present, its characteristic ekstasis, is precisely what makes the perceptual act itself impersonal.

It is not a personal act enabling me to give a fresh significance to my life. The person who, in sensory exploration, gives a past to the present and directs it towards a future, is not myself as an autonomous subject, but myself in so far as I have a body and am able to 'look.' Rather than being a genuine history, perception ratifies and renews in us a 'prehistory.'⁶⁴

Every perception thus "produces a new present which retains the past. The duality of naturata and naturans is therefore converted into a

⁶⁰Ibid., pp. 239-40. ⁶¹Ibid., p. 240.

⁶²Ibid. ⁶³Ibid. ⁶⁴Ibid.

dialectic of constituted and constituting time."⁶⁵

Still this does not get us to the most primordial horizon of Being, that which makes being-situated possible. Although we have described the temporal ekstasis of the perceptual situation itself, we have yet to define that ekstasis which makes perception possible in the first place. The possibility of perception belongs to the futural ekstasis, just as the possibility of the general situation being-in-the-world belongs to it, for the ultimate ground of perception is the ultimate ground of being-situated. Although the perceptual "moment" is essentially characterized by the present, it is existentially grounded in the future, the temporal horizon of possibility itself. Like authentic Being, authentic perception is projective in its resoluteness. To the extent that perception makes the object determinate by throwing its indeterminate sensations into the past, it does so only in so far as it ceaselessly directs itself toward the object as a projected identity and thereby throws itself into the future; and to that extent, perception constitutes a primordial mode of concerned being-alongside the ready-to-hand, as well as solicitous being-with-others. Authentic perception frees me for the world by the directedness of its project, and thus liberates my body for the potentiality-for-being appropriate to its own situation with respect to the disclosure of being. And like Being, authentic perception maintains itself in truth and un-truth simultaneously; it can never withdraw from the actuality of its present for it would then cease to be, yet its possibility confers a style upon its own situation so that it is always situated within a temporal configuration constitutive of the

⁶⁵Ibid.

particular kind of space it presently negotiates vis-a-vis the resoluteness of its intention. In other words, perception is factually determined by the actuality of its present, though factually delimited by the possibility of its future. Authentic perception has already put itself into the situation, for resoluteness "is authentically nothing else than Being-in-the-world."⁶⁶ Anticipatory resoluteness "brings the Self right into its current concerned Being-alongside what is ready-to-hand, and pushes it into solicitous Being with Others."⁶⁷

In the visual field, for example, objects disclose themselves by virtue of other objects which constitute their horizon. I can only "see" an object because other objects remain concealed, although they are still in the "field;" conspicuously, this is different from the perception in a perspective which adheres in terms of a single horizon constituted by an abstract vanishing "point." After all, perception discloses truth to the extent that it seeks to meet the world on its own terms; it directs itself to that end in order to bring forth the truth of the world by making room for the "clearing" where objects simultaneously conceal and de-conceal themselves. It is in this clearing that aletheia is figured in "relief." The inauthentic perception, on the other hand, rather than bring forth this clearing (Gestalt), seeks to close it off within the boundary or outline of an all-inclusive frame (Ge-Stell) so that it might secure the object in its place. It commandeers the absolute via the process of representation (Vor-stellen), and it is in this sense that inauthentic perception establishes the nature of modern technology, which assumes "the unconditional character of mere willing in the sense of

⁶⁶Heidegger, Being and Time, p. 344. ⁶⁷Ibid.

purposeful self-assertion in everything."⁶⁸ Of course, this is its intention: it intransigently disallows the other to appear in its otherness. By refusing to meet the object on its own terms, as a mode which makes the presencing and absencing of life possible, the technological posture simultaneously denies the world the possibility of appearing in its self-deconcealing. In short, it spurns the phenomenal possibility of the world. By closing itself off from the phenomenon, it ironically denegates itself the truth, the very thing it claims to possess absolutely by virtue of the frame. This is comprehensible only in light of the fact that the technological attitude parasitizes on self-deception. As a self-deception, the inauthentic perception represents, in fact, a pseudo-posture, for it "pretends" not to be situated at all; modern technology fixes the world by its view and subsequently sets itself apart from the world so that it stands outside it. The technological pseudo-posture is forced to sever itself from the world because it willfully intends to control it. Accordingly, its intention obdurately ignores the resolute call to Being and posits, in its place, the transparently un-situated correctness of an idea.

By assuming an absolutely constituent consciousness, modern technology consigns its objects to a vavatory model-in-thought, subject to nothing but its own seigneuric indubitability, so that in effect it never has to perceive them at all. By abnegating the situation, that is, being-in-the-world, technology submits itself to a slavery historically unheralded, one which far exceeds that of the situation it seeks to escape. By virtue of its constitution, this hyperopic vision falls prey

⁶⁸Heidegger, "What are Poets For?" Poetry, Language, Thought, p. 116.

to the foreshortened figures it attempts to emulate; these "figures" which lure the ideal eye to an ultimate horizon-less invisibility where they disappear altogether, subsumed by the harmless obscurity called "infinity," merely pre-occupy the boredom of its vacuous vision which levels down everything, every ordo, "to the uniformity of production."⁶⁹ Because the technological vision would avoid that which lies closest to it, because it will not see what is nearest its own "eyeball," it is constantly frustrated by the ambiguous figure in the foreground which it cannot avoid and which gradually encroaches upon its "territory." It lives in perpetual fear of the day this figure will zoom-in upon its vision until it usurps the entire space of its frame, condemning the infinite light of its vision to eternal darkness. And what, more precisely, is this dark figure which technology would eternally negate? It is its very ground--finitude; it is, in short, death. "The self-assertion of technological objectification is the constant negation of death. By this negation death itself becomes something negative; it becomes the altogether inconstant and null."⁷⁰ The inauthentic technological perception thus negates itself in so far as it remains entirely contingent upon the content of its frame, a content which defines its own existence as eternally present-at-hand. In this respect, technology remains open to an invariably impossible future, wherein a single "present," eternally the same, continually dis-places the futural vector inherent in the act of individually renewing each successive perception. It thus corresponds, in many ways, to the psychoanalytical phenomenon of "repression." The technological attitude can never abandon its mono-

⁶⁹Ibid., p. 117. ⁷⁰Ibid., p. 125.

maniacal enterprise which indefinitely usurps its energy; it simultaneously pushes the traumatic experience of itself out of its frame so that the structure remains intact. By abstracting its existence to the third person, singular, this attitude subsequently forgoes the project of entertaining other "worlds" in the exclusive interest of one. As a phenomenon, however, this kind of repression nevertheless reveals that it can never truly escape its situation, that is, its finitude, and we are thereby led to the dynamics of its peculiar situation as autochthonous to its pervasive self-deception--a posture which pretends not to be situated.⁷¹ Authentic perception, on the other hand, brings itself into the fullness of being by articulating its own situation as an appropriation, an enownment of the world, and thereby ratifies being-in-the-world as the very condition of its own possibility. I am able to appropriate a past for the present and direct that present towards a future "in so far as I have a body and am able to 'look.'"⁷² In such a way, my subjectivity is grounded in the ultimate horizon of its finite temporality. Rather than purifying consciousness of its opacity, the temporal subjectivity of perceptual consciousness brings us in touch with that primordial experience of the world which, in turn, grounds the possibility of a critical attitude capable of questioning the "gaze" and subsequently removing itself from the situation in order to penetrate it. Thus, the subjectivity of authentic perception is grounded in time. But if, at the outset, my perceptual field stands out against the background of a world in which neither subject nor object is posited,⁷³ how can

⁷¹Cf. Merleau-Ponty's description of repression regarding the phenomenon of the "phantom limb," Phenomenology, pp. 82-83.

⁷²Merleau-Ponty, Phenomenology, p. 240. ⁷³Ibid., p. 241.

there by an inter-subjectivity without objectification? How can a multiplicity of unique phenomenal "spaces" simultaneously share a common world?

As a "form" of behavior, perception adheres to a world-structure which remains consistently "there" with respect to the intentional field, but nevertheless refuses to concede the epistemological distinction between the insidedness and outsidedness of its space. Just as the temporality of perception is neither absolutely constituted nor constituting, its spatiality is neither absolutely spatialized nor spatializing. Empiricism, for example, concerns itself with a purely physical space whereas idealism concerns itself with geometrical space.

In the first case, my body and things, their concrete relationships expressed in such terms as top and bottom, right and left, near and far, may appear to me as an irreducibly manifold variety, whereas in the second case I discover a single and indivisible ability to describe space. In the first case, I am concerned with physical space, with its regions of varied quality; in the second with geometrical space having interchangeable dimensions, homogeneous and isotropic, and here I can at least think of a pure change of place which would leave the moving body unchanged, and consequently a pure position distinct from the situation of the object in its concrete context.⁷⁴

Physical space is thus characterized by its content, whereas geometrical space is determined by some "pure unifying activity;"⁷⁵ yet, our first-hand experience of the world teaches us that we must look "on the hither side of the distinction between form and content."⁷⁶ Cases of vision without retinal inversion, in which the subject is made to wear glasses which "correct" the retinal images, show us that our experience of "top" and "bottom," "up" and "down," and so forth can be altered with respect to its content as well as its form, since the altered visual appearances

⁷⁴Ibid., p. 244.

⁷⁵Ibid., p. 248.

⁷⁶Ibid.

"which, at the beginning, stood out against a background of previous space, develop round themselves . . . a horizon with a general orientation corresponding to their own."⁷⁷ Direction in space, then, is neither the reception of a "real" space, nor the relationship dependent upon a certain number of fixed points arbitrarily chosen. Experience shows us "that the same contents can be successively oriented in one direction or another, and that objective relationships as registered on the retina through the position of the physical image do not govern our experience of 'up' and 'down,'" and so forth.⁷⁸ But how, then, do we come into the possession of a world oriented in space?

As Merleau-Ponty suggests, perception recognizes "a certain spatial level."⁷⁹ What makes orientation in space possible in the first place is not my body as an object in an objective space, but rather my body as "a system of possible actions, a virtual body with its phenomenal 'place' defined by its task and situation. My body is wherever there is something to be done."⁸⁰ I consequently acquire an orientation towards the world when my virtual body co-incides with my objective body, although it is the virtual body which ultimately makes it possible for me to change levels, and thereby accommodate a variety of different "spaces." I am able to understand space only to the extent that I can live it through my body: my body co-exists with the world, and it is this situation which "magnetizes experience and induces a direction in it."⁸¹ In so far as it is perceived, the world is always grasped in terms of an orientation in

⁷⁷Ibid., p. 245. ⁷⁸Ibid., p. 247.

⁷⁹Ibid., p. 248. ⁸⁰Ibid., p. 250.

⁸¹Ibid., p. 252.

space which is not contingent upon the object, but grounded in the directionality of an intentional field which is able to "right" the world for every new spectacle which makes its appearance; and to this extent we can never disassociate "being" from the "situation," that is, being-in-the-world. My body, as a "system of anonymous 'functions' which draw every particular focus into a general project,"⁸² insures me of its inherence in the world. This spatial level, constitutive of perception, "endows every subsequent perception of space with its meaning, and it is resumed at every instant."⁸³ Space is grounded, therefore, in our own facticity. The world is primordially spatial as a structural phenomenon wherein the subject is established in a setting inherent in the world. Because the spatial perception itself is always "motivated," my body similarly negotiates the situation vis-à-vis the general motion of the world; and in so far as motion is always involved in a setting, the world becomes that "space" where I am able to freely change my place of residence in accordance with every new appearance of it. In this sense, then, my perception of the world is determined by the way in which I am able to negotiate it, and to that extent perception constitutes a "form" of behavior grounded in a phenomenal space which is neither spatialized nor spatializing, neither objective nor subjective.

Oriented or phenomenal space, in turn, is precisely what opens us onto a world of possible objectifications. The various structures of being-in-the-world guarantee a world common to all of them because they are ultimately grounded in a "natural" world prior to any reflective consciousness of it, wherein my gaze is able to lose itself entirely.

⁸²Ibid., p. 254. ⁸³Ibid.

In so far as space constitutes a lived experience, it is primordially existential; and can only open onto an objective "outside" because it simultaneously articulates a non-human space toward which my body projects me. Perception is not determined by analytical reflection, but can dissolve into the sensible where its verification and fullness are found.⁸⁴

I never wholly live in varieties of human space, but am always ultimately rooted in a natural and non-human space. As I walk across the Place de la Concorde, and think of myself as totally caught up in the city of Paris, I can rest my eyes on one stone of the Tuileries wall, the Square disappears and there is then nothing but this stone entirely without history: I can, furthermore, allow my gaze to be absorbed by this yellowish, gritty surface, and then there is no longer even a stone there, but merely the play of light upon an indefinite substance.⁸⁵

Perception itself, then, discloses the co-incident of subjectivity and objectivity as it is constitutive of the world and our normal experience of it. In "abnormal" states of consciousness, such as myth, dream, and insanity, we begin to lose touch with the world to the extent that its non-human space diminishes to the purely human. And yet the world still reveals its common appearance in so far as these states demonstrate a deviation from it. The primordial space of the world thus frees me for every possible setting because it binds me to the in-itself, whereas in dream, myth, or hallucination this space recedes toward a purely human structure. "What protects the sane man against delirium or hallucination, is not his critical powers, but the structure of his space: objects remain before him, keeping their distance and, as Malebranche said speaking of Adam, touching him only with respect."⁸⁶

This phenomenal or lived distance, through which I respectfully

⁸⁴Ibid., p. 293. ⁸⁵Ibid. ⁸⁶Ibid., p. 291.

keep in touch with the world, reveals its own kind of "perspective," a depth by which I grasp the world in terms of its actual opacity and not according to an ideal physical or geometrical space sustained by thinking the relation of its parts to each other via the "pictorial" perspective indicative of both empiricism and idealism. The primordial depth we experience in perception is not determined by the juxtaposition of its parts, for it is prior to objective space; the depth we experience in perception is a visible depth, and not the ideal depth which traditional theories of perception would relegate to the invisible foreshortened form of "breadth viewed in profile."⁸⁷ An invisible depth pre-supposes the juxtaposition of simultaneous points in the direction of my gaze--a breadth seen from the side by virtue of a uniform space in which the subject abandons his individual point of view on the world in order to think himself into an un-situated, ubiquitous vantage point.⁸⁸ Invisible depth, in fact, represents the way in which God would see the world. But this tells us nothing about the way we actually perceive it; although this concept, in itself, attests the self-evidence of an inter-subjective world.⁸⁹ The leveled-down perspective of science derives from a primordial depth which belongs to the perspective itself and not to things; this primordial depth defines my relationship to the thing, and not the relation among things irrespective of a perceiving subject.⁹⁰ Without a subject, the object atrophies to a life-less ideality; perception, like Being, is necessarily incarnate. Richard Wilbur's "tall camels of the spirit," which "shimmer on the brink," beautifully describe the vacuous "rational" perspective which moves "with a stilted stride/ To

⁸⁷Ibid., p. 255. ⁸⁸Ibid. ⁸⁹Ibid., p. 256. ⁹⁰Ibid.

the land of sheer horizon, hunting Traherne's/ Sensible emptiness, there where the brain's lantern-slide/ Revels in vast returns;" and we are warned to

Wisely watch for the sight
Of the supernova burgeoning over the barn,
Lampshine blurred in the steam of beasts, the spirit's right
Oasis, light incarnate.⁹¹

Phenomenal depth expresses the apparent size of an object, whereas "objective" depth defines the apparent size of an object as something measurable, the function of an invisible interval which reveals the "real" size with respect to other objects in space. But this "real" size is merely a mental size, a relation which does not take into account the perceiver, but conceptually vanishes in the object autonomously. The phenomenon of depth, however, discloses a vanishing point naturally established in the subject of the perception. Phenomenal "distance" can never be given to me as the height of a triangle together with its base and base angles, as Malebranche would have it,⁹² for my body does not occupy the same objective space of its perception. If it did, I would be already initiated into the world and would never need a perception. Of course, this is the way science would have it. But perception "does not bear upon a content of consciousness;" the mental image of the object is, in fact, "neither larger nor smaller than the physical image of the same object on my retina."⁹³ Gestalt psychology has shown that the apparent size of an object is not the representation of an invisible depth for

⁹¹"A World Without Objects is a Sensible Emptiness," in Contemporary American Poetry, ed. Donald Hall (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1962), p. 63.

⁹²Merleau-Ponty, Phenomenology, p. 257.

⁹³Ibid., p. 260.

"the apparent size of a retreating object does not vary proportionately to the retinal image."⁹⁴ Consequently, there is no mental image constitutive of a determinate size relative to the physical image which "stands like a screen between me and the thing."⁹⁵

The phenomenon of apparent size and distance are "two phases of a comprehensive organization of the field,"⁹⁶ an act in which my gaze alters the perceptual field by focusing on the object in-itself, and thereby causes the apparent size of the object to appear. By breaking up the visual field, the perspective appears as a depth in intention; yet, this depth of perspective does not "measure" the apparent size of the object according to its distance, but rather grasps it prior to any geometrical judgment. The further away the object lies, the less completely it "occupies" my visual field--realizing, of course, that the visual field itself is not a measurable area, and has no definite capacity.⁹⁷ My gaze can take in more or less objects depending upon how it negotiates the visual field, so that "near" and "far" define the situation, how my gaze takes hold of the objects in its field. In this respect, it differs radically from the daguerrean-like frame (Wilbur's "brain's lantern-slide") of the world-view which always contains the same number of things because it posits or sets them in an objective space incapable of changing its "content" precisely because of the frame. Increasing distance, then, is not "an augmenting externality: it expresses merely that the thing is beginning to slip away from the grip of our gaze and is less closely allied to it."⁹⁸ Depth becomes a moment

⁹⁴Ibid., p. 259. ⁹⁵Ibid., p. 260.

⁹⁶Ibid., p. 259. ⁹⁷Ibid., p. 261. ⁹⁸Ibid.

in appropriating the single object; by taking up a factual situation, the unity of binocular vision transpires because the visual field itself is moving towards the most perfect possible symmetry.⁹⁹ By appropriating the most determinate form, my gaze penetrates the object in such a way that depth appears as the significance of a certain organization in my visual field; "It is the dimension in which things or elements of things envelop each other, whereas breadth and height are the dimensions in which they are juxtaposed."¹⁰⁰ Thus, primordial depth does not assess a distance between objects; it is liminal regarding its applicability to things.

Just as top and bottom, right and left are not given to the subject with the perceived contents, and are at each moment constituted with a spatial level in relation to which things arrange themselves--in the same way depth and size come to things in virtue of their being situated in relation to a level of distances and sizes, which defines the far and the near, the great and the small, before any object arises to provide us with a standard for comparison.¹⁰¹

Primordial depth articulates the phenomenal hold my body has on its immediate surroundings, the style of my gaze, just as we can speak of a "small" responsibility which nevertheless "fills up," so to speak, the retinal structure of my intentional field--something which appears immanently close because it must be done immediately. Depth discloses, therefore, the phenomenal relation between a subject and space, that existential dimension of perspective anterior to the derivative perspective of physical and geometrical space, which conceptually designate "the one single form of being in a situation."¹⁰²

Like the phenomenon of space in general, primordial depth is

⁹⁹Ibid., p. 262. ¹⁰⁰Ibid., pp. 264-65.

¹⁰¹Ibid., p. 266. ¹⁰²Ibid., p. 267.

equally grounded in temporality. Unlike the Kantian synthesis, which presupposes the discrete terms of a multiple perspective subject to analytical explication, the temporal dimension of depth constitutes a quasi-synthesis; for my gaze to grasp an object at a distance, it simultaneously grasps the object in time in so far as it "already holds" or "still holds" the object.¹⁰³ Spatial co-existence is temporal, then, because the perceived object and my perception of it are contemporary.

The 'order of co-existents' is inseparable from the 'order of sequences', or rather time is not only the consciousness of a sequence. Perception provides me with a 'field of presence' in the broad sense, extending in two dimensions: the here-there dimension and the past-present-future dimension. The second elucidates the first. I 'hold', I 'have' the distant object without any explicit positing of the spatial perspective (apparent size and shape) as I still 'have in hand' the immediate past without any distortion and without any interposed 'recollection'.¹⁰⁴

We do not perceive distance as the content of an equidistant flat projection of the object any more than we understand memory as the interposition of a content between a past and present. Just as memory signifies an immediate possession of the past, a way of "being there," so too the perception of distance "can be understood only as a being in the distance which links up with being where it appears."¹⁰⁵ Once we admit time into the spatial setting, the phenomenon of movement shows up as an entity in its own right. "The thematization of movement ends with the identical object in motion and with the relativity of movement, which means that it destroys movement."¹⁰⁶ Granted, something must be in motion in order for a change to come about; yet, if we concern ourselves with "the particular manner of its 'passing,'" we discover a world made

¹⁰³Ibid., p. 265. ¹⁰⁴Ibid. ¹⁰⁵Ibid.

¹⁰⁶Ibid., p. 275.

up not only of things, but also "pure transitions."¹⁰⁷ Only objective time is made up of successive moments.¹⁰⁸ The unity of a lived time and space are always present to the perceiving subject because they envelop him within the unified scope of a behavioral configuration--his familiar setting in the world. Phenomenal time is not constituted by the successive moments of an "objective" time; "the lived present holds a past and a future within its thickness."¹⁰⁹ Similarly, the pure transition of phenomenal time reveals the unique way in which motion articulates the inextricable factuality of the situation.

The motion in my visual field constitutes "a modulation of an already familiar setting;" at no time is it necessary that I be aware of any objective positions, for every object in motion is given to my visual field--a visual organization which, by definition, does not maintain an objectively stable point.¹¹⁰ Unlike the frame, the edges of the visual field do not constitute a real line: "Our visual field is not neatly cut out of our objective world, and is not a fragment with sharp edges like the landscape framed by the window. We see as far as our hold on things extends, far beyond the zone of clear vision, and even behind us."¹¹¹ Thus, when an object changes place in my visual field, its motion functions as a structural phenomenon; for the "very peculiar relationship which constitutes movement does not exist between objects."¹¹² Depending on that part of the field upon which my gaze focuses, the object is said to be either in motion or at rest. Like Proust's steeple of Saint-Hilaire,

107Ibid. 108Ibid. 109Ibid.

110Ibid., pp. 275 and 277, respectively.

111Ibid., p. 277. 112Ibid.

as we retreat from it in a carriage we can take it as a fixed point and feel ourself in motion around it as the narrator does; or we can watch it glide by in front of us as though our own position were fixed. The cloud floats over the steeple only if my focus is on the cloud; as soon as I focus on the steeple it begins to move.¹¹³ Motion is the way in which my gaze establishes a relation in the visual field with respect to a figure and its background; what makes part of the field the background, and another part its figure, is the way I look at it, the peculiar focus of my gaze. This relation between the moving object and its background "passes through my body" because my eye is never another object in the object space; I do not infer the immobility of the steeple, but by transferring my gaze from the steeple to the clouds, and so forth, its immobility simultaneously appears: "the two phenomena envelop each other: what we have is not two terms of an algebraic expression, but two 'moments' in an organization which embraces them both."¹¹⁴ Thus it is the gaze which preeminently discloses the possibility of a pure transition in the world, for in the body itself we discover that kind of motion entirely independent of a moving object. Like the orientation of top and bottom, motion is also a phenomenon of levels:

The movement of my eye towards the thing upon which it is about to focus is not the displacement of an object in relation to another object, but progress towards reality. My eye is in motion or at rest in relation to a thing which it is approaching or from which it is receding. In so far as the body provides the perception of movement with the ground or basis which it needs in order to become established, it is as a power of perception, rooted in a certain domain and geared to a world.¹¹⁵

So long as my visual field provides a setting where objects change place irrespective of any geometry or calculation via a juxtaposition of parts,

113Ibid., p. 278. 114Ibid. 115Ibid., p. 279.

the phenomenon of movement must be designated as structural; and since this relation is not constituted by a movement between objects, it cannot be relative. "Once involved in a setting, we see motion appear before us as an absolute."¹¹⁶ As a structural function of my visual field, then, motion discloses that the spectacle of the world is always appropriated as a kinaesthetic situation, the double-horizoned relationship between an object and my body.

II

When Gertrude Stein said of Picasso that with him "pictures commenced to want to leave their frames,"¹¹⁷ she prefigured the most elementary posture of twentieth-century art in general. Although the twentieth century divinizes the image of life framed by the world-view because it re-makes technology into the new godhead, its artists have relentlessly declared that God is, once and for all, dead. Very simply, this means that we can no longer unquestioningly accept the all-embracing grace of the ubiquitous vision of science. Rather than envision the world as God would see it, twentieth-century art liberates the world for man; it situates him within the limited point of view, the freedom of his own perspective, and rids him of the cystostic vision of a technology which would control him with the same disrespect by which it controls its entire object-world. And this is what cubism explicitly proclaimed. It freed man for the thing, and the thing for itself, because it perceived the primordial constitution of the world's "space"--what Gertrude Stein called the "composition" of the world. "Nothing changes from generation

¹¹⁶Ibid., p. 280.

¹¹⁷Picasso (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1946), p. 12.

to generation except the thing seen and that makes a composition."¹¹⁸
 This new way of seeing the world obtained from a characteristically
 different manner of looking at things:

First. The composition, because the way of living had changed the composition of living had extended and each thing was as important as any other thing. Secondly, the faith in what the eyes were seeing, that is to say the belief in the reality of science, commenced to diminish. To be sure science had discovered many things, she would continue to discover things, but the principle which was the basis of all this was completely understood, the joy of discovery was almost over.

Thirdly, the framing of life, the need that a picture exist in its frame, remain in its frame was over. A picture remaining in its frame was a thing that always had existed and now pictures commenced to want to leave their frames and this also created the necessity for cubism.¹¹⁹

In cubism, then, twentieth-century art had found a beginning. By making a fresh start, by looking at things all over again, the artist simultaneously discovered the quasi-self-sufficiency of the thing as well as his own situation in the world; and this reflected an understanding of the primordial space of being-in-the-world.

Because cubism appreciated the spectacle of the world as a certain kinaesthetic situation, it re-defined the significance of co-relative perspective in perception. In so far as it disclosed the opacity of the world to the extent that I have a body and that "through that body I am at grips with the world,"¹²⁰ it renounced the transparently ubiquitous point of view which always "sees" the thing from an ideal perspective, as a mental construct or idea. Cubism demanded, in fact, a new spatial level in order to be perceived; it demanded a new attitude of the body.

¹¹⁸"Composition as Explanation," in Selected Writings of Gertrude Stein, ed. Carl Van Vechten (New York: Vintage Books, 1972), p. 513.

¹¹⁹Stein, Picasso, p. 12.

¹²⁰Merleau-Ponty, Phenomenology, p. 303.

Once that was achieved, the painting became "familiar" at last. "It is strange about everything, it is strange about pictures, a picture may seem extraordinarily strange to you and after some time not only it does not seem strange but it is impossible to find what there was in it that was strange."¹²¹ What cubism re-defined in the perspective was the phenomenal space of the world, the non-geometrical space in which my relation to the thing is constituted by being-situated. Pictorial perspective was entirely abolished in favor of that unique perspective by which we take up the things in the world with our body; and that is why it required a new structure of expression. The ideal space of pictorial perspective could only re-present the object as it "appeared" to the mind, whereas the expressive space of cubism presented the object as it affected the body, just as "An oblique position of the object in relation to me is not measured by the angle which it forms with the plane of my face, but felt as a lack of balance, as an unequal distribution of its influences upon me."¹²² We primordially perceive the thing as a relation of our own body, and not in terms of an ideal spatial re-presentation; the mental representation constitutes a concept, it can never get us to the thing as it exists in its own right. Second-order consciousness thus removes us from the world in so far as it discounts the ancipital relation between the space of the thing and the space of my body. For this reason the discursive significance of pictorial perspective demands a particular kind of logic in order to be "seen" at all, and many people subsequently fail to recognize this kind of derivative visualization

¹²¹Stein, Picasso, p. 14.

¹²²Merleau-Ponty, Phenomenology, p. 302.

although it would be foolish to say that they do not perceive the world. For example, "Picasso at this period often used to say that Spaniards cannot recognize people from their photographs. So the photographers made two photographs, a man with a beard and a man smooth shaven and when the men left home to do their military service they sent one of these two types of photographs to their family and the family always found it very resembling."¹²³ In so far as the "realism" of the photograph is derivative, it tells us nothing of our primordial appropriation of a world. If art were to escape its utter subjection to the world-view, it had to re-discover that primary "reality," being-in-the-world.

Cubism pictorially articulated the primordial situatedness of Being, prior to its intussusception by a malignant theoretical optics. It reversed the traditional perspective of Euclidean space, once again making the spectator a participant, as Heidegger would express it, in the "worldling of the world." Like Hopkins' "inscape," this new kind of perceptual space invites the perceiver in, it surrounds him; by vanishing in the spectator, and not the object, it personalizes the world in so far as it renounces the objectively neutral space of the Newtonian landscape.¹²⁴ Cubism thus internalized space at the terminus of the visual gradient;¹²⁵ it publicly declared that space was essentially a personal affair. But even before cubism, painting had definitively disclaimed Euclidean space as an a priori. Seurat, for example, had already reversed the traditional perspective, creating a formal or phenomenal space which replaced the hypotactic image of a geometrically

¹²³Stein, Picasso, p. 14.

¹²⁴McLuhan, Vanishing Point, p. 24. ¹²⁵Ibid., p. 28.

neutral space with the paratactic discontinuity of an expressive space. Prior to Ezra Pound's poetic "super-pository" technique and the modern cinematic technique of super-imposition, pointilism created paratactic space.¹²⁶ As McLuhan remarks, by utilizing the Newtonian concept of the fragmentation of light, Seurat "came to the technique of divisionism, whereby each dot of paint becomes the equivalent of an actual light source, a sun, as it were;" through the deformation of an objectively continuous space, a space enclosed by the impersonal and linear flow of a series of geometrical equations, Seurat opened the painting onto the viewer's personal space and subsequently opened the art work onto the world--he returned to "the paratactic Egyptian image."¹²⁷ In this respect, we are better able to understand Rousseau's remark to Picasso who, incidently, owned five Rousseau canvases: "We are the two great painters of this era, you in Egyptian style, I in modern style."¹²⁸ In so far as modern art breaks down the visual continuity of a homogeneous space, it articulates the phenomenal space of perception. By negotiating a virtual space--a dream space, as it were--it even pre-figures the electronic age:

We are inclined today to regard paintings as radiant forms of energy much in the way that the Oriental world does. Perhaps the most obvious example of how space has ceased to be neutral, in the old visual and Newtonian sense, is to be found in the world of the astronaut. The totally designed environment necessary to life in the space capsule draws attention to the fact that the astronaut makes the spaces that he needs and encounters. Beyond the

¹²⁶Cf. McLuhan, Vanishing Point, pp. 25-26, and Earl Miner, The Japanese Tradition in British and American Literature. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1958.

¹²⁷McLuhan, Vanishing Point, p. 24.

¹²⁸quoted in Shattuck, p. 108.

environment of this planet there is no space in our planetary or "container" sense. The gravitational point once transcended, the astronaut must have his own environment with him, as it were. There is no upside down in Eskimo art or in a space capsule any more than there is perspective or foreshortening (weight, or gravitational force, came in with perspective). Strong indications are given to the astronauts that objects, as well as people, create their own spaces. Outer space is not a frame any more than it is visualizable.¹²⁹

In his painting Le reve, for example, Rousseau presents the natural habitat as an artifact;¹³⁰ and his Le centenaire de l'indépendance refutes the uniform space of pictorial perspective as does a tryptich, forcing the eye to move over the scene discontinuously--indeed, "electronically:"

Le centenaire de l'indépendance breaks down into three arbitrarily combined scenes like a tryptich, and not even a homogeneous three-dimensional space is constructed to hold them together. On the right side in the immediate foreground stand three men and a woman; in the center the smaller figures of the dancers move with a lively disjointed rhythm under a spreading tree; on the left a drummer plays in the far background and some children watch the dancing. The three distinct groups are connected only by a line of banners which stretches across the upper part of the canvas. The eye moves over the scene not in a smooth line of flowing mass but in three jumps.¹³¹

Rather than enclose the world, Rousseau's paintings, like Seurat's, complete it by opening onto the perceiver; this is what Kandinsky meant when he spoke of the "new realism" foreshadowed by Rousseau.¹³² Unlike photographic realism, "a highly sophisticated development of the sensibility absent from children's drawings and which did not devour the art of the West until the sixteenth century," Rousseau's realism evokes "the remembered or dream image set down directly in paint--an image seeking not to outrage the purely optical arrangement of the world, but to

¹²⁹McLuhan, Vanishing Point, p. 25. ¹³⁰Ibid., p. 173.

¹³¹Shattuck, p. 110. ¹³²Ibid., p. 109.

complete it."¹³³ When asked why he had placed the red sofa in the middle of a jungle (Le reve), Rousseau casually replied: "You shouldn't be surprised to find a sofa out in a virgin forest. It means nothing except for the richness of the red. You understand, the sofa is in a room; the rest is Yadvigha's dream."¹³⁴ Rousseau's "naivete" re-creates the primordial space of perception, and thus it was accurately said of him that he was not of his own century. In one of his final letters he explained,

if I have kept my naivete, it is because M. Gerome, who was a professor at the Beaux-Arts, as well as M. Clement, director of Beaux-Arts at the Ecole de Lyon, always told me to keep it. You will no longer find that amazing in the future. And I have been told before that I was not of this century. I will not now be able to change my manner which I have acquired by stubborn application, believe me.¹³⁵

Rousseau's images transact the "interior" space of the world; as formal or phenomenal spaces they are naive only to the extent that there is no "room" for an impersonal object. Rather than situate the object at a "distance," forever fixed in a geometrical location, Rousseau's canvas confers a certain "depth" upon the object as something "close" or "far" by virtue of the composition itself (as Stein calls it), which pulls us to it, envelops us, Rousseau accomplished this in terms of color. The surface tension of the foreground "favors the location of the composition in the front plane,"¹³⁶ and subsequently coerces the space of the painting outward, beyond the edges of the canvas, beyond the frame; this frontal pull denies us easy access to the illusion of a perspective-space while it simultaneously engages our gaze as an extension of its own

¹³³Ibid. ¹³⁴quoted in Shattuck, p. 111.

¹³⁵Ibid., pp. 111-12. ¹³⁶Shattuck, pp. 104-05.

insatiable field. In Le reve, for example, "lush magnified leaves spring up in the foreground, and meet, as if in the same plane, other plants which are much farther away. . . . He incarnates his universe by painting it exhaustively and palpably close."¹³⁷ In other words, the objects in the painting become an extension of our gaze, just as the blind man's walking stick becomes an extension of his own body; Rousseau's universe is incarnate because its space situates the body as the subject of perception, and not as another object in objective space. His space is phenomenal in so far as its forms cannot be separated from its color: it "expresses" the relation of distance, as well as value and mood.¹³⁸ In this respect, his ubiquitous lighting remains powerless to effect the color itself, and merely assists the composition in releasing its objects "to the voraciousness of surface design."¹³⁹ In so far as Rousseau's space appropriates the primordial appearance of things, it invites our gaze to take up its objects, to touch them, to explore their surfaces; and to this extent, his art graciously concedes the opacity of the world by opening onto it. It completes the world. Thus, Rousseau could incisively say of Cezanne's paintings, "I'd like to finish all these."¹⁴⁰

By manipulating its foreground, then, as the embolic function of an expressive depth, modern painting apprehended the object in its phenomenal space, one which in-corporates the spectator, takes him in, envelops him. Because it does not set the perceiver apart, as "viewer," its expressive space emancipates it from the frame. Yet, in their unanimous insubordination to the emmetropic delineation of reality,

¹³⁷Ibid., p. 105. ¹³⁸Ibid., p. 103.

¹³⁹Ibid., p. 106. ¹⁴⁰quoted in Shattuck, p. 105.

modern painters were not alone; for other artists had equally tired of this solitary confinement. Just as in painting the composition "commenced to leave its frame," so it was with the musical composition as well; for with "atonality" or "antitonicity," as Stravinsky preferred to call it, the tonal function of chords escaped the frame of the diatonic system. In his Poetics of Music, Stravinsky declared, "From the moment when chords no longer serve to fulfill merely the functions assigned to them by the interplay of tones but, instead, throw off all constraint to become new entities free of all ties--from that moment on one may say that the process is completed: the diatonic system has lived out its life cycle."¹⁴¹ Although the development of the overtone had evolved, by Debussy's time, from the unison, through consecutive fifths, to the triad and the seventh, Debussy perceived "the complete harmony of the ninth, eleventh, thirteenth, as the true expression of nature which they are."¹⁴² Yet he employed the overtone as a true center in itself. Classical tonality had implied a closed circle of modulations; when Debussy discarded the significance of major and minor, he wished to escape the centrality of the C major scale. By transposing a variety of scales other than the tonal, Debussy achieved, as he expressed it to Guiraud: "Incomplete chords, floating. Il faut noyer le ton. One can travel where he wishes and leave by any door. Greater nuances."¹⁴³

¹⁴¹Igor Stravinsky, Poetics of Music in the Form of Six Lessons, trans. Arthur Knodel and Ingolf Dahl (New York: Random House, Vintage Books, 1947), p. 40.

¹⁴²E. Robert Schmitz, The Piano Works of Claude Debussy (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1950), p. 10.

¹⁴³quoted in Maurice Emmanuel, "Notes on Debussy's Conversations with Ernest Guiraud, 1890," in Claude Debussy: Prelude to "The Afternoon

Satie's experimental harmony encouraged Debussy toward a kind of opacity in his own harmonic structures in so far as he "omits the third in a triad, or alternate thirds in chords of the ninth or thirteenth, leaving superimposed fifths" whereby the subsequent modality remains undetermined for the moment, opening onto two simultaneous horizons.¹⁴⁴ Because the harmonic structures create this ambiguity, the chordal progressions step into the foreground, as it were, to take their place alongside the melody; and it is this transposition which, together, moves out of the diatonic system onto simultaneous "vistas" to touch our ear. But it was only by bringing the chordal progression into the foreground that Debussy was able to create this new kind of super-imposition in music. For example, in his Prelude to "The Afternoon of a Faun," which generally progresses either by a fifth down or a fourth up, "The susceptibility of the C# and the G and their connecting line of melody to being harmonized with various chordal accompaniments . . . is the outstanding harmonic feature."¹⁴⁵ The total context of the piece thus derives from the heightening of chordal significance; and it is precisely this which led many listeners, including Saint-Saens, to conclude that the Prelude lacked melody. Because "the parts seem to overlap each other," no part "spontaneously breaks loose to lodge in our memories as a tune."¹⁴⁶ And yet, this ambiguous relation in the composition between the melody and

of a Faun," An Authoritative Score, ed. William W. Austin (New York: W. W. Norton and Co., Inc., Norton Critical Scores, 1970), p. 130.

¹⁴⁴Schmitz, p. 30.

¹⁴⁵William W. Austin, "Toward an Analytical Appreciation," Norton Critical Scores, p. 82.

¹⁴⁶Ibid., p. 71.

the harmony, what Debussy called "melodic harmonies," constitutes the basis on which Pierre Boulez designates the Prelude as the beginning of modern music: "just as modern poetry surely took root in certain of Baudelaire's poems, so one is justified in saying that modern music was awakened by L'Après-midi d'un faune."¹⁴⁷

Parallel to Debussy's own career moved that of his dearest friend, Eric Satie; and together, like the chordal progressions they created, these two men transposed the direction of twentieth-century music. Taken together, these two careers opened music onto the world, freed it from its conceptual setting, just as the undetermined modality of their harmonic structures opened onto simultaneous horizons by means of superimposition. But with Satie, there were two "careers." The first, in unison with Debussy's own career, executed the basic posture of the fin-de-siècle in general--that period characterized by Satie's admonition to Debussy to forsake the "sauerkraut" of Wagner's aesthetic.¹⁴⁸ Debussy subsequently was to say of Wagner's Ring that it struck him as a sort of "vast musical city directory."¹⁴⁹ Indeed, it seems appropriate here to quote Stravinsky at length concerning the melodramatic--in fact, vaudevillian--nature of Wagner's music, for no one has ever put it better:

Insubordination . . . does away with constraint in the ever-disappointed hope of finding in freedom the principle of strength. Instead, it finds in freedom only the arbitrariness of whim and the disorders of fancy. Thus it loses every vestige of control, loses its bearings and ends by demanding of music things outside its scope and competence. Do we not, in truth, ask the impossible of music when we expect it to express feelings, to translate dramatic

¹⁴⁷"Modern Music Begins," Norton Critical Scores, p. 161.

¹⁴⁸Shattuck, p. 127.

¹⁴⁹Stravinsky, Poetics of Music, p. 80.

situations, even to imitate nature? And, as if it were not enough to condemn music to the job of being an illustrator, the century to which we owe what it called "progress through enlightenment" invented for good measure the monumental absurdity which consists of bestowing on every accessory, as well as on every feeling and every character of the lyrical drama, a sort of checkroom number called a Leitmotiv

There are two kinds of Leitmotiv in Wagner: some symbolize abstract ideas . . . the others make the pretense of representing objects or concrete personages

It is strange that skeptics who readily demand new proofs for everything and who usually take a sly delight in exposing whatever is purely conventional in established forms never ask that any proof be given of the necessity or even of the simple expediency of any musical phrase that claims to identify itself with an idea, an object, or a character. If I am told that the power of genius is here great enough to justify this identification, then I shall ask what is the use of those widely circulated little guides that are the material embodiment of the musical city directory Debussy had in mind, little guides that make the neophyte attending a presentation of Gotterdammerung resemble one of those tourists you see on top of the Empire State Building trying to orient himself by spreading out a map of New York. And never let it be said that these little memory-books are an insult to Wagner and betray his thought: their wide circulation alone sufficiently proves that they answer a real need.

Basically, what is most irritating about these artistic rebels, of whom Wagner offers us the most complete type, is the spirit of systematization which, under the guise of doing away with conventions, establishes a new set, quite as arbitrary and much more cumbersome than the old. So that it is less the arbitrariness . . . that tries our patience than the system which this arbitrariness sets up as a principle.¹⁵⁰

So much for the pomp and "spectacle" of the Wagnerian horror show.

Satie's second career, following his break with Debussy and his decision to return to school in order to study counterpoint under Albert Roussel,¹⁵¹ singularly appropriated that unique musical form which was to characterize much of the first half of the twentieth century--jazz. "If the Sarabandes foretell the course of French music to 1914, The Gymnopedies and the

¹⁵⁰Ibid., pp. 79-81.

¹⁵¹When Debussy advised Satie against it, saying "At our age you don't shed your skin again," Satie very simply replied, "If I lose, too bad. It would mean I had no guts in the first place;" quoted in Shattuck, p. 133.

Gnossiennes foretell the turn it was to take after the war."¹⁵² The turmoil instigated by Parade (1917) established the tone for the post-war years, "a turning to jazz and music hall and to all the paraphernalia of modern life, not in the spirit of realism, but with a sense of exhilaration in the absurd."¹⁵³ The next year, 1918, jazz reached Paris when a black band from the States played the Casino de Paris.¹⁵⁴ In 1890, Debussy had remarked to Guiraud, "Rhythms are stifling. Rhythms cannot be contained within bars. It is nonsense to speak of 'simple' and 'composed' time. There should be an interminable flow of them both without seeking to bury the rhythmic patterns."¹⁵⁵ Interestingly, all of Satie's works during 1910 to 1915, with the exception of his songs, appear in published form without either bar lines or key signatures.¹⁵⁶ Besides escaping the diatonic frame, music was attempting to defy its very confinement to measure.

In 1913, Stravinsky had already introduced the African rhythms of jazz into his Sacre du printemps, and Satie had subsequently written into Parade its first concert treatment in French music.¹⁵⁷ The elliptical nature of jazz, its oblique quality, defies the homogeneous space of the traditional structures which demand to be filled in, so to speak, both rhythmically and melodically in order to work. Once this kind of theoretical perspective was abandoned, modern music could transpose, like modern painting, all its elements into the foreground itself, creating its own

¹⁵²Shattuck, p. 143.

¹⁵³Ibid., pp. 154-55. ¹⁵⁴Ibid., p. 155.

¹⁵⁵Emmanuel, "Notes on Debussy's Conversations," p. 130.

¹⁵⁶Shattuck, p. 151. ¹⁵⁷Ibid., p. 155.

depth by means of an expressive structure rather than a discursive logic.

Speaking of the African influence on jazz, Ernest Borneman has said:

In language, the African tradition aims at circumlocution rather than at exact definition. The direct statement is considered crude and unimaginative; the veiling of all contents in ever-changing paraphrases is considered the criterion of intelligence and personality. In music, the same tendency towards obliquity and ellipsis is noticeable: no note is attacked straight; the voice or instrument always approaches it from above or below, plays around the implied pitch without ever remaining on it for any length of time, and departs from it without ever having committed itself to a single meaning.¹⁵⁸

The same is true of meter. Jazz distinctively brought the rhythmic improvisation of the soloist into the foreground so that its simultaneous inter-action with an isochronous meter articulated an open perceptual field; the resultant super-imposition generated an emblematic kind of "relief" which subsequently enveloped the listener within its own distinctive space. Thus, like the formal element of color in a Rousseau canvas, the formal element of rhythm created the "spatial depth" of a melody in so far as it stepped forward, so to speak, to take its place alongside the other elements in its "field." In his Poetics of Music, Stravinsky phrased it this way: "Who of us, on hearing jazz music, has not felt an amusing sensation approaching giddiness when a dancer or a solo musician, trying persistently to stress irregular accents, cannot succeed in turning our ear away from the regular pulsation of the meter drummed out by the percussion?"¹⁵⁹ In fact, Brunello Rondi, in his Prospetiva della musica moderna, argues that Debussy's greatest achievement was precisely in the area of rhythm, and he credits Debussy for

¹⁵⁸"The Roots of Jazz," in Jazz, ed. Nat Hentoff and Albert J. McCarthy (New York: Grove Press, Inc., 1959), p. 17.

¹⁵⁹Stravinsky, Poetics of Music, p. 30.

having opened the way toward later developments in this respect.¹⁶⁰ Whether or not we agree with him about Debussy, jazz undeniably enhanced the aesthetic possibilities open to rhythm, and modern music in general; by fetching the entire scope of musical elements available to it into the foreground, jazz accomplished that super-imposition which somehow characterized all of modern art and which Gauguin decreed essential--"For there is no art if there is no transposition."¹⁶¹ And Satie, more than Debussy, was never hesitant to take advantage of these possibilities, instituting a major direction for post-war music.

Ravel's respect for Satie was enormous; his first published work, a Menuet antique for piano (1895), clearly revealed the influence of the older composer in its liberated use of sevenths and ninths irrespective of their resolution.¹⁶² The year before, however, Debussy's Prelude had appeared, and shortly thereafter it was Debussy who became his life-long idol, although the Pavane pour une Infante defunte (1899) still showed the succession of thirteenth and ninth characteristic of Satie's early work, especially the Sarabandes. The Pavane, in so far as it foreshadowed the technique and style of Ravel's future compositions, stands singularly important in this respect; as Norman Demuth has said of it, "It is remarkable for its original lay-out; the tune itself requires considerable control of key, but when one thinks that he might have accompanied it with simple arpeggios . . . we can see the working of an

¹⁶⁰Austin, "Toward an Analytical Appreciation," p. 91.

¹⁶¹Paul Gauguin, "Impressionism and After," Norton Critical Scores, p. 124.

¹⁶²Norman Demuth, Ravel (New York: Collier Books, 1962), p. 16.

original mind from the very start."¹⁶³ Notably, the second entry of the tun, widely spaced in so far as it is doubled at the fifteenth as well as the octave, portends a favorite device in his later works; its pianistic significance thus guaranteed it a place in the history of modern music, even though Roland-Manuel spoke disparagingly of it as a piece suitable for young girls.¹⁶⁴ After the war, however, Ravel became increasingly more attracted to jazz and its origin, especially its rhythmic possibilities, an interest which culminated, more or less, in 1928 following a tour of the States and Canada. Upon his return he began working on an orchestration which he was to call "a work for orchestra without music;" the result was Bolero.¹⁶⁵ Regardless of whether we consider it "great" music, Bolero discloses a similarly intense preoccupation with rhythm that we find in Satie and Debussy, with one major exception: the rhythm entirely dominates the piece. In its monotony, it bespeaks a kind of absurdity reminiscent of the initial declaration of Dada in 1916--that is, it takes us no-where. Its repetitive function merely serves to incite the mounting intensity of an angular rhythm which builds to nearly hypnotic power until the startling change to E major thrusts us entirely out of this rhythmic orbit for eight measures, only to envelop us once again with the return to C for its coda.¹⁶⁶ The syncopation and dominant rhythm continually expand outward, like the circular ripples from a pebble thrown into a lake, creating a "surface" depth without any particular direction: the orchestra plays "like a gigantic guitar, with the percussion rattling out the pedal rhythm."¹⁶⁷ As Demuth describes its

¹⁶³Ibid., p. 67. ¹⁶⁴Ibid., pp. 66-67.

¹⁶⁵Ibid., p. 54. ¹⁶⁶Ibid., p. 141. ¹⁶⁷Ibid.

first concert performance in Paris, "Its insistence played upon the senses to an inordinate degree. People clutched each other and crumpled their programmes into lumps of perspiring pulp."¹⁶⁸ As for its title, the piece is called a "bolero;" yet, its rhythm is unmistakably the rhythm of jazz.

The form of jazz typically expresses the new aesthetic of modern music; its method of composition, like the composition of a modern painting, defies linear perspective--it defies the frame. As Rene Guillere expressed it in an article, "Il n'y a plus de perspective:"

Its basic parts: syncopation and a dominance of rhythm Rhythm is stated by angle--protruding edge, sharp profile. It has a rigid structure--firmly constructed. It strives towards plasticity. Jazz seeks volume of sound, volume of phrase. Classical music was based on planes (not on volumes)--planes arranged in layers, planes erected atop one another, planes horizontal and vertical, creating an architecture of truly noble proportions: palaces with terraces, colonnades, flights of monumental steps--all receding into a deep perspective. In jazz all elements are brought to the foreground. . . . Conventional perspective with its fixed focus and its gradual vanishing point has abdicated.¹⁶⁹

Modern painting, modern music--modern art in general--no longer acknowledges the construction of the world grounded in a geometrical concept; its new "depth" of perspective reveals the object as it is grasped with both eyes, gropingly, and not as it is seen by an ideal eye. "We no longer construct the visual world with an acute angle, converging on the horizon. We open up this angle, pulling representation against us, upon us, toward us. . . . We take part in this world."¹⁷⁰ Through this new

¹⁶⁸Ibid., p. 140.

¹⁶⁹quoted in Sergei M. Eisenstein, The Film Sense, trans. Jay Leyda (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc., A Harvest Book, 1942), p. 96.

¹⁷⁰Eisenstein, The Film Sense, p. 96.

kind of depth, modern art brings us back into the world; we enter the world, we touch it, we disclose it in so far as we become part of it once again; in short, we become situated. This new perception, like the Chinese landscape-painting, avoids leading the perceiver into a single, pre-determined perspective--instead, it stretches out before him, inviting the perceiver into its field as surely as it reciprocally moves toward him. Eisenstein is incorrect when he describes this epoch as decadent because it lacks a higher unity and thereby places an over-emphasis on individualism. As he sees it, "It is only in periods of decadence in the arts that this centripetal movement changes to a centrifugal movement, hurling apart all unifying tendencies."¹⁷¹ But Eisenstein misses the point: all perception begins with the individual, although it undeniably ends with the world. Modern art attempted to re-establish the beginning of a world, how we know it in the first place, its perceptual constitution; this movement is obviously centrifugal in so far as it refutes a theoretical world of any sort. Perception is an originating "consciousness," and to that extent it can never give us an idea of a whole world already there before us. Yet, the depth of perspective in modern art centripetally leads us to a world whose typical structure symbiotically invades the body as its setting. We can never have a "view" of this world simply because we can never leave it. "It exists primarily in its self-evidence."¹⁷² Because of his social responsibility to the "state," however, Eisenstein is forced to retain an antique historical perspective; and to this extent he misses the point on purpose.

In literature, of course, the same structure had dominated the

¹⁷¹Ibid., p. 100. ¹⁷²Merleau-Ponty, Phenomenology, p. 325.

milieu as well. Here antique perspective took the form of detailed characterization with strict adherence to a chronological plot, and framed by the linear connectedness and ubiquitous knowledgeability of the "narration," or point of view. The poem, the novel, the play--all represented a concise view of the world. As we have seen, the romantic poets, though seeming to turn away from chronology in favor of the "new" logic, psychology, continued to negotiate the isolated emotional moment as a recollection. As a detached observer of himself, the romantic poet thereby placed his own experience in an historically synchronic perspective. In this movement "backwards," toward discursive explanation, the poet appropriated his past as a dis-interested spectator in order to achieve a certain degree of "objectivity;" but this is nothing more than a reflection so that the emotional state may be re-presented in its supposedly original form. Because the recollection itself is never original, but claims to duplicate something which came before it, it impersonates a static moment in time, one which delineates an "idea" in so far as it exemplifies a distanced knowledge about something. Such a perspective nullifies the situation, and seeks repose in its very lack of intentionality--thus the romantic basis for creativity itself, emotion recollected in tranquility. The poem frames the emotion in terms of its mental prospect or view, "that prospectiveness of mind, that surview, which enables a man to foresee the whole of what he is to convey, appertaining to any one point; and by this means to subordinate and arrange the different parts according to their relative importance, as to convey it at once, and as an organized whole."¹⁷³ And again according to

¹⁷³Coleridge, Biographia Literaria, in Selected Poetry and Prose, p. 294.

Coleridge, by situating himself outside the experience in order to look back, the poet must avoid a "state of excitement," for "the property of passion is not to create; but to set in increased activity."¹⁷⁴ The poem thus represents the telescoped reflection of a single, isolated image: "Nothing assuredly can differ either in origin or in mode more widely from the apparent tautologies of intense and turbulent feeling, in which the passion is greater and of longer endurance than to be exhausted or satisfied by a single representation of the image or incident exciting it."¹⁷⁵ In this respect, Wordsworth's Prelude expresses the most sustained attempt at such a linear perspective, vanishing on the horizon line of a tranquilly recollected past, though he described it best at Tintern Abbey:

Five years have past; five summers, with the length
Of five long winters! and again I hear
These waters, rolling from their mountain-springs
With a soft inland murmur.--Once again
Do I behold these steep and lofty cliffs,
That on a wild secluded scene impress
Thoughts of more deep seclusion; and connect
The landscape with the quiet of the sky.
The day is come when I again repose
Here, under this dark sycamore, and view
These plots of cottage-ground¹⁷⁶

The recollected moment is artificial and inauthentic in so far as it remains, as Kierkegaard said, "negatively directed backwards in opposition to the movement of life;"¹⁷⁷ once it is freed of this frame, recollection can at last proceed forward to become an originating consciousness, as it does in Proust. Kierkegaard categorized this forward movement in

¹⁷⁴Ibid., p. 293. ¹⁷⁵Ibid., pp. 293-94.

¹⁷⁶Poetical Works, pp. 163-64.

¹⁷⁷Soren Kierkegaard, The Concept of Irony, trans. Lee M. Capel (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, a Midland Book Edition, 1968), p. 155.

recollection as "repetition," and defined it as interested intentionality: "Repetition and recollection are the same movement, only in opposite directions; for what is recollection has been, is repeated backwards, whereas repetition properly so called is recollected forwards."¹⁷⁸ The "interestedness" involved in Kierkegaardian repetition fundamentally approximates the Heideggerian "Sorge," Dasein as being-in-the-world. Similarly, the recollected moment of romantic poetry negotiates the disinterested metaphysical attitude, and consequently portrays "the perspective sub specie aeternitatis or, as Kierkegaard puts it, aeterno modo, by 'aesthetically' reconciling opposites in the inclusive whole of possibility and neutralizing the existential imperative to 'choose' resolutely in situation."¹⁷⁹ Primordially, both recollection and repetition are grounded in "interest," the necessity of an existential significance; but, as William V. Spanos further explains it in his essay, "Heidegger, Kierkegaard, and the Hermeneutic Circle: Towards a Postmodern Theory of Interpretation as Dis-closure,"

in "recollecting backward"--in recalling in the sense of recollecting the unique temporal experience from the point of view of an already fully established concept of Being as realm of ideal Forms (as in Plato) or as ideal System (as in Hegel) that is prior to the contingent experience, the recollection resolves the contradictions and annuls the very interest that originally generates the metaphysical question of what it means to be.¹⁸⁰

By recollecting backwards, romantic poetry continued to deploy the anthropological frame as a means to de-limit its pseudo-subjectivity; for by glancing over its shoulder, the art work merely receded toward a solitary pre-directed depth whose mental "correctness" was determined by its ideal

¹⁷⁸Repetition: An Essay in Experimental Psychology, trans. Walter Lowrie (New York: Harper and Row, Harper Torchbooks, 1964), p. 33.

¹⁷⁹Spanos, p. 465. ¹⁸⁰Ibid., p. 464.

and simultaneously identical perspective--the depth of infinity. Grounded in infinity, the representational power of the mind guarantees an objectivity which transcends the situation, re-locating the emotion in a body-less (subject-less) space, an objective space accessible to all by virtue of identical frequencies, as it were, and a zero phase difference. This synchronous point of view transcends the world like Wordsworth's imagination, which soars beyond the summit of Mount Snowdon, dwelling "above this frame of things."¹⁸¹ To this extent, romantic poetry decreed that "the history of a Poet's mind/ Is labour not unworthy of regard;"¹⁸² but in so doing, it appropriated the very frame it rhetorically renounced--objectification.

The chronological objectification of individual emotional states set before the poet "an image to be looked at from a distance," just as surely as the eighteenth century set before the poet a picture of the world to be painted, or technology set before the scientist "an It to be mastered."¹⁸³ Modern poetry, however, like painting and music, brought its hitherto background elements into the foreground in order to engage the reader's interest, constantly threatening and modifying his spatial and temporal perceptions vis-a-vis the situation. If Baudelaire launched the new beginning from which poetry would likewise commence to leave its frame, he did so in order to escape the world. And the "new order" of Mallarmé and Valéry, originating from Baudelaire himself, no more confronts the world in terms of being-situated than does romanticism;

¹⁸¹Prelude, in Wordsworth: Poetical Works, p. 588.

¹⁸²Ibid.

¹⁸³Spanos, p. 479.

it seeks, rather, to abandon it.¹⁸⁴ Both Lautréamont and Rimbaud relied heavily on a hallucinative literary technique, but it is paradoxically here that we discern the beginning of the destruction of discursive logic and its subsequent chronological perspective in order to meet the world on its own terms, as something wonder-full to behold, and not in terms of a stagnant concept, a controlled or disciplined view. "With Rimbaud a new personage emerges: the 'child-man,' the grownup who has refrained from putting off childish things. Artists became increasingly willing to accept the child's wonder and spontaneity and destructiveness as not inferior to adulthood."¹⁸⁵ But it was not until Apollinaire that the poem inclusively opened onto the world. Apollinaire's poetry freed the appearance of the thing for the world; appearance and reality became one and the same. What was true of Picasso was equally true of Apollinaire, as Gertrude Stein pointed out: "The beginning of this struggle to express the things, only the really visible things, was discouraging, even for his most intimate friends, even for Guillaume Apollinaire."¹⁸⁶

Apollinaire's early literary endeavors already display this tendency to return to the things themselves as they appear in perception, and not as the invisible objects of a conceptualized lineality. With the publication of Alcools (1913) Apollinaire forsook all punctuation in order to undermine discursive unity by means of discontinuous sentences; and his "calligraphic" poems thoroughly dislodged the narrative from its traditionally logical sequence and thereby achieved a final liberation

¹⁸⁴In so far as it "runs away" from the world, the poetry of Baudelaire and Mallarmé discloses the kind of repression already discussed with respect to the scientific world-view itself.

¹⁸⁵Shattuck, p. 31. ¹⁸⁶Stein, Picasso, p. 15.

from the frame. Apollinaire stated his own theory in Soirées: "Psychologically it is of no importance that this visible image be composed of fragments of spoken language, for the bond between these fragments is no longer the logic of grammar but an ideographic logic culminating in an order of spatial disposition totally opposed to discursive juxtaposition."¹⁸⁷ This calligraphic structure involved the reader just as cubism involved the spectator as a participant in the art work; and it is no co-incidence that Stein discussed a similar calligraphic character in Picasso's painting at this time:

During this period the cubes were no longer important, the cubes were lost. After all one must know more than one sees and one does not see a cube in its entirety. In 1914 there were less cubes in cubism, each time that Picasso commenced again he recommenced the struggle to express in a picture the things seen without association but simply as things seen and it is only the things seen that are knowledge for Picasso. . . . And so then always and always Picasso commenced his attempt to express . . . really everything a human being can know at each moment of his existence and not an assembling of all his experiences.

So in all this period of 1913 to 1917 one sees that he took great pleasure in decorating his pictures, always with a rather calligraphic tendency than a sculptural one, and during the naturalist period, which followed Parade and the voyage to Italy, the consolation offered to the side of him that was Spanish was calligraphy.

Calligraphy, as I understand it in him had perhaps its most intense moment in the decor of Mercure. . . . A little before that he had made a series of drawings, also purely calligraphic, the lines were extraordinarily lines, they were also stars that were stars which moved, they existed, they were really cubism, that is to say a thing that existed in itself without the aid of association or emotion.¹⁸⁸

Yet, in back of all this there existed that predominant and interpenetrating vector which underscored Apollinaire's entire oeuvre, and

¹⁸⁷quoted in Shattuck, p. 310.

¹⁸⁸Stein, Picasso, pp. 35, 37, and 37-38, respectively.

which he had already defined as the "gratuitous act" of his pornographic novels: the total freedom to express what one sees, the absolute freedom of the individual in the face of society--Heidegger's authentic "care" in the face of the "they-self."

Like cubism, Apollinaire's poetry freed the art work from its ideal perspective by bracketing "the arrogant anthropomorphic frame of reference of the metaphysical imagination, the Wille zum Willen, and its synchronic perspective in favor of a 'situated' or historical imagination and its diachronic standpoint, the standpoint of the ek-static Dasein."¹⁸⁹ In his struggle with time, Apollinaire recollects the past forward in so far as a unique past acquires its interest and significance as situated "being" in the present; at the same time, this repetition is guided beyond the present to the extent that its remembering constitutes a dis-covering of the world. "Nothing causes more melancholy in me than the passing of time. It is in such formal disagreement with my feelings, with my sense of identity, that it is the very source of my poetry."¹⁹⁰ Apollinaire's authentically "subjective" (care-ful) mode grounds the reader in its becoming, in the openly anxious moment of its own freedom, by turning itself inside out, so to speak, so that its movement simultaneously negotiates both destruction and ekstasis. "It is as if his I were the exterior world from which, once he had radiated himself into it, he could look back wistfully and indulgently upon his old self as a pathetic object."¹⁹¹ This ambiguous reversal of consciousness devours the reader

¹⁸⁹Spanos, p. 479.

¹⁹⁰Lettres à sa marraine, quoted in Shattuck, p. 312, footnote.

¹⁹¹Shattuck, p. 316.

even as its posture digests the world: "But I know the savor of the universe."¹⁹² Apollinaire's iconoclastic technique breaks down the barrier between subject and object, leaving the reader unaccommodated; discontinuity dialogically engages the reader with the text and thus ruptures the referential surface of the metaphysical world-picture, that framed space of the world which Wallace Stevens described as not even our "own" much less our "self."¹⁹³ Apollinaire perhaps expressed it best in "Cortège," where the "location" of his own being and, more inclusively, the world, refuses to be pinned down to a single vanishing point:

One day
 One day as I invited my soul
 I said to myself William it's time to come
 So I at last may find out who I am . . .

All those who arrived and were not myself
 Brought one by one the fragments of myself¹⁹⁴

Like Satie's compositions which frequently revolve around a single interval, Apollinaire's poetry achieves an hermeneutic circularity which eludes linear development; indeed, he wrote his first calligraphic poems literally in circles, "the circles of expanding and contracting attention."¹⁹⁵ If the center no longer holds, as Yeats expressed it, it is because the self has at last "othered" the world, made it its own; without the mediation of representational consciousness, the world becomes "the horizon of all horizons, the style of all possible styles, which

¹⁹²"Vendémiaire," Alcools, trans. Anne Hyde Greet (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1965), p. 209.

¹⁹³Spanos, pp. 474-75.

¹⁹⁴Alcools, pp. 67 and 71, respectively. Cf. Daniel Oster, Guillaume Apollinaire (Paris: Seghers, 1975), pp. 72-85.

¹⁹⁵Shattuck, p. 38, footnote.

gaurantees for my experience a given, not a willed, unity underlying all the disruptions of my personal and historical life."¹⁹⁶ Once we recognize the world as the primordial situation of Being, the distinction between subject and object disappears toward the invisible sphere to which it belongs. Apollinaire's poetry thus articulates the "pure art" of which Baudelaire spoke in L'art philosophique but left as an explicandum for the future: "Qu'est-ce que l'art pur suivant la conception moderne? C'est créer une magie suggestive contenant à la fois l'objet et le sujet, le monde extérieur à l'artiste et l'artiste lui-même."¹⁹⁷ Apollinaire's poetry unequivocally cancelled out the endurance ratio of the technological posture whose tensile strength could no longer sustain the stress of living the world; the fatuous attempt to control the world in the languid interest of a mentally detached view of life had failed. Ironically, the twentieth century has ignored this bankruptcy, resuscitating the technological value to its logically larcenous proportion; in so doing, it has of course simultaneously forfeited what is existentially its own--the world. But Apollinaire knew: "Our civilization is more refined than the things which it employs/ There's more to it than the easy life."¹⁹⁸

By recollecting forward, poetry had accomplished the destruction of

¹⁹⁶Merleau-Ponty, Phenomenology, p. 330.

¹⁹⁷Oeuvres Complètes de Charles Baudelaire, 7 vols. (Paris: Calmann Lévy, Bibliothèque Contemporaine, 1889-1904), 3:127--"What is the modern conception of pure art? It is to create a suggestive magic which contains both object and subject, the external world of the artist and the artist himself" (translation mine).

¹⁹⁸(Translation mine): "Notre civilisation a plus de finesse que les choses qu'ils emploient/ Elle est au-delà de la vie confortable," "À L'Italie," Obus Couleur De Lune, in Oeuvres Poétiques D'Apollinaire, ed. Marcel Adéma and Michel Décaudin, pref. André Billy (Paris: Gallimard, Bibliothèque de la Pléiade, 1965), p. 275.

the narrative and chronological frame; in bringing its own temporality into the foreground, the poem effected the transformation of consciousness toward its primordial constitution in the "subject" and thereby authentically appropriated the world as its indivisible situation. This new awareness, as an originating consciousness, enveloped the reader in a world whose very constitution he helped to create, just as perceptual "consciousness" discloses the world through its participation in it. But with this re-creation of the past in the present, and toward a future, the modern poem was not alone. "What we have not had to decipher, to elucidate by our own efforts, what was clear before we looked at it, is not ours."¹⁹⁹ Thus speaks the narrator of Proust's revolutionarily brilliant oeuvre. Here, the re-awakened memory continually establishes itself in the foreground of the narration; not fettered to the lineality of a single chronological vanishing point, its temporality is free to "jump around" as the eye jumps over Rousseau's Le centenaire de l'indépendance. The ekstasis of this movement authentically enables the "subject" to dis-cover the world in so far as temporality expresses it; it becomes the very expression of Being. The "reality" of the work resides in the determination of this depth, a depth created by the world of the work itself, and not a mentally perspectived representation of it. "A writer reasons, that is to say he goes astray, only when he has not the strength to force himself to make an impression pass through all the successive states which will culminate in its fixation, its expression. The reality that he has to express resides . . . not in the superficial

¹⁹⁹ Marcel Proust, Remembrance of Things Past, 7 vols. trans. Scott Moncrieff and Andreas Mayor (New York: Random House, Vintage Books, 1970), 7:140.

appearance of his subject but at a depth at which that appearance matters little."²⁰⁰ Because Remembrance of Things Past situates the memory in its affective context, it opens onto the world as a means of revealing its essential ambiguity:

in fashioning a work of art we are by no means free. . . . it is pre-existent to us and therefore we are obliged, since it is both necessary and hidden, to do what we should have to do if it were a law of nature, that is to say to discover it. But this discovery . . . is it not, I thought, really the discovery of what, though it ought to be more precious to us than anything in the world, yet remains ordinarily forever unknown to us, the discovery of our true life, of reality as we have felt it to be, which differs so greatly from what we think it is that when a chance happening brings us an authentic memory of it we are filled with an immense happiness? In this conclusion I was confirmed by the thought of the falseness of so-called realist art, which would not be so untruthful if we had not in life acquired the habit of giving to what we feel a form of expression which differs so much from, and which we nevertheless after a little time take to be, reality itself.²⁰¹

Proust's authentic moment, as recollection forward, discloses being-in-the-world as "care," for it accommodates our basic susceptibility to the "they-self" while it simultaneously refuses to bend toward the solace proffered by the "they." In a sense, this movement constitutes Dasein's being toward its ownmost potentiality, a "letting-itself-come-towards-itself" in so far as it takes over its own guilt.²⁰² Rather than back away in the face of the "having been," Proust's narrator resolutely takes over his own thrown-ness; this moment of vision, "as an authentic Present or waiting-towards . . . permits us to encounter for the first time what can be 'in a time' as ready-to-hand or present-at-hand."²⁰³

This is clearly not the "Having forgotten" (Vergessenheit) of

²⁰⁰Ibid., p. 141. ²⁰¹Ibid., p. 140.

²⁰²Heidegger, Being and Time, pp. 372-73.

²⁰³Ibid., p. 388.

having been, whereby I am "proximally and for the most part as-having-been;"²⁰⁴ otherwise, Proust's narrator could never "re-capture" the past creatively. It is not the "remembering" of a forgetting that "retains"--the kind of recollection backward of the romantic poets; Proust's moment of vision carries the past with it in anticipatory understanding--in openness and uncertainty. "The idea of death took up permanent residence within me in the way that love sometimes does. . . . and even if no object occupied my attention and I remained in a state of complete repose, the idea of death still kept me company as faithfully as the idea of my self."²⁰⁵ In creatively coming to terms with the authentic nature of this temporal ekstasis, Proust's narrator discloses a final anticipatory resoluteness: "In the past the fear of being no longer myself was something that had terrified me But by dint of repetition this fear had gradually been transformed into a calm confidence."²⁰⁶ By the essentially dialogical process of the creative act, the narrator succeeds in rectifying that "oblique interior discourse which deviates gradually more and more widely from the first and central impression," bringing it back into line with the "authentic words which the impression ought to have generated;" like the love which he is finally able to reconcile with his own death, the oeuvre itself ultimately accomplishes this "laborious undertaking which our idleness would prefer to shirk."²⁰⁷

Here all our feigned indifferences, all our indignation at the lies of whomever it is we love . . . in a word all that we have not ceased, whenever we are unhappy or betrayed, not only to say to the loved one but, while we are waiting for a meeting with her, to repeat endlessly to ourselves, sometimes aloud in the silence of

²⁰⁴Ibid., p. 389. ²⁰⁵Proust, p. 267.

²⁰⁶Ibid., p. 263. ²⁰⁷Ibid., p. 148.

our room, which we disturb with remarks like: "No, really, this sort of behavior is intolerable," and: "I have consented to see you once more, for the last time, and I don't deny that it hurts me," all this can only be brought back into conformity with the felt truth from which it has so widely diverged by the abolition of all that we have set most store by, all that in our solitude, in our feverish projects of letters and schemes, has been the substance of our passionate dialogue with ourselves.²⁰⁸

By re-capturing the past, the memory does not "scan" it as a distant view on which it finally gets a perspective, but rather grasps an affective depth--its expression in the total temporal ekstasis of past-present-future. Proust's art work thus avoids the misleading re-presentation,

so often done by painters when they paint a sail or the peak of a mountain in such a way that, according to the laws of perspective, the intensity of the colors and the illusion of our first glance, they appear to us either very near or very far away, through an error which logical thinking subsequently corrects by, sometimes, a very large displacement. Other errors, though of a more serious kind, I might continue to commit, placing features, for instance, as we all do, upon the face of a woman seen in the street, when instead of a nose, cheeks and chin there ought to be merely an empty space with nothing more upon it than a flickering reflection of our desires. But at least, after seeing what I had seen . . . and even if I did not attempt . . . to represent some of my characters as existing not outside but within ourselves . . . and to vary also the light of the moral sky which illumines them in accordance with the variations in pressure in our sensibility (for an object which was so small beneath the clear sky of our certainty can be suddenly magnified many times over on the appearance of a tiny cloud of danger)--if, in my attempt to transcribe a universe which had to be totally redrawn, I could not convey these changes and many others, the needfulness of which, if one is to depict reality, has been made manifest in the course of my narrative, at least I should not fail to portray man, in this universe, as endowed with the length not of his body but of his years²⁰⁹

By recollecting forward, then, Proust brought the temporality of the novel into the foreground so that the events of its plot dis-continuously reveal themselves through super-imposition, and not the perspective of linear chronology; he simultaneously freed the narration from its frame. In doing so, Proust actualized the vector of the modern novel initiated

²⁰⁸Ibid. ²⁰⁹Ibid., p. 270.

by Flaubert and Dostoevsky, establishing the ground for what is loosely called "stream of consciousness" and the twentieth-century masterpieces of Gide, Joyce, and Faulkner.

In drama, meanwhile, the immediacy of consciousness evolved toward a depth of its own. In his Death of Tragedy, Steiner dates the beginning of modern theatre from Ibsen's Pillars of Society (1877);²¹⁰ but the social orientation of Ibsen's early work seems hardly adequate to sufficiently rank it as modern. In fact, it is not until 1884, with Ibsen's Wild Duck, that the dramatic form absconds from its traditional frame, as Steiner himself remarks: "The limitations of the well-made play and its deliberate flatness of perspective began crowding in on Ibsen. While retaining the prose form and outward conventions of realism, he went back to the lyric voice and allegoric means of his early experimental plays, Brand and Peer Gynt. With the toy forest and imaginary hunt of old Ekdal in The Wild Duck, drama returns to a use of effective myth and symbolic action which had disappeared from the theatre since the late plays of Shakespeare."²¹¹ Ibsen's use of symbolic action brings the traditional idea of a "plot" or series of incidents into the forefront of the dramatic frame so that personal gesture supersedes the external "event," taking its place alongside the other elements of the play; this stylized vision of life equally confers an emblematic significance upon all the elements in so far as the drama now expresses the virtual shape of an "ethical interior." The very objects of the setting express an inner shape, an inward motion--the new steeple in The Master

²¹⁰George Steiner, The Death of Tragedy (New York: Hill and Wang, 1961), p. 290.

²¹¹Ibid., pp. 291-92.

Builder, the vine leaves in Hedda Gabler, Gabler's pistols, the wild duck, the flagpole in The Lady from the Sea, the tarantella dance in A Doll's House, and so forth.²¹²

Ibsen's dramas presuppose the withdrawal of God from human affairs, and that withdrawal has left the door open to cold gusts blowing in from a malevolent though inanimate creation. But the most dangerous assaults upon reason and life come not from without, as they do in Greek and Elizabethan tragedy. They arise in the unstable soul. Ibsen proceeds from the modern awareness that there is rivalry and unbalance in the individual psyche. The ghosts that haunt his characters are . . . cancers growing in the soul. In Ibsen's vocabulary, the most deadly of these cancers is "idealism"²¹³

In his later plays especially, the three-walled stage, with its perspective view into a slice of life, retracts toward an affective depth whose setting leads into an unchartered world, a world whose sign-posts we must discover all over again. By transposing the public form of drama into the highly subjective "key" of private expression, Ibsen re-defined the dramatic perspective itself. Strindberg achieved a similar kind of depth, but failed in the long run to effect the dramatically coherent structure we consistently find in Ibsen. What made the difference?

Ibsen re-defined the very "focus" of the dramatic vision, a perspective which, since the Renaissance, had focused on external incidents or "plot." Taking its lead from Aristotle, who had defined the tragic vision as the imitation of an action, Renaissance dramatic construction subsequently employed chronology as the dramatic equivalent of pictorial perspective--the re-presentation of an event. In his Poetics, Aristotle had specifically insisted on this:

The most important of the constitutive elements is the Plot, that is, the organization of the incidents of the story; for Tragedy in

²¹²Ibid., pp. 294-95. ²¹³Ibid., p. 293.

its essence is an imitation, not of men as such, but of action and life, of happiness and misery. And happiness and misery are not states of being, but forms of activity; the end for which we live is some form of activity, not the realization of a moral quality. . . . In a play, consequently, the agents do not perform for the sake of representing their individual dispositions; rather, the display of moral character is included as subsidiary to the things that are done. So that the incidents of the action, and the structural ordering of these incidents, constitute the end and purpose of the tragedy.²¹⁴

This is consistent with the significance Aristotle gives to "beginning," "middle," and "end" so that the spectator, via the ubiquity of his perspective, is able to witness the completely unified action within a single glance, as it were. With Ibsen, however, "plot" becomes the incrustated "epilogue" to a previous action; he begins where earlier tragedies had ended: "Suppose Shakespeare had written a play showing Macbeth and Lady Macbeth living out their black lives in exile after they had been defeated by their avenging enemies. We might then have the angle of vision that we find in John Gabriel Borkman."²¹⁵ As the peripherally indeterminate ingress to a private interior, Ibsen's drama super-imposed the logic of interior time over an implied chronological moment, initiating the destruction of the plot as an imitation of an action or "life." It wasn't until Chekhov that the destruction was complete.

Chekhov's plays not only abrogate the traditional perspective of the five-act division, but also meiotically terminate the anorectic teleology of beginning-middle-end. Chekhov fetches chronology into the foreground to such an extent that it touches our nose; a blurred tempo-

²¹⁴Aristotle on the Art of Poetry, trans. Lane Cooper (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1947), p. 24.

²¹⁵Steiner, pp. 296-97.

rality nebulously juts through the entire visual field of the play, so to speak. Time anxiously nudges us as we wait for something to happen, but it never does. In Chekhov absolutely nothing ever "happens." It is all talk; even suicide simply represents another rhetorical posture, for like the characters themselves, it accomplishes nothing. The structure of Chekhov's drama constitutes a magnetic field of psychological motion where "every word and gesture provokes a complex disturbance and regrouping of psychological forces. . . . A Chekhovian dialogue is a musical score set for speaking voice."²¹⁶ Like Satie's music, which often develops a single musical idea from different directions simultaneously rather than "at length," Chekhovian drama evolves by standing still. It endures. Whatever motion we may feel, it is the motion of a still center; and that center is everywhere at once. Like a carriage wheel, which appears to be going backward once it reaches a certain forward velocity, Chekhov's movement revolves in both directions at the same time. His interrogation of psychological time suggests a mutual motion and repose, just as with Satie's ostinato bass there is the suggestion of "permanent movement and permanent rest."²¹⁷ What Roger Shattuck says of Satie might equally be said of Chekhov: "He varies only the bare contour, the notes in the melody but not its general shape, the chords in the accompaniment but not its dominant mood."²¹⁸ The enigmatic quality of Chekhovian dialogue derives from this super-imposition of simultaneous levels of consciousness which, in turn, creates its own distinctive significance--absurdity. Chekhov's plays take up where Socrates left off in the Symposium, demonstrating that the spirit of tragedy is ultimately that

²¹⁶Ibid., p. 300. ²¹⁷Shattuck, p. 141. ²¹⁸Ibid.

of comedy as well. In this respect, we can better understand Chekhov's remark that he never wrote a tragedy; he intuitively recognized life's ultimate absurdity. And what difference is there in the end, whether the listener or the talker falls asleep? Socrates' final comment in the Symposium is most ironically appropriate--silence. With his usual incisiveness, Kierkegaard remarks:

What Socrates valued so highly, namely, to stand still and come to himself, i.e. silence, this is what his whole life is in relation to world history. He has left nothing from which a later age can judge him. . . . He belonged to that species of human beings with whom one is not content to remain with the external as such. The external always suggested an 'other', an opposite. He was not like a philosopher lecturing upon his views, wherein the very lecture itself constitutes the presence of the Idea; on the contrary, what Socrates said meant something 'other'. The outer and the inner did not form a harmonious unity, for the outer was in opposition to the inner, and only through this refracted angle is he to be apprehended.²¹⁹

Chekhov's plays articulated the silence of Socratic irony.

If Chekhov pre-figured Ionesco, Genet, Beckett, and the "Theatre of the Absurd" in general, Alfred Jarry virtually launched it on the way. In its trans-valuation of the rational "attitude," the Ubu trilogy resembles "the incoherence--and significance of that other great monstrosity: Picasso's Guernica."²²⁰ If the perfect script were ever written for W. C. Fields, this is it; Ibsen's Peer Gynt constitutes a close second. In act one, scene one of Ubu Enchained, Pa Ubu, having "lorded" it over others as "king," initiates the general situation of the play:

PA UBU. . . . Now that we are in the land where liberty is equal to fraternity, and fraternity more or less means the equality of legality, and since I am incapable of behaving like everyone else and since being the same as everyone else is all the same to me seeing that I shall certainly end up by killing everyone else, I

²¹⁹The Concept of Irony, pp. 49-50. ²²⁰Shattuck, p. 228.

might as well become a slave, Ma Ubu!

MA UBU. A slave! But you're too fat, Pa Ubu!

PA UBU. All the better for doing a fat lot of work. You, madam our female, go and set out our slave apron, and our unmentionable slave brush, and our slave hook, and our slave's shoe-polishing kit. But as for yourself, stay just as you are, so that everyone can see plainly that you are wearing your beautiful costume of slave cook.²²¹

In a single definitive gesture, Jarry levels the reflective consciousness which, in itself, attempts to level down all modalities of existence to a single consciousness. In fact, Ubu Enchained, begins with silence, as the stage directions indicate, when Pa Ubu "comes forward and says nothing."²²² Ma Ubu responds: "What! You say nothing, Pa Ubu! Surely you haven't forgotten the Word?"²²³ The "word" of course is Merdre--"Pschitt!"--which brought the house down on 10 December 1896, when Ubu Rex opened at the Théâtre Nouveau in the Rue Blanche. Not since 1830, when Victor Hugo packed the house for the premiere of his own Hernani, had there been anything like it. Pa Ubu's inability to pronounce the word at the beginning of Ubu Enchained merely underscores the absurdity of it all. Like Rousseau's canvases and Satie's music, Jarry's child-like posture recreates the structure of a pre-reflective consciousness where the apparent and the real remain entirely ambiguous; slavery and freedom are synonymous within the context of the play because Jarry never questions their relation initially. Jarry's vision is absurd precisely because he takes nothing--or better, everything--for granted; his work addresses an interrogation

²²¹Alfred Jarry, The Ubu Plays, ed. Simon Watson Taylor (New York: Grove Press, Inc., 1968), p. 110.

²²²Ibid., p. 109.

²²³Ibid.

which is never even formulated.²²⁴ By suspending all affirmation, he stands, as Husserl would express it, in wonder before the world.²²⁵

Jarry turned the world inside-out in so far as he lived his art; in his personal life he recreated the very figures which populate the pages of his oeuvre. As he says of Sengle, the protagonist of Days and Nights (1897),

he made no distinction whatsoever between his thoughts and his actions or between his dream and his waking; and perfecting the Leibnizian definition, that perception is a true hallucination, he saw no reason why one should not say: hallucination is a false perception, or more exactly: a weak one, or better yet: predicted (remembered sometimes, which is the same thing). And, above all, he considered that there existed nothing except hallucinations, or perceptions, and that there were neither nights nor days (despite the title of this book, which is why we chose it), and that life goes on without interruption; . . . and the first proof of life is the beating of the heart.²²⁶

Here, as in his "pataphysics," the distinction between dream and waking does not represent a shift to consciousness but singularly indicates a continuity. Taken as a whole, this continuum constitutes consciousness itself so that we can never dismiss the dream on phenomenological grounds. The form of a dream appropriates a certain kind of consciousness by its very nature; otherwise, it could never be disclosed, for example, in the art work. This is what Rollo May implies when he exhorts the psychoanalyst to approach the patient's dream as a series of spatial forms.²²⁷ Concerning the structure of the dream, R. G. Collingwood made this distinction:

²²⁴Cf. Merleau-Ponty, Phenomenology, p. 295. ²²⁵Ibid.

²²⁶Selected Works of Alfred Jarry, ed. Roger Shattuck and Simon Watson Taylor (New York: Grove Press, Inc., 1965), p. 145-46.

²²⁷Rollo May, The Courage to Create (New York: Bantam Books, 1976), p. 154.

It is essentially a structure which is, in the terminology of the psycho-analyst himself, unconscious. The dreamer himself is unaware of it until, in collaboration with his psycho-analyst, he brings it to light. The mythological way of stating this fact is to say that the structure was 'in the unconscious'. This is frankly nonsense . . . because the structure is not in the unconscious but precisely in the dream, for it is the structure of the dream; and the dream is conscious enough. . . . the revelation made by psycho-analysis is not the bringing into consciousness of what was unconscious, but the bringing into explicitness of what was implicit, the noticing of something already actually experienced in a light in which it had not been noticed before. . . . the new light in question is nothing but the hitherto overlooked structure of the experience in question²²⁸

In so far as the dream embodies an implicit "logical" structure, it constitutes a continuous or, better, contiguous "form" of consciousness. Jarry's works invert the logic of traditional consciousness, transforming it into the structure of the dream. Thus, Ubu asserts his freedom by ironically, and paradoxically, becoming a slave. This is the "magnificent gesture" which Jarry transformed, by way of a pun, into the "manifest imposture;" and it uniquely abridges the essence of his entire oeuvre. Merleau-Ponty has said it another way: "I face truth not with its negation, but with a state of non-truth or ambiguity, the actual opacity of my existence."²²⁹ Jarry set about "to upset the balance of waking (rational) logic and developed the elements of 'Pataphysics,' a kind of reasonable unreason;" the action of Ubu Rex, for example, takes place in Poland, "(. . . a country long condemned to the nonexistence of partition) an Eternity of Nowhere, and that contradiction is the mode of its logic."²³⁰ By virtue of the universal imposture, the typical becomes

²²⁸Speculum Mentis or The Map of Knowledge (London: Oxford University Press, 1924), pp. 93-94.

²²⁹Merleau-Ponty, Phenomenology, p. 295.

²³⁰Shattuck, pp. 202 and 206, respectively.

exceptional, and the exceptional, typical; this was the avowed purpose of his "pataphysics," the science of the realm beyond metaphysics:

Pataphysics will examine the laws governing exceptions, and will explain the universe supplementary to this one; or, less ambitiously, will describe a universe which can be--and perhaps should be--envisaged in the place of the traditional one, since the laws that are supposed to have been discovered in the traditional universe are also correlations of exceptions, albiet more frequent ones, but in any case accidental data which, reduced to the status of unexceptional exceptions, possess no longer even the virtue of originality.²³¹

Like Picasso, who later collected Jarry's manuscripts, Jarry's art sets out to describe a universe which one can see; in this transformed space, the art work takes its place alongside the expressive space of the world. Because the art work has been freed of its frame, André Breton could say that with Jarry, the separation between art and life has been annihilated once and for all.²³² How poignantly Jarry disclosed the nature of his own works when he analyzed the characters in a novel by Henri de Régnier, who through inverse mimicry "congeal their surroundings into their own image and erect palaces of space around themselves;" and he continues, "if every hero brings his own scenery with him, and if we never see the Prince of Praizig without his military greatcoat, Madame de Vitry without her rouge. . . . nor Madame Brignan without her dyed hair, then this proves, and no more evidence is needed, that the author has turned his creatures inside out and exposed their soul: the soul is a nervous tic."²³³ Liberated for its own unique space, the art work could at last

²³¹Exploits and Opinions of Doctor Faustroll, Pataphysician, in Selected Works of Alfred Jarry, pp. 192-93; cf. also, Shattuck, pp. 241-42.

²³²André Breton, Les Pas Perdus (Paris: Gallimard, 1924), pp. 47-65.

²³³"Concerning Inverse Mimicry in the Characters of Henri de Régnier," Selected Works of Alfred Jarry, pp. 91 and 92-93, respectively.

proceed to create its own world as well. In Ubu, Jarry initiated the prototype which he would incorporate into his later works; he created, in fact, the anti-Frankenstein monster, "a one-man demolition squad twenty years before Dada."²³⁴ Even more startling, as the science of laws governing exceptions, his pataphysics prefigured Heisenberg's principle of indeterminacy. No wonder that Cyril Connolly dubbed Pa Ubu the "Santa Claus of the Atomic Age," and that Apollinaire could say of Jarry himself that he was "the last sublime debauchee of the Renaissance."²³⁵

By abandoning the lineality of a continuous and uniform perspective-space, the avant-garde exploded that most elemental perceptual bias which had plagued Western civilization for more than four centuries. In returning to the "composition" of the work, as Gertrude Stein expressed it, modern art abrogated the subject-object dichotomy constituted and sustained by the principles of resemblance, imitation, and re-presentation. More or less taking its lead from music, which came to epitomize an absolutely self-sufficient art, modern painting and literature incorporated the "spectator" into its own structure; this new "expressive" form appropriated a unique space in which the subject is expected to discover his own orientation all over again. We become a part of the field; we become incarnate. By virtue of a trans-position, either juxtaposition or super-imposition, modern art escaped the "transition," a discursive element which inevitably represents a second-order "reflection" in itself. Apollinaire called this transition-less quality of modern art "surprise." Surprise engages us in mutual creation with the artist

²³⁴Shattuck, p. 226.

²³⁵quoted in Shattuck, pp. 224 and 251, respectively.

himself, as well as the art work, in so far as we disclose the significance of the work. "In the old tradition the spectator knows in essence what must happen, and while the action unfolds we experience not surprise but verification of certain general truths. The peripety is fated from the start. Thus, any important event occurs, in effect, twice--and this analysis can be applied to Greek tragedy, to the early French novel, and to baroque architecture."²³⁶ By its nature an expressive form is intimate: rather than hold him at "bay," it invites the spectator into its own space. We no longer "observe" the art work from a pre-determined distance, as a "view," but touch it by entering onto its space. To the extent that modern art brings all its "elements" equally into the foreground so that something is "in front" or "in back" of something else only in so far as the "gaze" of the perceiver distinguishes it as such, the art work enters onto the world as an incomplete gestalt which demands to be completed in order to be experienced at all. Art, as e.e. cummings said of life, is no longer "a verb of two voices"--active and passive.²³⁷ By manipulating or "handling" the appearance of the thing, modern art appropriates the perceptual freedom of the composition itself, the right to its own world irrespective of a preconceived externality. This is the kind of visual freedom Gertrude Stein had in mind when she said that with Picasso's cubism the painting commenced to leave its frame.

Of all the cubists, perhaps Juan Gris expressed the new aesthetic and its subsequent methodology best: "Now painting is foreseeing--foreseeing what will happen to the general effect of a picture by the intro-

²³⁶Shattuck, pp. 339-40.

²³⁷Jacket copy of the play Him, New York: Boni and Liveright, 1927, quoted in Shattuck, p. 343.

duction of some particular form of some particular colour, and foreseeing what sort of reality will be suggested to the spectator. It is, then, by being my own spectator that I extract the subject from my picture."²³⁸

In 1890, Maurice Denis had already redefined the composition of the painting, and it was his re-formulation of this issue which instituted modern criticism in general, he declared: "Se rappeler qu'un tableau--avant d'être un cheval de bataille, une femme nue, ou une quelconque anecdote--est essentiellement une surface plane recouverte de couleurs en un certain ordre assemblées."²³⁹ Rousseau seemed acutely aware of this distinction, employing color as the most significantly "formal" element in all his compositions. By 1912, Robert Delaunay had made enormous progress in this respect, directing his experiments with pure color toward an entirely non-figurative style while, at the same time, Kandinsky and Mondrian were performing similar experiments in Germany and Holland respectively.²⁴⁰ Out of this specific effort there evolved the general term "simultanism." In the paintings of Delaunay's Les fenêtres series, for example, "we are simultaneously indoors and out of doors, inside an object and on all sides of it."²⁴¹ But what makes this articulation of simultaneous points of view any different from the flat projection we

²³⁸"Notes on My Painting," in Daniel-Henry Kahnweiler, Juan Gris: His Life and Work, rev. ed., trans. Douglas Cooper (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1968), p. 194. Cf. "Reply to the Questionnaire: 'Chez les cubistes'," 1925, *ibid.*, p. 202: ". . . for the only relationship that existed was that between the intellect of the painter and the objects and practically never was there any relationship between the objects themselves."

²³⁹Théories: 1890-1910, 4th ed. (Paris: L. Rouart and J. Watelin, 1920), p. 1: "Recall that a painting--before being a horse in battle, a naked woman, or any kind of anecdote--is essentially a plane surface covered with colors and arranged in a certain order" (translation mine).

²⁴⁰Shattuck, pp. 279-80. ²⁴¹*Ibid.*, p. 349.

encounter in the ubiquitousness of the world-view? Precisely this--the visual field remains entirely indeterminate. Like the newspaper cut-outs in a cubist collage, the "objects" of a simultanist painting constitute a possible horizon for other objects in the field. Rather than vanish in the determinate point of a single horizon, each object engages my attention in so far as it opens onto an indeterminate periphery. I complete the "gestalt" a different way each time my gaze "takes it up" which, in turn, determines how my body orients itself to the unique space of the painting's world. I can only make the world of the painting the familiar setting of my own life to the extent that I intend to take it up completely. In this respect, the art work enters onto my own world; it compels me to become familiar with it in so far as it dialogically engages my attention, and I negotiate its unfamiliar space in order to arrive at the most determinate "form" possible. Only beyond the "edges" of the painting, however, is this completion actualized, just as my visual gaze appropriates the objects "in back of me" as part of its field. Because the formal possibilities subsequently remain open by virtue of this double horizon, I encounter nothing less than the existential ek-stasis itself--that is, temporality. Situated in the diachronic standpoint, the art work engages my interest in so far as it stands out from the temporal horizon as a whole, past-present-future. Thus, for example, the so-called "simultaneous" points of view in simultanism constitute, in effect, neither a simultaneity in space nor in time. Shattuck locates the essence of not only simultanism but of modern art in general in an eternal and continuous present, and calls it "the art of stillness;" as he remarks, "Stillness represented its unity,

its continuous present, its sole permanence."²⁴² For Shattuck, modern art represents, then, a synchronic standpoint, the "place" where everything happens at once. This, however, merely re-locates its perspective within the larger frame of the world-view itself, whereas, in fact, this art appropriates an essential quality just the opposite of stillness, and that is motion.

The lack of connectives in modern art pre-figures the electronic cultural milieu in which we live today. Like the mechanism in Jarry's "How to Construct a Time Machine" (1899), it even anticipates the theory of relativity:

If we could remain immobile in absolute Space while Time elapses, if we could lock ourselves inside a Machine that isolates us from Time . . . all future and past instants could be explored successively, just as the stationary spectator of a panorama has the illusion of a swift voyage through a series of landscapes.²⁴³

Yet, in so far as it is phenomenal, the motion of modern art is not relative. The absence of transition in modern art, whether it be a musical score, a painting or a literary piece, produces that kinaesthetic sensation whereby we experience a certain "speed" or motion in the form, though never to the point where formal elements concur simultaneously. This motion, however, possesses no "properties" in itself, but only a certain style. "The moving object, as object of an indefinite series of explicit and concordant perceptions, has properties, the mobile entity has only a style."²⁴⁴ Movement does not necessarily pre-suppose a moving object; "it is sufficient that it should include 'something that moves', or at the most 'something coloured' or 'luminous' without any actual

²⁴²Ibid. ²⁴³Selected Works of Alfred Jarry, p. 115.

²⁴⁴Merleau-Ponty, Phenomenology, pp. 273-74.

colour or light. The logician excludes this middle term: the radii of the circle must be either equal or unequal, motion must either have or not have a moving body."²⁴⁵ We are concerned here with the non-thematic significance of movement, for the thematization of movement "ends with the identical object in motion and with the relativity of movement, which means that it destroys movement."²⁴⁶ Phenomenally speaking, a "world" is constituted not only by things but by change as well, whereas the "world" constituted by the world-view recognizes only the thing itself in transit. Thus, its most peculiar characteristic--having to account for "where" everything "is at" thematically. Spatial and temporal lineality thus enable the percipient to always define his experience of the world by virtue of an unequivocal predicate--that is, its "theme." If it cannot be expressed in a single definitive sentence, it simply isn't there. Similarly, transition in the art work helps to define the relation of all its parts in so far as the art work as a whole occupies a certain space; even to say that the art work is greater than the sum of its parts still implies a mathematical function which ultimately gets us nowhere. In traditional drama, or literature in general for example, the "event" merely constitutes another "thing" in the manipulation or construction of plot. Modern art, on the other hand, recognizes the pure transition itself, the manner of a thing's passing. "The something in transit which we have recognized as necessary to the constitution of a change is to be defined only in terms of the particular manner of its 'passing'."²⁴⁷ In other words, the modern art work defines itself primarily in terms of its "behavior" and not its "properties." Because it is essentially

245Ibid., p. 274. 246Ibid., p. 275. 247Ibid.

transition-less, modern art appropriates the "pure transition" in itself--that is, motion. The motion of modern art begins to appear as the "modulation of an already familiar setting" in my perceptual field,²⁴⁸ only in so far as I acquaint myself with it entering onto its space. To the extent that my perceptual "gaze" supplies the appropriate figure and background to the field, and to that extent alone, does the motion of the work become structural, though never "relative," for the "very peculiar relationship which constitutes movement does not exist between objects."²⁴⁹ In my perception of the modern art work, then, whether it be music, painting or poetry, the pre-objective ekstatic temporality of a lived present holds me within the thickness and opacity of past and future as well; unlike objective time determined by successive moments, I experience the phenomenon of motion "without being in any way aware of objective positions."²⁵⁰ Shattuck's thinking is faulty in this respect precisely because he conceives of the perceiver as another object in objective space; he thus implicitly accepts the assumption that motion can, and does, occur between two objects. This is why he discovers, at the heart of modern art, an absolute stillness: "An object in motion has difficulty taking into account other motions. Only by achieving rest, arrest, can we perceive what is happening outside ourselves."²⁵¹ This is, of course, a logical conclusion only if we conceive of the perceptual act transpiring without a field. The necessity of a double horizon constituted by both physical and bodily space leads us to a far different

²⁴⁸Ibid. ²⁴⁹Ibid., p. 277.

²⁵⁰Ibid., p. 275.

²⁵¹Shattuck, p. 350.

conclusion indeed, whereby motion, as we have seen, becomes an absolute.²⁵²

In its demand to be completed, modern art asserts an ontological priority in time, and appropriates this significance in so far as the motion becomes identical with its completed appropriation. Its transposition, which Gauguin decreed essential to all modern art, thus constitutes what today, in effect, we call "montage." Here, as we saw during the Renaissance, it was art which once again preceded technology and its most significant product since the daguerreotype--the "motion" picture. Cinematic montage primordially articulates the "pure transition," the manner of a thing's passing. Indeed, contrary to George Sarton's insidiously arrogant remark noted in the previous chapter, that "if we try to explain the progress of mankind, the history of science should be the very axis of our explanation,"²⁵³ the progress of mankind is primordially and for the most part grounded in its art. As Sir Herbert Read has said, art precedes other forms; on the basis of its activity, "a 'symbolic discourse' becomes possible, and religion, philosophy and science follow as consequent modes of thought."²⁵⁴ Rollo May amplifies Sir Herbert's statement as follows:

This is not to say that reason is the more civilized form and art the more primitive one, in a pejorative sense--an egregious error unfortunately often found in our rationalistic Western culture. This is, rather, to say that the creative encounter in the art form is "total"--it expresses a wholeness of experience; and science and philosophy abstract partial aspects for their subsequent study.²⁵⁵

²⁵²Merleau-Ponty, Phenomenology, p. 280.

²⁵³Sarton, The Renaissance, p. 55.

²⁵⁴quoted in May, p. 99. ²⁵⁵May, pp. 99-100.

At any rate, the motion in modern art pre-figured cinematic montage and its purely transitional nature--temporal juxtaposition. And here, Roger Shattuck is true to the mark: "Having no subordinate conjunctions and no punctuation except the retarded timing of the fade and the mix, film is organically juxtaposition."²⁵⁶ No one has examined the history and nature of the film more perceptively, perhaps, than Sergie Eisenstein. In his Film Sense, he says of juxtaposition:

The basic fact was true, and remains true to this day, that the juxtaposition of two separate shots by splicing them together resembles not so much a simple sum of one shot plus another shot--as it does a creation. It resembles a creation--rather than a sum of its parts--from the circumstance that in every such juxtaposition the result is qualitatively distinguishable from each component element viewed separately.²⁵⁷

In other words, this new entity, as a product of juxtaposition, transcends any and all re-presentation whatsoever--by virtue of its very motion it escapes the limitations of its frame. As an example, Eisenstein cites Ambrose Bierce's "The Inconsolable Widow" where a woman in widow's attire stands weeping upon a grave.

"Console yourself, madame," said a Sympathetic Stranger.
 "Heaven's mercies are infinite. There is another man somewhere, besides your husband, with whom you can still be happy."
 "There was," she sobbed--"there was, but this is his grave."²⁵⁸

Eisenstein then explains: "The woman . . . is a representation, the mourning robe she is wearing is a representation--that is, both are objectively representable. But 'a widow,' arising from a juxtaposition of the two representations, is objectively unrepresentable."²⁵⁹ Thus,

²⁵⁶Shattuck, p. 334, footnote.

²⁵⁷Eisenstein, The Film Sense, pp. 7-8.

²⁵⁸quoted in Eisenstein, The Film Sense, p. 5.

²⁵⁹Eisenstein, The Film Sense, p. 8.

the unity of a film derives from its ability to transcend not only the content enclosed by the single frames, but also the juxtaposition of these separate contents with each other.²⁶⁰ "Hence the image of a scene, a sequence, of a whole creation, exists not as something fixed and ready-made. It has to arise, to unfold before the senses of the spectator."²⁶¹ What unfolds before us is nothing less than the spatial "world" of the film, its composition. Ultimately grounded in the temporality of its vision, the "motion" picture, like all of modern art, invites us into its space in so far as we take it up intimately, with the personal style of our "gaze." Phenomenally situated within the pre-objectivity of perception, the film demands a new spatial level in order to be "seen" at all. As Gertrude Stein said of art, defining it as the "composition" of the world--"Nothing changes from generation to generation except the thing seen and that makes a composition."²⁶²

Modern art not only opened onto the revolutionary form of the film and its subsequent technological development, but once again laid the ground for all of the seminal advances in the science and technology of the twentieth century. It created, in fact, the very possibility of a "post-modern" physics some fifty years ahead of its time. In so far as contemporary physics is beginning to admit that it can no longer entertain a total picture of the universe, it is ultimately fated to relinquish its world-view; and with it must go, once and for all, the pseudo-salvation of the ubiquitous vision of science in general. It is simply a matter of time. Meanwhile, the central question which plagues

²⁶⁰Ibid., p. 9. ²⁶¹Ibid., p. 18.

²⁶²"Composition as Explanation," in Selected Writings, p. 513.

the contemporary physicist echoes the significant question which haunted the avant-garde some fifty years before: is the physical space of the universe essentially symmetrical as Galileo and Newton would have it, or is it primordially the expression of an incomprehensible pattern or "form." Post-modern physics discloses a world not only at odds with reason, but with our imagination as well. As Huston Smith remarks in his essay, "The Revolution in Western Thought,"

the problems which the new physics poses for man's sense of order cannot be resolved by refinements in scale. Instead they appear to point to a radical disjunction between the way things behave and every possible way in which we might try to visualize them. How, for example, are we to picture an electron traveling two or more different routes through space concurrently or passing from orbit to orbit without traversing the space between them all? What kind of model can we construct of a space that is finite yet unbounded, or of light which is both wave and particle?²⁶³

In so far as we cannot form a picture of it, this "new" world refuses to be visualized at all--at least in the traditional perspective; it is entirely beyond reason; it is truly, in Kant's sense of the term, "sublime." Yet what, after all, is the space of the electron, wherein it concurrently travels through two or more different routes without traversing the space between them at all, if not the pre-objective, "behavioral," situated space of being-in-the-world? It is nothing less than the expressive space of modern art. Thus, post-modern physics finds itself describing the universe in such purely metaphorical terms as "light years," "bent space," "absolute negative temperatures," and "audible radio stars."²⁶⁴ P. W. Bridgman of Harvard has put it this way:

The structure of nature may eventually be such that our processes

²⁶³Dialogue on Science, ed. William R. Cozart (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Co., Inc., 1967), p. 26.

²⁶⁴Shattuck, p. 349.

of thought do not correspond to it sufficiently to permit us to think about it at all. . . . The world fades out and eludes us. . . . We are confronted with something truly ineffable. We have reached the limit of the vision of the great pioneers of science, the vision, namely, that we live in a sympathetic world in that it is comprehensible by our minds.²⁶⁵

The post-modern physicist is subsequently encouraged to talk about a theory in terms of its "elegance," rather than its "truth." And in so doing, he has at last returned to a world of beauty, the very world of art from whence he originally emerged during the Renaissance. Rationality or utility is no longer of paramount importance, but rather subsumed, as Rollo May remarks, "as part of the character of being beautiful. The harmony of an internal form, the inner consistency of a theory, the character of beauty that touches one's sensibilities--these are significant factors determining why a given idea emerges. . . . insights emerge not chiefly because they are 'rationally true' or even helpful, but because they have a certain form, the form that is beautiful because it completes an incomplete Gestalt."²⁶⁶ As it did when Einstein introduced his theory of relativity and Heisenberg his principle of indeterminacy, the world henceforth runs the risk of continually being upset--indeed, re-appropriates the very principle of chaos as part of its ground.²⁶⁷ The perceptually biased "defense mechanisms" of optical perspective are, at last, de trop. Apollinaire knew it some fifty years before, as did the avant-garde in general; and he articulated what has become the basic posture of the twentieth century in his brilliant poem

²⁶⁵quoted in Smith, "The Revolution in Western Thought," in Dialogue on Science, p. 26.

²⁶⁶May, pp. 73-74.

²⁶⁷Cf. May, p. 78.

"Zone," as we now begin to disclose the affective distances of
inter-planetary space:

God who dies Friday and rises Sunday
Christ who flies higher than the aviators
And holds the world's record

Christ pupil of the eye
Twentieth pupil of the centuries he knows his business
And changed to a bird this century ascends like Jesus268

CHAPTER III

HAWTHORNE'S DIORAMIC GAZE: PERCEPTION

For the nineteenth century, the daguerreotype appreciably offset the temporal and spatial displacement caused by the latest technology; for it securely located man within the perspective co-ordinates of his world-view. Yet, violent technical innovation engenders alienation and the pain of isolation in any age.¹ Hawthorne's fiction definitively expresses the alienation and pain of isolation which his own age experienced. It does so only because Hawthorne himself was eminently aware of the condition of his environment: "The artist has the power to discern the current environment created by the latest technology. Ordinary human instinct causes people to recoil from these new environments and to rely on the rear-view mirror as a kind of repeat or ricorso of the preceding environment."² Hawthorne's fiction condemns the unconscious bias of perception in his own culture, and thus opens the possibility of new perceptions with respect to the counter-environments of the fiction itself. As McLuhan puts it:

The function of the artist in correcting the unconscious bias of perception in any given culture can be betrayed if he merely repeats the bias of the culture instead of readjusting it. In fact, it can be said that any culture which feeds merely on its direct antecedents is dying. In this sense the role of art is to create the means of perception by creating counterenvironments that open the door of perception to people otherwise numbed in a nonperceivable situation.³

¹McLuhan, Vanishing Point, p. 235.

²Ibid., p. xxiii. ³Ibid., p. 241.

Although it is difficult to assess the degree to which Hawthorne was consciously aware of himself as the creator of counter-environments--a means of perceiving the actual environment over and against the pseudo-environments created by technology and their resultant fictions of space and time--Hawthorne's fiction clearly speaks against the age; and it does so with remarkable consistency. But what is this speaking against? What is it that Hawthorne so violently detested and which, in short, becomes the brunt of his attack? Perhaps what he most generally disliked about his age was its attitude toward the visual sense, an attitude which overwhelmingly reflected the major concern of his day as it appeared vis-à-vis technology--specifically, the "daguerrean" or world-view. Hawthorne's use of mirrors, for example, counterbalances the transilluminated image of the daguerrean plate; rather than perfectly reflect the world, his mirrors obliquely demonstrate its perceptual opacity prior to second-order consciousness; that is, prior to reflection itself. The mirror translates the reflexivity of the sensible, that in which my own externality completes itself: "More completely than lights, shadows, and reflections, the mirror image anticipates, within things, the labor of vision."⁴ The mirror reciprocates what I see, by disclosing what things see of me; the body-image transcends itself to become a spectacle in its own right. Like any spectacle, moreover, the mirror plays its own games, optical tricks by which the metamorphic nature of vision illusively appears in order to enclose itself. In fact, from an "objective" point of view, the mirror image must be re-reflected, that is, translated mentally, before it accurately represents its derivative spatial

⁴Merleau-Ponty, Primacy, p. 168.

reflection. The image in the mirror is transitory, its transpositional ambiguity escapes us even as we look. Thus, "Monsieur du Miroir" ironically illustrates the futility of any attempt to capture "the picture or visible type of what I muse upon, that my mind may not wander so vaguely as heretofore, chasing its own shadow through a chaos, and catching only the monsters that abide there."⁵ Like many painters, who use the mirror to paint themselves in the act of painting, Hawthorne frequently employs his "mirrors" in order to write himself into the writing. Indeed, on an aesthetic level, the mirror "mirrors" his own maieutic method. Hawthorne's socratic narrator not only questions his subject-matter and audience, but repeatedly interrogates himself. In so doing, he places a counterfeit image before himself, an opaque alternative which recreates the perceptually and ontologically ambiguous dialectic of "within" and "without." This primordial ambiguity sets the tone throughout much of Hawthorne's oeuvre, for the self-interrogative narrator is often the source of his irony as well. Like Matisse, Hawthorne enjoyed drawing himself into the very structure of the work: "Farewell, Monsieur du Miroir! Of you, perhaps, as of many men, it may be doubted whether you are the wiser, though your whole business is REFLECTION."⁶

Inescapably, Hawthorne's fiction is predominantly visual, but to

⁵"Monsieur du Miroir," in The Centenary Edition of the Works of Nathaniel Hawthorne, ed. William Charvat, Roy Harvey Pearce, and Claude M. Simpson, XVIII vols. (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1962-present), X, pp. 169-70. Subsequent references to Hawthorne's works, unless otherwise noted, will be exclusively to this edition, hereafter referred to by volume and page number only. Volumes I through XI have appeared to date, with volume XII projected for early December. I have had no opportunity to research Hawthorne's "missing notebook," most recently discovered in Boulder, Colorado, covering the years 1835-1841.

⁶Ibid., p. 171. Cf. also, "Fancy's Show Box," IX, p. 221, where Mr. Smith gazes at his own reflection in the madeira glass.

the extent that it is visual at all it is always counter-visual; its perception is antithetical to the public bias. Throughout his life, Hawthorne remained half-convinced that the reflection was indeed the reality.⁷ As Normand remarks:

Even though his intent in escaping from the maze of customs he had been brought up in was not to seek out new ways of being and thinking, but simply to see what there is hidden beneath appearances, he was none the less a traitor to society, for he was refusing to play the game. He had therefore forfeited all his rights, his identity, indeed all reality, and even in his own eyes.⁸

Thus, Hawthorne acquired what Malcolm Cowley calls his "compulsive habit;" for he adorned "his imagined rooms and landscapes with mirrors of every description--not only looking-glasses but burnished shields and breastplates, copper pots, fountains, lakes, pools, anything that could reflect the human form."⁹ Yet, in so far as the "reality" to which Hawthorne's eyes fell forfeit remained solely constituted by the technological frame of his age, he "lost" nothing more than the static, pre-conceptualized determinateness of its perspective view. Grounded in finite temporality, Hawthorne's gaze never gives us the whole picture any more than the mind is able to grasp the meaning and value of Being within a single and systematic mental equivalent: "Perhaps there are higher intelligences that look upon all the manifestations of the human mind--metaphysics, ethics, histories, politics, poems, stories & c--with the same interest as we do on flowers, or any other humble production of

⁷The American Notebooks, VIII, p. 360.

⁸Jean Normand, Nathaniel Hawthorne: An Approach to an Analysis of Artistic Creation, trans. Derek Coltman (Cleveland: The Press of Case Western Reserve University, 1970), p. 41.

⁹"Hawthorne in the Looking-Glass," Sewanee Review 56 (October-December 1948) : 545.

nature."¹⁰ Thus, it is not so much that Hawthorne sought what was hidden beneath appearances, as that he consistently made attempts in both the notebooks and the fiction itself "to re-educate his eyes, to rediscover direct perception."¹¹ In fact, after 1837 Hawthorne's notebooks reveal a marked shift in his own perceptual habits, a shift toward minute observation of the appearance of things. "His eye became a faceted mirror reflecting a reality fragmented into elements of microscopic size."¹² Nevertheless, it remains phenomenally true that the hidden necessarily constitutes an essential "aspect" of any "appearance." Hawthorne always recognized this phenomenon. In the American Notebooks, for example, he says of Una's beauty, "Her beauty is the most flitting, transitory, most uncertain and unaccountable affair, that ever had a real existence; . . . if you glance sideways at her, you perhaps think it is illuminating her face, but, turning full round to enjoy it, it is gone again."¹³ Hawthorne's emphasis on feeling, sensibility, and interiority reflects his reaction to the prevalent "rationalism" of his day, and appropriates, in its place, the changing appearance of each object with respect to the temporality of perception itself. His fiction proclaims a new moment in its discovery of the world, a moment freed for itself in order to become apparent; that is, personal and opaque. By appearing for the first time, as an originating consciousness, it repeatedly warns us never to approach the world it discloses with a pre-conception, but rather encourages "the discipline of looking always at what is to be seen."¹⁴

¹⁰The American Notebooks, VIII, p. 256.

¹¹Normand, p. 115. ¹²*Ibid.*, p. 121. ¹³VIII, p. 413.

¹⁴Henry David Thoreau, Walden; or, Life in the Woods (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1961), p. 162.

I doubt if anybody ever does really see a mountain, who goes for the set and sole purpose of seeing it. Nature will not let herself be seen in such cases. You must patiently bide her time; and by and by, at some unforeseen moment, she will quietly and suddenly unveil herself and for a brief space allow you to look right into the heart of her mystery. But if you call out to her preemptorily, 'Nature! unveil yourself this very moment!' she only draws her veil the closer; and you may look with all your eyes, and imagine that you see all that she can show, and yet see nothing.¹⁵

Because it compels us to reorient ourselves to a world previously envisioned as "familiar," Hawthorne's gaze simultaneously reveals the primordial opacity of Being in general--"the things that constantly surround us, we end up by not seeing them anymore."¹⁶ The changing technological milieu forcibly brought this point home to Hawthorne, for in the mechanistic utilitarianism of contemporary science he apprehended the very ground of the transparently fixed idea which dominated his own century as it had shaped the distinctive contour of Western civilization since the Renaissance.

Prior to Bergson's Creative Evolution (1907), very few writers had reacted more critically to the nineteenth-century scientific view than Hawthorne. An unsigned review of 1860, in The Times, expressed a typical utilitarian response to Hawthorne's fiction in general:

There is a peculiar type of the American mind which is strongly in revolt against American utilities, and which is predisposed by the very monotony of its surroundings to hues of contrast and attitudes of antagonism. . . . It is emphatically the desire of idealists like . . . Mr. Hawthorne to escape from the 'iron rule' of their country and the 'social despotism' of their generation. They disdain to be parts of a complicated scheme of progress, which can only result in their arrival at a colder and drearier region than that they were born in, and they refuse to add to 'an accumulated

¹⁵Hawthorne, The English Notebooks, quoted in Critical Heritage, p. 508.

¹⁶Nathalie Sarraute, Do You Hear Them?, trans. Maria Jolas (New York: George Braziller, 1973), p. 144.

pile of usefulness, of which the only use will be, to burden their posterity with even heavier thoughts and more inordinate labour than their own.'¹⁷

Rather than paint the time in which he lived, Hawthorne chose to attack its fundamental beliefs. In science he recognized the mechanical illustration of ready-made truths about the meaning of life in which only a mind imbued with the most rigid principles can take delight.¹⁸ And like his scientists, Hawthorne's intellectuals and reformers similarly display the same conceptually sterile fixation so characteristic of the age. Thus, all three groups seek not so much to discover but to verify. Accomplished "anatomists" that they are, Hawthorne's villains attempt to penetrate the ambiguity of appearance, to see through the illusive opacity of both body and mind in order to substantiate their own transparent views. Aylmer, Rappaccini, Chillingworth, Westervelt, Hollingsworth, Holgrave--all represent men with minds conditioned by inflexible concepts, the single ubiquitous perspective of a rational and fixed idea. Obsessed by the absolute invariability of its belief, this mentality is forced to use any means to prove its truth; for without proof its whole intellectual super-structure will collapse: witness Aylmer. The scientific frame of reference provided Hawthorne with images which enabled him to interiorize the world afresh in order to communicate with it,¹⁹ to rediscover its primordial texture and consistency rather than describe its popularly accepted fixation in physical, chemical, and biological laws, as it was by such naturalists as Zola in France, and Dreiser and Crane in the States.

¹⁷quoted in Critical Heritage, p. 329.

¹⁸Normand, p. 245. ¹⁹Ibid., p. 173.

Because Hawthorne's concerns were wholly other than those expressed by the popular literature of his day, in conflict with public sensitivity, he was condemned to failure from the start. As one critic put it:

Mr. Hawthorne, we are afraid, is one of those writers who aim at an intellectual audience, and address themselves mainly to such. We are greatly of opinion that this is a mistake and a delusion, and that nothing good comes of it. The novelist's true audience is the common people--the people of ordinary comprehension and everyday sympathies, whatever their rank may be.²⁰

In the critical vocabulary of the time, Hawthorne's fiction apportioned too much "shadow" and insufficient "sunshine." In an age when the general truths of the world were supposed to inhere in the unambiguous divinity of light, the daguerrean view came to represent the scientific certitude of reason itself. In typically ironic fashion, Hawthorne discussed this aesthetic obstacle in his preface to The Marble Faun: "No author, without a trial, can conceive of the difficulty of writing a Romance about a country where there is no shadow, no antiquity, no mystery, no picturesque and gloomy wrong, nor anything but a common-place prosperity, in broad and simple daylight."²¹ Poe's disapprobation of Hawthorne's propensity toward the dark and hidden articulated the common sentiment of that age, and its naive faith in the ultimate guarantee of rationality: "Let him mend his pen, get a bottle of visible ink."²² Like Baudelaire, Hawthorne was necessarily compelled to limit his audience to a few select readers who would understand him. One such

²⁰An unsigned essay, "Modern Novelists--Great and Small," Blackwood's Magazine, 1855, quoted in Critical Heritage, p. 313.

²¹IV, p. 3.

²²"Tale Writing--Nathaniel Hawthorne," Godey's Lady's Book, 1847, quoted in Critical Heritage, p. 150.

reader was John Lothrop Motley, who had written to Hawthorne in praise of The Marble Faun: "I like those shadowy, weird, fantastic, Hawthornesque shapes flitting through the book. I like the misty way in which the story is indicated rather than revealed; the outlines are quite definite enough from the beginning to the end to those who have imagination enough to follow you."²³ On 1 April 1860, Hawthorne replied:

You are certainly that Gentle Reader for whom all my books were exclusively written. . . . It is most satisfactory to be hit upon the raw, to be shot straight through the heart. It is not the quantity of your praise that I care so much about (though I gather it all up most carefully, lavish as you are of it), but the kind, for you take the book precisely as I meant it You work out my imperfect efforts, and half make the book with your warm imagination; and see what I myself saw, but could only hint at. Well, the romance is a success, even if it never finds another reader.²⁴

Unfortunately for Hawthorne, the cheery optimism indigenous to the scientific "sunshine" of the age had autonomously transferred itself onto the thematic and tonal import of the literature in general, where it came to represent an essentially feminine talent as opposed to the masculine strength of scientific inquiry. While Hawthorne observed this impoverished spectacle, he was simultaneously "consumed with fury at having to watch a damned mob of scribbling women reaping a harvest of easy popularity at his expense, while the most enlightened critics of the age were for their part awaiting the appearance of the male genius, America's poetic Jupiter."²⁵ He had, of course, arrived. The general public, however, lacked the sophisticated sensitivity Hawthorne would have liked it to have; unfortunately, "it was not even responsible for the quality of its emotions--emotions that those with the necessary

²³quoted in Critical Heritage, p. 327.

²⁴Ibid. ²⁵Normand, p. 173.

astuteness make it their business to provoke. . . . His inward themes could reach the ear of a lazy public only with great difficulty."²⁶ As one critic so aptly described the technological prejudice for transparency, and Hawthorne's subsequent lack of recognition by the general public: "Taste and culture, in fact, the outgrowths of educated thought, are drawbacks to popularity, so far forth at least as they tend to add angles reflective and refractive to the media through which people see works of art. The law is, the more transparent the medium, the more instinctive the recognition."²⁷ Richard Holt Hutton equally recognized the obliquity of Hawthorne's perceptual gaze in his essay "Nathaniel Hawthorne," and specifically applied it to the thematic treatment of the tales: "For the secret of his power lies in the great art with which he reduplicates and reflects and re-reflects the main idea of the tale from the countless faces of his imagination, until the reader's mind is absolutely saturated and haunted by it."²⁸

Because Hawthorne's fiction interiorized the certainty which its public ascribed to the external world, interrogating the basic prejudices of a superficially self-sufficient and indigently smug facade, it required a commonly accepted ground from whence it could thereafter proceed to undermine that very foundation. If anything, what has traditionally been called Hawthorne's allegorical method constitutes nothing more than a front or "masque" to catch the public off-guard, a ceremonial way of getting the reader into the more significant fictional

²⁶Ibid., p. 172.

²⁷An unsigned review, *Southern Review*, 1870, quoted in Critical Heritage, pp. 465-66.

²⁸*National Review*, 1860, quoted in Critical Heritage, p. 372.

vision, a convenient method of fixing things in a superficial form both accessible and acceptable to his general public.²⁹ Reduced to a single "optical" appearance, it is the nature of allegory to imprison its content within the unequivocal confines of an insubstantial abstraction. Hawthorne's external objects, on the other hand, consistently defy their abstracted allegorical frame; the letter, the house, the statue, the serpent, the ribbon, the maypole, the veil, the lime-kiln--these objects significantly function as something more than mere moral or visual divertissement. They signify, in fact, the interior appropriation of a world, partial elements of a spatial configuration, the personal completion of a structural "gestalt" within a subject. For Hawthorne, an object is "objective" only to the extent that it perceptually informs the partial aspect of a "field." By definition, a field of vision is never in the object; as such, it is fated to remain ultimately ambiguous in so far as we can never "trace it out" in its entirety. The different parts of the whole possess a significance beyond the particular qualities of its individually determinate "figures." As Merleau-Ponty remarks, "Already a 'figure' on a 'background' contains, as we have seen, much more than the qualities presented at a given time. It has an 'outline', which does not 'belong' to the background and which 'stands out' from it; it is 'stable' and offers a 'compact' area of colour, the background on the other hand having no bounds, being of indefinite colouring and 'running on' under the figure."³⁰ So it is with Hawthorne's greatest symbol, the scarlet letter.

²⁹Cf. Normand, p. 244.

³⁰Merleau-Ponty, Phenomenology, p. 13.

In the most basic sense of the term, all of Hawthorne's symbols are, in fact, emblems. They exist within a spatial configuration, and appear as "figures" against an ambiguously indeterminate "background." The woodcut emblems of the New England Primer had indelibly engraved themselves upon Hawthorne's consciousness. What constitutes his emblematic technique, then, is not so much an allegorical content supplemental to the visual image, as it is the apprehension of a figure on a background. Hawthorne's fiction abrades the traditional descriptive distance; we find ourselves in a revolutionarily unique landscape where the immediate encroaches so entirely upon our perceptual attention that we can scarcely obtain a perspective at all.³¹ Though few critics recognized the significance of Hawthorne's emblematic gaze and its incomplete external contours, an anonymous commentator remarked in an unsigned review, 1863, that the English sketches delineate "outlines not drawn from notes or from reminiscences painfully recalled, but phototyped from the very retina of the inward eye, and filled in with the very hues and shadings supplied at the moment by the author's taste, wit, sympathy, or disgust."³² Although the influence of Newtonianism and the daguerrean prejudice is apparent in the critical terminology, at least the critic seemed aware of the perceptual demands which Hawthorne exacted of himself as well as his reader. Charles Webber had expressed a similar observation in the American Whig Review, 1846:

One of his finest traits is a sort of magical subtlety of vision, which though it sees the true form of things through all the misty obscurations of humbug and cant, yet possesses the rare power of

³¹Cf. Henry Tuckerman, "Nathaniel Hawthorne," Southern Literary Messenger, 1851, quoted in Critical Heritage, p. 215.

³²North American Review, quoted in Critical Heritage, p. 391.

compelling others to see their naked shapes through a medium of its own. . . . It is a favorite expression with regard to Hawthorne, that he 'Idealizes' everything. Now what does this Idealization mean? Is it that he improves upon Nature? Pshaw! this is a literary cant which it is full time should be exploded! . . . Now, Hawthorne does not endeavor to improve upon the Actual, but with a wise emulation attempts--first to reach it, and then to modify it suitably with the purpose he has to accomplish. Of course he is led by his fine taste to desire to see it himself, and make you see it in precisely that light in which it shows best--in which its highest beauty is revealed.³³

And he adds, "We can't get away from the physical, and just as our material vision informs the inner life will that inner life know Wisdom."³⁴ In the American Notebooks, Hawthorne himself had remarked: "An innate perception and reflection of truth gives the only sort of originality that does not finally grow intolerable."³⁵ For Hawthorne, then, perception becomes an originating consciousness, the interior reflection of a structural "gestalt."

Unlike Emerson, for whom symbolism represented "the looking-glass raised to its highest power,"³⁶ Hawthorne's symbolism re-creates a personal and emblematic point of view, a unique moment in the perception of a thing, and not its derivative conceptual resemblance to something else. In effect, then, Hawthorne's fiction abrogates the subject-object dichotomy: "there is no longer any question of subjective expression or objective description."³⁷ Consequently, this new perceptual moment is metamorphic, grounded as it is in time: "Were we to sit here all day, a week, a month, and doubtless a lifetime, objects would thus still be

³³"Hawthorne," quoted in Critical Heritage, pp. 130-31.

³⁴*Ibid.*, p. 131. ³⁵VIII, p. 358.

³⁶Journals of Ralph Waldo Emerson, ed. Edward Waldo Emerson and Waldo Emerson Forbes (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1912) VIII, p. 99.

³⁷Feidelson, p. 52.

presenting themselves as new, though there would seem to be no reason why we should not have detected them all at the first moment."³⁸ Perhaps this moment is best expressed in Hawthorne's description of Pearl, the very embodiment of the object upon which all eyes in the novel gaze in order to dis-cover the "shape" of its meaning: "The child could not be made amenable to rules. In giving her existence, a great law had been broken; and the result was a being, whose elements were perhaps beautiful and brilliant, but all in disorder; or with an order peculiar to themselves, amidst which the point of variety and arrangement was difficult or impossible to be discovered."³⁹ The peculiar order of Pearl's "arrangement" derives from the metamorphic nature of the perceptual act; imbued with the changing variety of an indeterminate background or "field," Pearl signifies the temporal aspect of the letter itself: "This outward mutability indicated, and did not more than fairly express, the various properties of her inner life. Her nature appeared to possess depth, too, as well as variety."⁴⁰ As an emblem in her own right, her "figure" subsequently stands out against "an absolute circle of radiance around her, on the darksome cottage-floor. . . . Pearl's aspect was imbued with a spell of infinite variety; in this one child there were many children, comprehending the full scope between the wild-flower prettiness of a peasant-baby, and the pomp, in little, of an infant princess."⁴¹ She is of course the rose itself, and figures as the wild-flower emerging from the prison-house gloom of Puritanism. Unlike the

³⁸The American Notebooks, VIII, p. 247.

³⁹The Scarlet Letter, I, p. 91.

⁴⁰Ibid., p. 90. ⁴¹Ibid.

scientifically transparent objectification of the world, Pearl's significance obtains from the structural "gestalt" of the perceiver, just as the ambiguous embellishment of the letter against its own darksome background is variously interpreted by those who see it to stand for anything from "Adultery" to "Angel" to "Abel."⁴² Indeed, Hawthorne's oeuvre addresses the opacity of perception on nearly every page, and in this respect he stands uniquely by himself in the history of American letters. If we interpret it correctly, the scarlet "A" signifies nothing less than Hawthorne's "Art." And though he is continually singled out by critics as having no precedent, it is equally true that he has no antecedents; he stands alone in American literature as Bach does in the history of music. It is as though his unfinished manuscripts dare anyone else to complete them.

I

The daguerrean artist assumes the fixed transparency of a world uniformly illuminated by light in its primordial constitution. Whatever shadow the daguerreotype secures merely represents an artistic "effect" in the reproduction of an absolutely accessible truth. In this respect, art simply impersonated the technological vision itself, a viewpoint appropriate to the time, "that individual differences in artistic renderings indicate flaws in perception, at least for the recording arts."⁴³ Even the sophisticated aesthetic of a daguerreotypist such as Albert Southworth betrays this desire to fix the object in its transparently inflexible truth, though it appears deceptively attractive at

⁴²Ibid., pp. 158 and 160, respectively.

⁴³Rudisill, p. 85.

first sight. In the attempt to capture the essence of his "subject," the daguerreotypist, as Southworth remarks, "feels its expression, he sympathizes with its character, he is impressed with its language; his heart, mind, and soul are stirred in its contemplation. It is the life, the feeling, the mind, the soul of the subject itself."⁴⁴ Ultimately, however, the daguerreotypist can procure the desired representation only in so far as his sympathetic facility enables him to see through the appearance into the heart of its transparent reality, its contemplatively universal significance--its "soul." Holgrave epitomizes the primary manifestation of this attitude; he dares the existent to stand still and show itself worthy of representing not only the truth of itself, but the truth of life in general. As the translator and divine agent of light, the daguerreotypist cannot error to the extent that he appropriates this in-sight or view "through" the world, Holgrave's willingness to challenge the existent derives from this belief, and the attendant belief in the absolute disclosability of nature. His naive trust in the ability of light to elucidate the truth of the world sustains his equally concomitant confidence in its transparency. "Most of my likenesses do look unamiable; but the very sufficient reason, I fancy, is, because the originals are so. There is a wonderful insight in heaven's broad and simple sunshine. While we give it credit only for depicting the merest surface, it actually brings out the secret character with a truth that no painter would ever venture upon, even could he detect it."⁴⁵ Holgrave's

⁴⁴Albert S. Southworth, "An Address to the National Photographic Association of the United States," The Philadelphia Photographer 8 (October 1871) : 322.

⁴⁵The House of the Seven Gables, II, p. 91.

daguerreotype of Judge Pyncheon, for example, despite numerous efforts to make it more agreeable, persistently reveals the judge as a morally despicable person. Indeed, his desire to fix the truth of nature in general, to catch it in the act, to permanently hold or capture the existent amidst its fleeting variety of form and shape, reminds us of Emerson. Like Emerson, Holgrave challenges nature to "hold still," to prove itself. In this respect, his powers alarm Phoebe: "He made her uneasy, and seemed to unsettle everything around her, by his lack of reverence for what was fixed; unless, at a moment's warning, it could establish its right to hold its ground."⁴⁶ Thus, despite Holgrave's apparent "lack of reverence for what was fixed," we are inveterately deceived if we misconstrue him to figure as the representation of modernism and change in the novel. For though he seemingly argues against the kind of permanence suggested by the house itself, he no sooner prepares to leave it than he expresses the desire to preserve the exterior while altering the interior to suit the individual's taste:

But I wonder that the late Judge . . . should not have felt the propriety of embodying so excellent a piece of domestic architecture in stone, rather than in wood. Then, every generation of the family might have altered the interior, to suit its own taste and convenience; while the exterior, through the lapse of years, might have been adding venerableness to its original beauty, and thus giving that impression of permanence, which I consider essential to the happiness of any one moment.⁴⁷

Hawthorne was especially intrigued by scientific advances in media, and it was only natural that the daguerreotype fascinated him. Throughout his life, his work was continually discussed in reference to daguerrean technique. Already in 1842, Gaylor Clark had compared his

⁴⁶Ibid., p. 177.

⁴⁷Ibid., pp. 314-15.

mind to "the plates of a daguerreotype;"⁴⁸ and in 1850, George Ripley said of The Scarlet Letter, "The introduction, presenting a record of savory reminiscences of the Salem Custom House, a frank display of autobiographical confessions, and a piquant daguerreotype of his ancient colleagues in office, while surveyor of that port, is written with Mr. Hawthorne's unrivalled force of graphic delineation."⁴⁹

E. A. Duyckinck, in a review of 1852, remarked on The Snow Image: "It is no Chesterfieldian vacuum of politeness, but a world of realities, a camera obscura of the outer world delicately and accurately painted on the heart."⁵⁰ And in 1864, the year of Hawthorne's death, George William Curtis said of him that he "treated his companions as he treated himself and all the personages in history or experience with which he dealt, merely as phenomena to be analyzed and described, with no more private malice or personal emotion than the sun, which would have photographed them, warts and all."⁵¹ Curtis, like most of the critics, saliently misses the point; for in drawing an analogy between Hawthorne's fiction and the daguerreotype, he misperceived the essential quality of Hawthorne's descriptive technique. Even today, contemporary criticism continues to analyze him with respect to the aesthetic catchword of his own age, "chiaroscuro." In his book, The Power of Blackness, Harry Levin discusses Hawthorne in terms of "that obsessive dark room which is always behind the focus of his vision;" and elsewhere he says of the interplay

⁴⁸Knickerbocker, quoted in Normand, p. 382, note 13.

⁴⁹New York Tribune Supplement, quoted in Critical Heritage, p. 159.

⁵⁰Literary World, quoted in Critical Heritage, p. 238.

⁵¹North American Review, quoted in Critical Heritage, p. 417.

between light and dark in Hawthorne--"la feuille blanche, le roman noir"--that in the twelve years of solitude at Salem, "His mind itself became a camera obscura, a dark room which sensitively registered the infiltration of light from outside."⁵² True enough, Hawthorne often emphasized the inter-action of high-light, middle tint, and shadow, as Gabriel Harrison had defined the daguerrean method; but what the critics have predominantly failed to see is how the effect of Hawthorne's lighting obscures a more profound perceptual principle. His description of the drowned girl in the American Notebooks, for example, later used in The Blithedale Romance to depict the death of Zenobia, reveals an exceptionally stark realism, dramatically high-lighted by lantern as in a Goya painting:

When close to the bank, some of the men stepped into the water and drew out the body; and then, by their lanterns, I could see how rigid it was. . . . They took her out of the water, and deposited her under an oak-tree; and by the time we had got ashore, they were examining her by the light of two or three lanterns.

I never saw nor imagined a spectacle of such perfect horror. The rigidity, above spoken of, was dreadful to behold. Her arms had stiffened in the act of struggling; and were bent before her, with the hands clenched. She was the very image of a death-agony; and when the men tried to compose her figure, her arms would still return to that same position. . . . The lower part of the body had stiffened into a more quiet attitude; the legs were slightly bent, and the feet close together. But that rigidity!--it is impossible to express the effect of it; it seemed as if she would keep the same posture in the grave, and that her skeleton would keep it too, and that when she rose at the day of Judgment, it would be in the same attitude.⁵³

Hawthorne's wife equally misperceived his descriptive dynamics, mistaking the above passage for photographic realism. Editing her husband's notebooks for publication, Sophia wrote to James T. Fields in 1867,

⁵²New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1958, pp. 63, 28, and 36, respectively.

⁵³VIII, pp. 263-64.

inquiring whether they should publish "this wonderful photograph of the terrible night."⁵⁴ And when it first appeared, it thoroughly shocked the reviewer, Thomas Higginson, who considered it "almost too frightful to put into words,--certainly to put into types;" he continued, had there been introduced "a series of photographs from the Paris morgue, the result would not have been more terrible."⁵⁵

However, beneath the daguerrean appearance of the drowned girl's description, there lurks the hidden drama of an expressiveness inaccessible to the photographic medium itself. For the effect of the lighting is primordially disclosed as a function of its "discovery," the very motion inherent in the perceptual act of a subject, and not as the elucidation of an invariable object. The photograph objectively fixes its content by virtue of a single and constant source of light. Hawthorne's description, on the other hand, subjectively unfolds in time in so far as its variable lighting reflects an affective "distance" between the scene and the spectator. We perceive the changing aspects of the drowned girl at various distances which more or less express the significant "figures" Hawthorne would have us perceive or, better, "complete" against the indeterminate periphery of the blackness surrounding the "field." "Near" and "far" are not determined by the single continuity of a perspective, but rather appear as a function of an ambiguous interior expressiveness contingent upon how significantly each detail appropriates the whole effect, an effect which Hawthorne rhetorically claims "it is impossible to express," but nonetheless gets

⁵⁴Ibid., p. 685.

⁵⁵"Nathaniel Hawthorne and His Wife," Atlantic Monthly 55 (February 1885) : 264.

expressed most affectively. Thus, the drowned girl's clenched hands, which perspectively figure to be smaller than the arms, appear, in fact, much larger; they loom beyond their graphic relation to the arms and come to designate, in themselves, the general rigidity of the entire image. Here, Hawthorne's metonymic gaze, the attention to synecdochic detail, reveals his general proclivity toward contiguous relationships, relations which "logically" digress from a continuously uniform setting in space and time. Like the cubists, Hawthorne's descriptive gaze transforms the object into a set of synecdochic oscillations whose visual orientation strives toward maximum determinateness. It obtains only in so far as the perceiver "completes" it himself. This technique is clearly cinematic, and pre-figures the changing angle, variable perspective, and repertoire of variously focused "shots" indicative of the highly-sophisticated "motion" picture of the twentieth century. The close-up or "tight shot" of the drowned girl's hands momentarily fills the visual field no less effectively than the revolutionary metonymic "set-ups" in the productions of D. W. Griffith.⁵⁶ Hawthorne's changing light manifests this perceptual "distance" as an expressive function of the gaze itself. Our proximity to any given figure in the field is solely predicated upon the descriptive intention to "take it up." Because description discloses the affective aspect of an object, its perceptual enownment primordially reflects an intentional "motion" in the subject, and not the representational determination of an object as such. Again, Richard Holt Hutton incisively recognized the "gestalt" structure of Hawthorne's gaze:

⁵⁶Cf. Roman Jakobson, "Two Aspects of Language: Metaphor and Metonymy," in European Literary Theory and Practice: From Existential Phenomenology to Structuralism, ed. Vernon W. Gras (New York: Dell Publishing Co., Inc., Delta Book, 1973), pp. 124-25.

"every touch and line in his imagined picture is calculated to impress some leading thought on the reader."⁵⁷ Thus, in Hawthorne, distance invariably constitutes the expressive completion of a figure against a background, and not the static and fixed pictorialism of photographic perspective. Hawthorne's variable lighting alters the discovery of its objects according to the changing situatedness of the perceiver.

Conversely, what Hawthorne most admired in the Rembrandt-like achromaticism of the daguerreotype was its expressive ability to suggest a hidden psychological drama or intuition. The portrait genre particularly accommodated this interest in dramatic expressiveness: "What he looked for in a portrait was expression, pathos, the hidden drama of a Beatrice Cenci; what interested him in a still life was the materiality of the objects."⁵⁸ The portrait of Beatrice in The Marble Faun abides unique in this respect:

It is a peculiarity of this picture, that its profoundest expression eludes a straightforward glance, and can only be caught by side glimpses, or when the eye falls casually upon it; even as if the painted face had a life and consciousness of its own, and, resolving not to betray its secret of grief and guilt, permitted the true tokens to come forth only when it imagined itself unseen. No other such magical effect has ever been wrought by pencil.⁵⁹

Of portraits in general, Hawthorne commented: "The pursuit has always interested my imagination more than any other; and I remember, before having my first portrait taken, there was a great bewitchery in the idea, as if it were a magic process."⁶⁰ In order to capture this moment, however, the portrait painter was forced to wrestle with time,

⁵⁷"Nathaniel Hawthorne," National Review, 1860, quoted in Critical Heritage, p. 370.

⁵⁸Normand, p. 94. ⁵⁹IV, 204-05.

⁶⁰The American Notebooks, VIII, pp. 492-93.

"casting quick, keen glances at me, and then making hasty touches on the picture, as if to secure with his brush what he had caught with his eye."⁶¹ Elsewhere, the narrator of "The Prophetic Pictures" observes:

Nothing, in the whole circle of human vanities, takes stronger hold of the imagination, than this affair of having a portrait painted. Yet why should it be so? The looking-glass, the polished globes of the andirons, the mirror-like water, and all other reflecting surfaces, continually present us with portraits, or rather ghosts of ourselves, which we glance at, and straightway forget them. But we forget them, only because they vanish. It is the idea of duration--of earthly immortality--that gives such a mysterious interest to our own portraits.⁶²

Yet, less than two months after The Scarlet Letter first appeared in print, Hawthorne had remarked in a notebook entry of 5 May 1850: "In fact, there is no such thing as a true portrait; they are all delusions A bust has more reality."⁶³ Ten years later not only the bust, but the entire body as well, would come to life in Donatello. Despite frequent critical attacks on Hawthorne's ability to appreciate sculpture, evidence suggests quite the opposite, and points to the unique quality of Hawthorne's descriptive gaze. A notebook entry for 10 August 1842 already reveals his visual inclination toward the tactile and tangible qualities of sculpture, anticipating the marvelously ironic work of Hans Arp in our own century.

Summer squashes are a very pleasant vegetable to be acquainted with;--they grow in the forms of urns and vases, some shallow, others of considerable depth, and all with a beautifully scalloped edge. Almost any squash in our garden might be copied by a sculpture, and would look beautifully in marble, or in china-ware; and if I could afford it, I would have exact imitations of the real vegetable as portions of my dining-service.⁶⁴

And again, "when a great squash or melon is produced, it is a large and

⁶¹Ibid., p. 498. ⁶²IX, p. 173.

⁶³The American Notebooks, VIII, p. 491. ⁶⁴Ibid., p. 329.

tangible existence, which the imagination can seize hold of and rejoice in."⁶⁵ Because the eye delights in the tangible, that around which it can "play" in order to investigate the hidden qualities of an object, its intentional function suggests an opaque subjectivity in so far as it completes the object itself. For Hawthorne, the portrait was "false" to the extent that it presumed to complete an expressiveness entirely disproportionate to any predetermined objectification, for the significance or implicitness of expression necessarily inheres in the subject of perception, and not the object. Thus, Hawthorne's own technique so often reveals a natural affinity for the "sketch," which, like sculpture itself, invites completion by virtue of its opaque suggestiveness. Perceptually speaking, Hawthorne's gaze always seeks to complete the suggestive contours of the sketch or "trace:" "There was formerly, I believe, a complete arch of marble, forming a natural bridge over the top of the cave; but this is no longer so;" "We climbed to the top of the arch, in which the traces of water having eddied are very perceptible;" "Sometimes the image of a tree might be almost traced; then nothing but this sweep of broken rainbow;" "The foundation of a spacious porch may be traced on either side of the central portion; some of the stones still remain; but even where they are gone, the line of the porch is still traceable by the greener verdure."⁶⁶ Neither the portrait nor the daguerreotype in general provided Hawthorne with the kind of situated or three-dimensional "gestalt" he demanded of description for, in themselves, both are fated to remain transparently

⁶⁵Ibid., p. 330.

⁶⁶Ibid., pp. 100, 133, 158, and 160, respectively.

fixed and dead.⁶⁷ Like the portraits which continually haunt the painter's imagination in "The Prophetic Pictures," Hawthorne's description completes the expressiveness of an object, its subjectivity, the interiority of the world: "Whether I look at the windows or the door, there it is framed within them, painted strongly, and glowing in the richest tints--the faces of the portraits--the figures and action of the sketch!"⁶⁸

The "frame," which figures so prominently in Hawthorne, accordingly provides an emblematic background against which the possibility of an expressive delineation first appears; like the portrait painter of "The Prophetic Pictures," it was seldom Hawthorne's impulse "to copy natural scenery, except as a frame work for the delineations of the human form and face, instinct with thought, passion, or suffering."⁶⁹ Hawthorne's perceptual figures uniquely stand out against an emblematic context which varies their meaning by virtue of a situated gaze, and not the ubiquitous transparency of scientific "vision;" rather than delimit its content, the frame enables Hawthorne to define perception contextually. His frames never constitute the traditionally isolated and uniform view by which the object had previously been envisioned for centuries; for when Hawthorne specifically uses the word "frame," it nearly always means the background by which a foreground figure affectively comes to be set off, and not the optical representation of a perspective section of space. In

⁶⁷For further references to portraits, pictures, engravings, etchings, and the like, cf. the following pages in The American Notebooks, VIII: 53, 65, 130, 149, 212, 214-15, 218, 226, 227, 231, 233-34, 235, 242, 254, 255, 259, 260-61, 263, 293, 321, 331, 366, 383, 385-86, 394, 396, 399, 400, 401, 403, 407-08, 416, 417, 418-19, 444, 490, 491, 492, 495, and 498-99.

⁶⁸IX, p. 180. ⁶⁹Ibid., p. 178.

itself, the Hawthornian frame most clearly approaches what, today, Gestalt theory calls a field of vision. For proof of Hawthorne's perceptual intention despite this apparent contradiction in terminology, one need only consult the American Notebooks, that indispensable record of his observatory techniques: "this gentle picture strangely set off by the wild mountain frame around it;" "On the slope of Bald Mountain, a clearing, set in the frame of the forest on all sides;" "Towards the dimness of evening, a half-length figure appearing at a window:--the blackness of the back ground and the light upon the face cause it to appear like a Rembrandt picture;" "Monument Mountain stands out in great prominence, with its dark forest-covered sides, and here and there a large white patch, indicating tillage or pasture land;--but making a generally dark contrast with the white expanse of the frozen and snow-covered lake at its base, and the more undulating white of the surrounding country;" "I saw the face and bust of a beautiful woman gazing at me from a cloud. . . . The vision lasted while I took a few steps, and then vanished. I never before saw nearly so distant a cloud-picture--or rather sculpture; for it came out in alto relievo on the body of the cloud;" "an open eye in earth's countenance;" "There are broad and peaceful meadows, which, I think, are among the most satisfying objects in natural scenery; the heart reposes on them, with a feeling that few things else can give, because almost all other objects are abrupt and clearly defined; but a meadow stretches out like a small infinity, yet with a secure homeliness, which we do not find either in an expanse of water or of air;" "I return with them (flowers) to my wife, of whom what is loveliest among them are to me the imperfect emblems;" "it seems as if the picture of our inward bliss should be set in a beautiful

frame of outward nature;" "The fireplace had a white marble frame about it, richly sculptured with figures and reliefs."⁷⁰ Concerning a "gestalt," the Letter is by far Hawthorne's most appropriate emblem for man's very Being; like Heidegger's later works, it locates the primordial ground of existence in language itself. By 1839, Hawthorne had already insinuated such ontological implications in a journal entry explicitly concerned with perception: "Letters in the shape of figures of men, &c. At a distance, the words composed by the letters are alone distinguishable. Close at hand, the figures alone are seen, and not distinguished as letters. Thus things may have a positive, a relative, and a composite meaning, according to the point of view."⁷¹ Generally speaking, then, Hawthorne's use of the frame purveys a supralogical background or field in order to embody his symbols, and yet by virtue of its subjective constitution, the field extends beyond the edges of whatever particular device Hawthorne chooses as the frame itself. His emblematic field allows the image to be reflected and re-reflected off of its surrounding surfaces, just as the entire surrounding scene bounces off the many-faceted sides of Endicott's armour,⁷² or the scarlet letter, in the transformed shape of Pearl, is reflected off the polished, convex mirror of the breastplate in "exaggerated and gigantic proportions, so as to be greatly the most prominent feature of her appearance. In truth, she seemed absolutely hidden behind it."⁷³ Hawthorne's gaze lures the

⁷⁰VIII, pp. 132, 138, 259, 305, 311, 320, 321-22, 333, 366, and 490, respectively.

⁷¹Ibid., p. 183.

⁷²"Endicott and the Red Cross," IX, p. 434.

⁷³The Scarlet Letter, I, p. 106.

object out of its perspective depth and toward the "surface," where it leaves the artificial confines of its optical frame to become part of the world; with Hawthorne's emblematic symbols, image and object are always one and the same. Thus, as Holgrave unveils the recess in the wall, disclosing the ancient deed, the debilitated portrait, "frame and all, tumbled suddenly from its position, and lay face downward on the floor."⁷⁴

With the scarlet letter, the blackness of its emblematic frame indeterminately extends beyond the precisely embroidered figure of the "A" which measures, as we are told in the "Custom-House," exactly three and one-quarter inches on each side. The Letter formally proffers a reliable ingress to Hawthorne's perceptual labyrinth, and why it differs so radically from the daguerrean view; for in embroidery, Hawthorne discerned a felicitous tactile analogy for the gaze itself. Unlike pictorial perspective, where a visual content resides somewhere "in back of" the pictorial surface toward an invisibly inaccessible "location," its vanishing point, the visual content of an embroidery extends outward, "in front of" its optical surface toward a tangibly tactile space. The embroidered emblem virtually protrudes to "touch" our eye. It thus reciprocates the sculptural quality of Hawthorne's gaze, and approximates the general situatedness of perception as such. Hawthorne intuitively understood the "situation" as the reciprocal basis of perception as well as Being. Like the painting which Ishmael encounters at the Spouter Inn, whose ambiguous "something" in the middle evades definitive articulation, the perceptual "shape" of the "A" is likewise variously interpreted

⁷⁴The House of the Seven Gables, II, pp. 315-16.

according to the situation of the individual perceiver, and therefore destined to remain ultimately opaque; we can never get an absolute perspective on it. Similarly with life, the brilliantly embroidered Letter equally applies to the meaning of Being: "A life, generally of a grave hue, may be said to be embroidered with occasional sports and fantasies."⁷⁵ And herein emerges a veritable key to the nature of Hawthorne's lighting as such, and his descriptive affinity for the "powers of blackness" which Melville attributed to him,⁷⁶ rather than the light and sunshine of his own age. As Henry James expressed it, Hawthorne's fiction exposes his cat-like facility for seeing in the dark which Emerson, "as a sort of spiritual sun-worshipper, could have attached but a moderate value to."⁷⁷ Taking his lead from Bacon, with whose writing he was well acquainted, Hawthorne solidified his basic emblematic habit. In "Of Adversity," Bacon had written: "We see in needleworks and embroideries, it is more pleasing to have a lively work upon a sad and solemn ground, than to have a dark and melancholy work upon a lightsome ground: judge therefore of the pleasure of the heart by the pleasure of the eye."⁷⁸ Melville was one of those rare critics who immediately understood Hawthorne's counter-visual response to the daguerrean prejudice of his age, and its concomitant emphasis on the transparently absolute efficacy of light, in favor of this darkness

⁷⁵The American Notebooks, VIII, p. 235.

⁷⁶"Hawthorne and His Mosses," Literary World, 1850, quoted in Critical Heritage, p. 116.

⁷⁷Hawthorne (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, Cornell Paperbacks, 1966), p. 79.

⁷⁸Complete Essays of Francis Bacon, intro. Philip H. Bailey (New York: Belmont Books, 1962), p. 24.

which gives "more effect to the ever-moving dawn, that for ever advances through it, and circumnavigates his world."⁷⁹ Indeed, Melville seems to have been the only one to perceive the "gestalt" significance of "this black conceit" which pervades Hawthorne through and through:

You may be bewitched by his sunlight . . . but there is the blackness of darkness beyond; and even his bright gildings but fringe and play upon the edges of thunder-clouds. In one word, the world is mistaken in this Nathaniel Hawthorne. He himself must often have smiled at its absurd misconception of him. . . . this blackness it is that furnishes the infinite obscure of his background.⁸⁰

Thus, unlike the daguerrean representation which seeks to bring into sharp focus the entire content of its frame, Hawthorne's emblematic field, grounded in darkness itself, merely suggests the incomplete outlines of its figures as they are intermittently elucidated by the perceptual intention to take them up. In the same way, Goodman Parker's lantern gleams along the street, "bringing to view indistinct shapes of things, and the fragments of a world, like order glimmering through chaos, or memory roaming over the past."⁸¹ Whatever objects this gaze personalizes or enowns ambiguously appear set off against an indeterminate surrounding. For every object the gaze investigates, it simultaneously forfeits its hold upon the other objects in its field; they, in turn, slip away or fade back toward the obscure periphery from whence they originally came, "in harmony with the low relief and dimness of outline of the objects that surrounded them."⁸² The rose momentarily

⁷⁹"Hawthorne and His Mosses," quoted in Critical Heritage, p. 115.

⁸⁰Ibid., p. 116.

⁸¹"The Wives of the Dead," XI, p. 196.

⁸²James, p. 99.

appears in relief against the gloom of the prison;⁸³ the blurred meteor temporarily disrupts the vacant regions of the night sky;⁸⁴ the lime-kiln juts out from the surrounding darkness to swallow us;⁸⁵ the stark fir-tree punctuates the desolate landscape, covered with its solitary growth of living branches from the middle up;⁸⁶ the Great Stone Face emerges against the perpendicular side of a mountain;⁸⁷ the lightsome couple spontaneously issues forth from the band of gothic monsters, this crew of Comus, to relieve the darksome face of the English priest, shaded by the maypole;⁸⁸ the Letter itself writhes and twists its contorted shape upon the sable field which provides an ambiguous backdrop for the ocular metamorphoses of this illuminated manuscript.⁸⁹ Hawthorne's descriptive gaze approaches the object gropingly; it must feel around it as a blind man runs his hands over the features of another's face--thus, its peculiar sculptural or tactile quality. It brings the object out from its surroundings toward an affective depth peculiarly constituted by the perceiving subject. For Hawthorne, Being is incarnate throughout, the image made flesh between the double horizon of physical and bodily space, the cold marble resuscitated in the warmth of the Faun. Hawthorne's gaze initiates the discovery of a situated, material world,

⁸³The Scarlet Letter, I, p. 48.

⁸⁴Ibid., p. 154.

⁸⁵"Ethan Brand," XI, p. 89.

⁸⁶"The Gentle Boy," IX, p. 70.

⁸⁷"The Great Stone Face," XI, p. 27.

⁸⁸"The May-Pole of Merry Mount," IX, pp. 56-57.

⁸⁹The Scarlet Letter, I, p. 106.

the outsideness of the "self" where objects encroach upon one's vision, touching the fingertips of the "I." The world seen from within magnifies the body to infinity, reversing the traditional perspective on an object; the vanishing point hurtles toward me, as I simultaneously explode the boundaries of its frame. To emphasize rationality is to ignore the world's body;⁹⁰ thus Hawthorne shunned the ubiquitous view of his age which pretended to ignore the interior, ambiguous carnality of Being. On the pillory, the minister's vigil, temporarily illumined by the radiance of the meteor, dramatically pierces the all-encompassing blackness of the night which endosmotically threatens to devour it once again at any moment. This extraordinary light constitutes nothing less than the unique and personally individualized gaze, the original discovery of a world in which its previously familiar objects appear anew for the first time.

So powerful was its radiance, that it thoroughly illuminated the dense medium of cloud betwixt the sky and earth. The great vault brightened, like the dome of an immense lamp. It showed the familiar scene of the street, with the distinctness of mid-day, but also with the awfulness that is always imparted to familiar objects by an unaccustomed light. . . . all were visible, but with a singularity of aspect that seemed to give another moral interpretation to the things of this world than they had ever borne before.⁹¹

Unlike the enfiladed continuity of an objectively detached perspective,⁹²

⁹⁰William Van O'Conner, "The World as Body," Sewanee Review 56 (July-September 1948) : 441.

⁹¹The Scarlet Letter, I, p. 154.

⁹²Cf. the following passages in The American Notebooks, VIII: "At a distance, mountain summits look close together, and almost forming one mountain, though in reality, a village lies in the depth between them" (p. 101); "It is amusing to see all the distributed property, the aristocracy and commonality, the various and conflicting interests of the town, the loves and hates, compressed into a space which the eye

Hawthorne sketches his most affectively dramatic scenes palpably close precisely because they are perceptually inquisitive, demanding a new level of visual awareness in order to be disclosed at all. "It is a singular thing, that at the distance, say, of five feet, the work of the greatest dunce looks just as well as that of the greatest genius,--that little space being all the distance between genius and stupidity."⁹³ A perceptual osmosis transpires between subject and object, an osmosis which obliterates the objectification of the world-view. Like the modern art work, Hawthorne brings the object out of its predetermined location and to the surface, just as the mountain prefigures Earnest's face upon its side. Thus, man "rediscovers himself through topography."⁹⁴ In this sense, Hawthorne never "paints" or pictures his most perceptually intense scenes, but rather disrupts them from the inside out; his gaze engages the object in so far as it seduces the object outward and away from the familiar security of its perspective depth. Hence, he could immediately preface his description of the minister's vigil as "one of those ugly nights, which we have faintly hinted at, but forborne to picture forth."⁹⁵ Hawthorne's diction (to picture forth) reveals to what extent he treated

takes in as completely as the arrangement of a tea-table"(p. 102); the "prospect from the top of Wachusett is the finest that I have seen--the elevation being not so great as to snatch the beholder from all sympathy with the earth. The roads that wind along at the foot of the mountains are discernable; and the villages, lying separate and unconscious of one another, each with their little knot of peculiar interests, but all gathered into one category by the observer above them"(p. 260); "the beholder takes in at a glance the estates on which different families have long been situated . . . acting out the business of their life, which looks not so important when we can get up so high as to comprehend several men's portions in it at one glance"(p. 274).

⁹³Ibid., p. 16. ⁹⁴Levin, p. 50.

⁹⁵The Scarlet Letter, I, p. 146.

description as a projective activity--the perceptual intentionality of a subject, not unlike that activity of the minister himself who thereafter started from his chair, and "stole softly down the staircase, undid the door, and issued forth."⁹⁶ Hawthorne's descriptive gaze negotiates the factuality of the object as it strikes the eye, its original effect upon the senses prior to rational interpretation; the facts speak for themselves.⁹⁷ As Melville incisively remarked: "We think that into no recorded mind has the intense feeling of the visable [sic] truth ever entered more deeply than into this man's. By visable truth, we mean the apprehension of the absolute condition of present things as they strike the eye of the man who fears them not, though they do their worst to him."⁹⁸ And so with the meteoric lighting which temporarily illuminates the scaffold during the minister's vigil; it sets off each of its objects with a "singularity of aspect;" like the pre-rational gaze of perception, it discloses the perceptual reciprocity between subject and object in a world common to both--a world, moreover, which makes the birth of Being possible in the first place: "They stood in the noon of that strange and solemn splendor, as if it were the light that is to reveal all secrets, and the day-break that shall unite all who belong to one another."⁹⁹

Lighting had always beguiled Hawthorne, and the American Notebooks repeatedly reveal this preoccupation: "It is wonderful what a difference sunshine makes; it is like varnish, bringing out the hidden veins in a

⁹⁶Ibid. ⁹⁷Cf. "Earth's Holocaust," X, pp. 381-404.

⁹⁸Melville, The Letters of Herman Melville, quoted in Critical Heritage, p. 190.

⁹⁹The Scarlet Letter, I, p. 154.

piece of rich wood. . . . The sunshine gradually spreads over the whole landscape; and the whole sombre mass is changed to a variegated picture."¹⁰⁰ And elsewhere he says, "The sun shone strongly in among these trees, and quite kindled them; so that the path seemed brighter for their shade, than if it had been quite exposed to the sun."¹⁰¹ Such passages, however, can be misleading; for unlike the daguerreotypist, Hawthorne's interest in light primarily derives from its ability to cast a shadow, to elucidate some new perceptual "aspect" of an obscurely darkened world, or to transform, rather than accurately record the thing itself or "bring it to light." Thus, rather than light his objects by the constancy of the sun, Hawthorne illumines his scenes by the ambiguous flicker of the lantern, the torch, the fire, the moon. Such partial and intimate lighting subtly discloses its objects, previously envisioned as familiar, in strange and new disguises.

Moonlight, in a familiar room, falling so white upon the carpet, and showing all its figures so distinctly,--making every object so minutely visible, yet so unlike a morning or noontide visibility,--is a medium the most suitable for a romance-writer to get acquainted with his illusive guests. . . . whatever, in a word, has been used or played with, during the day, is now invested with a quality of strangeness and remoteness, though still almost as vividly present as by daylight.¹⁰²

Like Verlaine, Hawthorne's description appropriates the principle, "Pas la couleur, rien que la nuance."¹⁰³ Margaret overlooks the street scene from her window, where a lantern momentarily reddens the foreground surrounded by the deluge of darkness which envelops every other object;¹⁰⁴ Robin finds his kinsman amidst the labyrinthian procession illuminated

¹⁰⁰VIII, p. 218. ¹⁰¹Ibid., p. 219.

¹⁰²The Scarlet Letter, I, pp. 35-36. ¹⁰³Levin, p. 39.

¹⁰⁴"The Wives of the Dead," XI, p. 195.

by the dense multitude of torches which temporarily disrupts the chilly detachment of the moonbeams;¹⁰⁵ Goodman Brown discovers his fellow townsmen assembled at the black mass in the forest around the grotesque blaze of the fire, just as the ambiguous moonlight originally allowed him access to that clearing;¹⁰⁶ Ethan Brand stands virtually hypnotized before the dazzle of the lime-kiln to which he surrenders through identification;¹⁰⁷ the indistinct moonlight dimly reveals the body of Dorcas' son lying dead upon the bones of her father.¹⁰⁸ Unlike the sun-drenched world of scientific objectification, Hawthorne depicts an ambiguous world of shadow. Like the child, science would paint a world transparently clear, as Hawthorne observed of his daughter Una, who "wants there to be all sunshine and no shadow, like a Chinese picture."¹⁰⁹ Hawthorne, on the other hand, was steadfastly aware that the truth of consciousness inheres in man's primordial interrogation of the world, replete with doubt and contradiction. Thus, the dark shadow of ambiguity falls across every page of his work: "Hawthorne could not prevent himself from seeing darkness even at high noon."¹¹⁰ Whereas his age demanded that the new American psyche be white, just as its literature be pure, Hawthorne fearlessly discerned beneath its facade the monadic truth of black: "That blue-eyed darling Nathaniel knew

¹⁰⁵"My Kinsman, Major Molineux," XI, p. 229.

¹⁰⁶"Young Goodman Brown," X, pp. 84-85.

¹⁰⁷"Ethan Brand," XI, pp. 99-100.

¹⁰⁸"Roger Malvin's Burial," X, p. 360.

¹⁰⁹The American Notebooks, VIII, pp. 418-19.

¹¹⁰Normand, p. 163.

disagreeable things in his inner soul. He was careful to send them out in disguise."¹¹¹ Hawthorne's descriptive gaze perceived the void which man inhabits between affective poles of transformation, the "black, impenetrable nothingness" which awaits all who would wander from the security of their familiar surroundings into the "obscurity that hems them in."¹¹² Similarly, we often find in Hawthorne's descriptive sketches the unique and variously achromatic shades of black-on-black, as in the opening scene of The Scarlet Letter, where "the wooden jail was already marked with weather-stains and other indications of age, which gave a yet darker aspect to its beetle-browed and gloomy front."¹¹³ Indeed, sometimes the dark ambiguity of one shadow merely comes to be replaced by that of another which juts its indistinctive gloom through the surrounding field, piercing the ambiguous light of the camera-eye more profoundly than light penetrates the retina of one emerging from the dark. Thus, the prison-house opaquely intersects the clearing "long after the fall of the gigantic pines and oaks that originally overshadowed it."¹¹⁴

Even Hawthorne's portraits elude their daguerrean likenesses which would freeze them in their Being, to become "a ground of perceptual metamorphosis under cover of dim shadows."¹¹⁵ "In most of the pictures, the whole mind and character were brought out on the countenance, and concentrated into a single look, so that, to speak paradoxically, the originals hardly resembled themselves so strikingly as the portraits did."¹¹⁶ Set

¹¹¹D. H. Lawrence, Studies in Classic American Literature (New York: The Viking Press, Compass Books, 1964), p. 83.

¹¹²"Night Sketches," IX, pp. 427 and 429, respectively.

¹¹³I, p. 47. ¹¹⁴Ibid., p. 48. ¹¹⁵Normand, p. 304.

¹¹⁶"The Prophetic Pictures," IX, p. 170.

in relief by varying degrees of darkness, the faces emerge to touch us with their glance, just as the pale but unfaded Madonna, "who had perhaps been worshipped in Rome now regarded the lovers with such a mild and holy look that they longed to worship too."¹¹⁷ Simultaneously these faces recede into the surrounding darkness, like the two old bearded saints who had nearly vanished "into the darkening canvass."¹¹⁸ The portrait completes the spectator's gaze while the spectator's gaze, in turn, completes the portrait: "They hung side by side, separated by a narrow panel, appearing to eye each other constantly, yet always returning the gaze of the spectator."¹¹⁹ In fact, Hawthorne's portraits paradoxically light the rooms which they inhabit like the pictures of Walter and Elinor which, "concealed for months, gleamed forth again in undiminished splendor, appearing to throw a sombre light across the room, rather than to be disclosed by a borrowed radiance."¹²⁰ Like the incomplete silhouette of Hepzibah, framed by "the dusky, time-darkened passage" into which she steps, "a tall figure, clad in black silk,"¹²¹ the portraits of Walter and Elinor are variously completed in accordance with the individual gaze which perceives them.

Such persons might gaze carelessly at first, but, becoming interested, would return day after day, and study these painted faces like the pages of a mystic volume. . . . they sometimes disputed as to the expression which the painter had intended to throw upon the features; all agreeing that there was a look of earnest import, though no two explained it alike.¹²²

By virtue of his indirect lighting, then, Hawthorne's gaze suggests the

¹¹⁷Ibid. ¹¹⁸Ibid. ¹¹⁹Ibid., p. 176. ¹²⁰Ibid., p. 181.

¹²¹The House of the Seven Gables, II, p. 32. See also, p. 129: "Hepzibah spread out her gaunt figure across the door, and seemed really to increase in bulk."

¹²²"The Prophetic Pictures," IX, pp. 176-77.

incomplete contours of a world primordially constituted by the perceiving subject. It explodes the predetermined objectification of a reality transparently and uniformly illuminated by the scientific vision, which would impose its own inflexibly rigid structure in order to manipulatively dominate the delimited content of its fixed and sterile view. The world of Hawthorne's fiction passionately defrays the inordinate cost of an objectively neutered universe and its bankrupt vision, in favor of a polar and metamorphic reality situated in the personal glance of a perceiver. Amidst this sexually ambiguous world, Hawthorne's gaze enowns the interiority of its objects as they in turn reconstruct the subjective consciousness perceiving them. Like the echoes in "The Hollow of the Three Hills," Hawthorne's objects rebound from various external surfaces to strike our eyes only in so far as they are deflected, reflected, and re-reflected in the gaze which temporarily beholds them.¹²³ Perceptually grounded in the mutability of time, the object refuses the absolute determination assigned to it by the formal and spatial priority of the world-view. Hawthorne's ambiguous lighting enables the object to escape the scientific schematization to which the daguerrean view would subject it: the Letter ricochets off the armor in fragmented form in order to be completed a different way in the "shape" of Pearl, who in turn perceives a similar image in the head-piece,

smiling at her mother, with the elfish intelligence that was so

¹²³IX, p. 201: "Their voices are encompassed and re-echoed by the walls of a chamber, the windows of which were rattling in the breeze; the regular vibration of a clock, the crackling of a fire, and the tinkling of the embers as they fell among the ashes, rendered the scene almost as vivid as if painted to the eye" (italics mine). Cf. Leland Schubert, Hawthorne the Artist (New York: Russell and Russell, 1963), p. 24, for an interesting structural comparison between "The Hollow of the Three Hills" and Grant Wood's painting American Gothic.

familiar an expression on her small physiognomy. That look of naughty merriment was likewise reflected in the mirror, with so much breadth and intensity of effect, that it made Hester Prynne feel as if it could not be the image of her own child, but of an imp who was seeking to mould itself into Pearl's shape.¹²⁴

The inter-play of light and shade, of reflected and refracted light against an obscure backdrop of black, allowed Hawthorne to populate his universe with objects enowned or interiorized by the opacity of human consciousness itself. These ambiguously changing figures defy the reflection which would petrify them as they appear in the pool,¹²⁵ the fountain,¹²⁶ the well,¹²⁷ and then just as suddenly disintegrate back to the mutably indeterminate form from whence they originally came. "It is hard to follow one great vision in this world of darkness and of many changing shadows. Among those shadows men get lost."¹²⁸

Among the shadowy folds of darkness which encompass it, the House of the Seven Gables acquires its "concentration of intimacy,"¹²⁹ via the forces which besiege it, the House becomes human. It even reciprocates Hepzibah's desire to decorate her hat with ribbons by growing flowers on its roof, and imitates her frown with its "meditative look," its "impending brow," its "thoughtful gloom," its "rusty" and "battered visage."¹³⁰

¹²⁴The Scarlet Letter, I, p. 106

¹²⁵"The Hollow of the Three Hills," IX, p. 203.

¹²⁶"The Vision of the Fountain," IX, p. 214.

¹²⁷The House of the Seven Gables, II, p. 88.

¹²⁸John G. Neihardt, Black Elk Speaks (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1961), p. 254.

¹²⁹Cf. Gaston Bachelard, The Poetics of Space, trans. Maria Jolas (Boston: Beacon Press, Beacon Paperbacks, 1969), p. 36.

¹³⁰The House of the Seven Gables, II, pp. 27, 28, 12, 56, and 81, respectively.

In the same way, regarding the interior life of the House, the dim looking-glass that used to hang in one of the rooms "was fabled to contain within its depths all the shapes that had ever been reflected there."¹³¹ Yet, Hawthorne no more needs this apparently lost device than the inhabitants of the house, for his own descriptive gaze invests the objects within the house, as it does all the significant objects of his oeuvre, from the very walls to the portraits which adorn them, with the "human" or expressive space by which they come to life. Hawthorne's radical perception indirectly illuminates the objects of its gaze from within; it permits, in fact, the objects to enlighten us, just as Beatrice's face "positively illuminated the more shadowy intervals of the garden path."¹³² Moreover, once the object is brought to prominence in this way, the human world ceases to be a metaphor, "and becomes once more what it really is, the seat and as it were the homeland of our thoughts. The perceiving subject ceases to be an 'acosmic' thinking subject, and action, feeling, and will remain to be explored as original ways of positing an object, since 'an object looks attractive or repulsive before it looks black or blue, circular or square'."¹³³ Thus, each object brings its own unique degree of lighting with it and appropriately discloses its truth in so far as a subject gropingly enowns it in perception, just as the Great Carbuncle refuses to unveil its light to anyone who would seek it "objectively," that is, as a detached observer in search of absolute truth, and instantaneously mutates to

¹³¹Ibid., p. 20.

¹³²"Rappaccini's Daughter," X, p. 102.

¹³³Merleau-Ponty, Phenomenology, p. 24.

"opaque stone, with particles of mica glittering on its surface."¹³⁴
 Hawthorne's Faustian gaze dared to see reality differently than his age would have him view it; rather than intellectually codify the images of experience, he ventured into its primordial chaos in order to resurrect the very body of the world itself, a body whose physical and opaque carnality had long since been discarded by the disembodied image of daguerrean perspective, the flat projection of the scientific and technological world-view.

II

Whatever constancy accrues to the objects within the world of Hawthorne's work does so because the objects themselves appear against a double horizon wherein the embodied perceiver articulates the general setting of that world. Thus, the perception of a world simply constitutes the dilation of a subject's presence within the structures of an indeterminate field, whereby the body "takes up room" among the objects which surround it without ever becoming an object in itself. The physical presence of a perceiver thus "makes room" for the world by virtue of a space which is neither entirely subjective nor objective, and which accommodates its objects only to the extent that they reciprocally call each other into Being. The meteor punctuates the surrounding darkness just as surely as the darkness "creates" the meteor; the lime-kiln reveals the night just as the night illuminates it; the people on "the other side" of the veil appropriate its meaning as equiprimordially as the veil discloses them. Each makes the other possible in the first place, and contemporaneously exist only because they "touch" the

¹³⁴"The Great Carbuncle," IX, p. 165.

affective surface of an incarnate gaze. In this sense, every object becomes a metaphor; must be, in fact, a metaphor before it can become an object as such, for an object is factual only by virtue of a situated subject who perceives it as part of an affective setting in the first place. Although, at the outset, the Letter measures precisely three and one-quarter inches on each side, its significant factuality remains dormant without a factual subjectivity which calls it into Being. Thus, Hawthorne's initial description of the letter engages its immediate qualities, those aspects which pre-reflectively arrest the gaze, and not its geometrical properties.

But the point which drew all eyes, and, as it were, transfigured the wearer,--so that both men and women, who had been familiarly acquainted with Hester Prynne, were now impressed as if they beheld her for the first time,--was that SCARLET LETTER, so fantastically embroidered and illuminated upon her bosom. It had the effect of a spell, taking her out of the ordinary relations with humanity, and inclosing her in a sphere by herself.¹³⁵

Similarly, the Letter has yet to become a unified sensory experience because it remains to be lived by the reader-perceiver throughout the course of the novel. Each perceiver must discover his own way into the thing. Hawthorne implicitly understood this fact, and recreated the perceiver's ingress into the thing itself as it primordially transpires in perception. Thus, the phenomenon of lighting (Lichtfuhrung) looms paramount. Rather than confer a notional meaning on the object, Hawthorne's inosculation of light and shade implicitly organizes a structural field in which the object is only in so far as my perception disrupts into it; my experience of the world can only transcend itself in the objects of that world because it is born amidst the incarnate setting

¹³⁵The Scarlet Letter, I, pp. 53-54.

of the situation. Indeed, the conspicuous absence of color in Hawthorne's oeuvre invites further investigation.

In perception, the reflection of light functions incidentally; its presence confers life upon the objects it illumines, whereas its absence deprives them of all "expression." Similarly, lighting "is not presented to our perception as an objective, but as an auxiliary or mediating element. It is not seen itself, but causes us to see the rest."¹³⁶ Because lighting constitutes an aspect of the field, lingering in the background without drawing specific attention to itself, it encourages or guides the gaze toward maximum determinateness, and hence reveals the pre-reflective way in which the gaze takes up its objects in perception. The ubiquity of the daguerrean view posits the framed prospectus of a world uniformly illuminated from without along each of its indivisible "points." Technology merely substantiated this fiction. "In our civilization, which has the same light everywhere, and puts electricity in its cellars, we no longer go to the cellar carrying a candle. But the unconscious cannot be civilized. It takes a candle when it goes to the cellar."¹³⁷ So with perception: the gaze engages its objects gropingly within the intentionality of a subject. Like the incomplete light of the candle which shows up certain objects at the expense of others, the gaze enowns a thing by virtue of the thing's contemporaneous relation to a phenomenal body somehow already alongside the objective body as such, whereby a nebulous and inconspicuous lighting initially allows the gaze to take it up at the expense of other objects in the field. Now an

¹³⁶Merleau-Ponty, Phenomenology, p. 309.

¹³⁷Bachelard, Poetics of Space, p. 19.

object primordially announces itself to us in terms of its immediate "expression," its contours as they strike a kinaesthetic displacement of the phenomenal body. Perception itself goes straight to the thing, "and by-passes the colour, just as it is able to fasten upon the expression of a gaze without noting the colour of the eyes."¹³⁸ Conversely, color may appear to us in modes other than the fixed quality of a reflective attitude. Thus, the dark-green moss which covers the burial-stone of Parson Hooper appears to the receptive eye as black,¹³⁹ as does the verdure of the forest in "Young Goodman Brown."¹⁴⁰ Reciprocally, to certain eyes the Letter may appear "freshly green, instead of scarlet!"¹⁴¹ Indeed, the blackness which persists beneath the scarlet of the Letter is less a sensible quality than a lugubrious power which affectively emerges from the object, constantly insinuating its presence even when "sensibly" absent from sight. Moreover, whether it is seen in the direct light of the sun or the reflected and refracted light of the polished armor, the Letter affectively retains its constancy in modes other than the "sensory" itself. It is visible primarily in the sense that moral blackness is visible.¹⁴²

In this respect, Hawthorne's descriptive gaze anticipates the elemental function of lighting anterior to the distinction between colors as such. His lighting directs the gaze so that we discover the objects it discloses, and complete them, in accordance with the foreshadowed

¹³⁸Merleau-Ponty, Phenomenology, p. 305.

¹³⁹"The Minister's Black Veil," IX, p. 53.

¹⁴⁰X, p. 83. ¹⁴¹The Scarlet Letter, I, p. 178.

¹⁴²Cf. Merleau-Ponty, Phenomenology, p. 305.

spectacle previously given, just as Sir William Howe discerns his own image beneath the cloaked figure which unexpectedly issues from the shadow and then recedes before the spectators are able to catch a glimpse of it.¹⁴³ Set in relief by the folds of darkness which surround them, Hawthorne's figures surface to the gaze by virtue of the suggestive lighting which nudges them forth, redistributing whatever color "qualities" they possess back to the neutrality or "neutral territory" from whence they are initially mediated according to the variable level of lighting itself.

A child's shoe; the doll, seated in her little wicker carriage; the hobby-horse;--whatever, in a word, has been used or played with, during the day, is now invested with a quality of strangeness and remoteness, though still almost as vividly present as by daylight. Thus, therefore, the floor of our familiar room has become a neutral territory, somewhere between the real world and fairy-land, where the Actual and the Imaginary may meet, and each imbue itself with the nature of the other.¹⁴⁴

Similarly, the red of the roses is lost to the "dark and glossy curls" of the two youths encompassed within the ring of monsters at the maypole;¹⁴⁵ the motley colors of the clearing are neutralized by the Puritans, invisibly watching the spectacle, who compare these revelers to the darksome evil that populates the "black wilderness;"¹⁴⁶ the richly-colored garments of the figures, which emerge atop the staircase of the Province-House during the masked ball, gradually fade to dusk so that the shapes "appeared rather like shadows than persons of fleshly substance;"¹⁴⁷ the

¹⁴³"Howe's Masquerade," IX, p. 253.

¹⁴⁴The Scarlet Letter, I, pp. 35-36.

¹⁴⁵"The May-Pole of Merry Mount," IX, p. 56.

¹⁴⁶Ibid.

¹⁴⁷"Howe's Masquerade," IX, p. 251.

passionately gorgeous aspects of the plants in the garden reflect the artificiality of man's depraved fancy, "glowing with only an evil mockery of beauty."¹⁴⁸ Thus, Hawthorne's black and white vision significantly outweighs his color-daubing, but only because his descriptive gaze inclines toward the primary constitution of the perceptual act prior to its thematization. Like Rousseau, he utilizes bold and simple colors, yet engagingly set off against a tenebrous background which averts attention from itself because it creates the primordial space of perception: "in the momentary gloom, the fire seemed to be glimmering amidst the vagueness of unenclosed space."¹⁴⁹ Already alongside an objective "eye," the phenomenal space of an expressive bodily "eye" opens onto the object itself, and makes it visible, in so far as it seizes the interplay of light and shade without recognizing the light and shade as such. Lighting always lingers hidden in the background as a structural phenomenon whenever it makes an object visible, for in order to see the object "it is necessary not to see the play of shadows and light around it."¹⁵⁰ The shadows of the tree boughs which flicker over the dead figure of Judge Pyncheon amidst the gloomy room further articulate the slumping object while they simultaneously interrogate the birth of the perceiving subject. Conversely, these shadow-branches which reach out to touch us by reason of their unique space appear doubly there as they synchronously suggest an actual counter-part, beyond the window frame, presented in profile against the object they embody. The lighting thus directs our

¹⁴⁸"Rappaccini's Daughter," X, p. 110.

¹⁴⁹"The Artist of the Beautiful," X, p. 448.

¹⁵⁰Merleau-Ponty, Primacy, p. 167.

gaze toward the lifeless shape in the chair as "one" who has already been there, and leads us to the object to the extent that we submit or entrust ourselves to it. Expressively situated, we perceive the spectacle in conformity with the light which surrounds the body and permits the object to confront us. The lighting itself is neutral; only later, once the object has become determinate, do colors as such appear.

By reason of Hawthorne's indirect lighting, then, which gravitates toward the absence of color, objects apportion color among themselves in so far as they resist this new ambience. The quality of color in an object becomes determinate only after its renitency to some variable level of lighting. Initially, Hawthorne's lighting is always on the side of the subject, and not the object. Prior to the distinction between color, the effect of lighting is precisely what gets us into the perceptual situation in the first place. For example, when a painter wishes to portray some striking object, "he does so less by applying a bright colour to that object than by a suitable distribution of light and shade on surrounding ones."¹⁵¹ Hawthorne's description of the dead Judge poignantly exemplifies this perceptual phenomenon:

Meanwhile the twilight is glooming upward out of the corners of the room. The shadows of the tall furniture grow deeper, and at first become more definite; then, spreading wider, they lose their distinctness of outline in the dark, gray tide of oblivion, as it were, that creeps slowly over the various objects, and the one human figure sitting in the midst of them. The gloom has not entered from without; it has brooded here all day, and now, taking its own inevitable time, will possess itself of everything. The Judge's face, indeed, rigid, and singularly white, refuses to melt into this universal solvent. Fainter and fainter grows the light. It is as if another double-handfull of darkness had been scattered through the air. Now it is no longer gray, but sable. There is still a faint appearance at the window; neither a glow, nor a

¹⁵¹Merleau-Ponty, Phenomenology, p. 312.

glimmer--any phrase of light would express something far brighter than this doubtful perception, or sense, rather, that there is a window there. Has it yet vanished? No!--yes!--not quite! 152

Moreover, just as the harmony of a piece of music may structure itself around a dominant tone, Hawthorne's descriptive gaze orders its objects around a variable level of lighting, which in itself always tends toward the dominant "color" inherent in his oeuvre. And this elemental constancy within the world of Hawthorne's work, and which sustains the very setting of that world, uniformly appears as black--the total absence of color. Thus, the twilight glooming upward in the room where Judge Pyncheon motionlessly slumps ultimately obtains from this pre-dominant darkness, and involucrately subsists within it. Ontologically, of course, this perceptual "dominant" constitutes nothing less than the horizon of finite temporality, that double horizon of Being and nothingness which threatens at any moment to annihilate our perceptual consciousness, and all other forms of consciousness as well:

And there is still the swarthy whiteness--we shall venture to marry these ill-agreeing words--the swarthy whiteness of Judge Pyncheon's face. The features are all gone; there is only the paleness of them left. And how looks it now? There is no window! There is no face! An infinite, inscrutable blackness has annihilated sight! Where is our universe? All crumbled away from us; and we, adrift in chaos, may hearken to the gusts of homeless wind, that go sighing and murmuring about, in quest of what was once a world! 153

Hence, Hawthorne's lighting suggests an ontological significance far beyond its descriptive surface, and subsequently points back to the subjective nature of perception itself. In the sense that lighting corroborates the perceptual situation, spontaneously guiding the gaze toward an object which can only become determinate to the extent that it

152 The House of the Seven Gables, II, p. 276.

153 Ibid., pp. 276-77.

comes into being amid a general setting whose structure unfolds or "surrounds" both subject and object, the subject-object dichotomy concurrently coalesces to a dialectic of inside and out.¹⁵⁴ Just as the meteor and the darkness are mutually impossible without each other, the perceptual subject can experience neither without the phenomenal lighting which allows them to appear. Hawthorne's descriptive gaze accommodates this "double" space within the single image because it is willing to forfeit the visual frame of perspective, which merely appropriates the object, in favor of the ambiguous, though constant, experience of a subject. The world itself guarantees this constancy, for Being is always situated.

Furthermore, Hawthorne's darkness expressively situates us at an interior "center," although that situated central "point" can never be located geographically or geometrically, but rather phenomenally, for "anywhere is the center of the world."¹⁵⁵ Unlike the detached observer, such as Coverdale or Kenyon, whose preconceived perspective constitutes a world uniformly illumined from without, Hawthorne's dark creates a specific, situated point of view whereby the observer participates in the perceptual enownment of the object; the surrounding blackness dissolves the "objective" distance between spectator and world which the spiritualized Paul Pry takes for granted,¹⁵⁶ since it situates us toward an intentional "where-we-are" and not the spatial "where" of scientific objectification. As the consummate master of a two-dimensional art,¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁴Cf. Bachelard, The Poetics of Space, pp. 211-31.

¹⁵⁵Neihardt, p. 43.

¹⁵⁶Cf. "Sights from a Steeple," IX, pp. 191-98.

¹⁵⁷Cf. Levin, pp. 66-67, who sees the narrator in similar terms as

for example, the Virtuoso's collection of objects transfers the value of pictorial perspective back upon the world; and he consequently dismisses the narrator's deception by Parrhasius' trompe-l'oeil with the single remark, "You need not blush."¹⁵⁸ In a previous and parallel scene, the narrator had already rejected such an attitude by refusing the invitation to Cornelius Agrippa's magic glass, another two-dimensional illusion:

"There are so many greater wonders in the world, to those who keep their eyes open, and their sight undimmed by custom, that all the delusions of the old sorcerers seem flat and stale."¹⁵⁹ With Parrhasius' painting, of course, it is ironically the art work which deceives; for like the phenomenal space of perception, the space of the art work is similarly virtual, and must be phenomenally "touched" in order to reveal its proper depth. Conversely, an object can purely vanish "into thin air" only at the level of theoretical objectification, for at the threshold of perception, it must always go somewhere else, even though it is momentarily concealed. Furthermore, while he rhetorically claims a situated point of view based solely in the present, the Virtuoso's view constitutes the flat projection of a world-view grounded in infinity, for he is doomed to live forever. Like the objects of his collection, he envisions the history of man in terms of a transparent perspective which is simultaneously everywhere and nowhere. Inhabiting, or better, constituting a world grounded in illusion, he thus betrays a repressed resentment¹⁶⁰ for the concrete object itself,

well. Levin's interpretation, however, is contradicted by the narrator's own remarks.

¹⁵⁸"A Virtuoso's Collection," X, p. 492. ¹⁵⁹Ibid., p. 482.

¹⁶⁰Cf. Max Scheler, Ressentiment, trans. William W. Holdheim (New York: Schocken Books, 1972), pp. 55-56.

the very thing his "collection" or view claims to appropriate with finality. Fearing the incarnate specificity of the thing itself, which comminates at any moment to annihilate his comprehensive "picture," the Virtuoso subsequently comes to hate all objects. Analogous to the inauthentic understanding of the technological perception, the Virtuoso has likewise "learned to despise all things."¹⁶¹ Indeed, Hawthorne may have specifically had in mind here the Kantian category of the Understanding when his narrator rejoins: "'To despise all things!' repeated I. 'This, at best, is the wisdom of the understanding.'"¹⁶² Hawthorne's descriptive technique, on the other hand, encourages the percipient to disrupt or merge into the "content" of his gaze by virtue of the darkness which surrounds him and which, at every moment, threatens to obliterate his world, "like the archway of an enchanted palace, all of which has vanished but the entrance into nothingness and empty space."¹⁶³ In order to transcend or overcome the dark, this world must be continually reconstituted by a perceiver who, in fact, must turn himself inside-out with each successive image which appears. Every new image of a world thus guarantees a primordial coherence between subject and object, wherein the percipient sensibly participates in the Being of that world, and thereby loses his reflective identity.

Because visual experience naturally pushes objectification further than the tactile, the scientific-technological world-view flatters itself that it constitutes the world: "it presents us with a spectacle spread

¹⁶¹"A Virtuosos's Collection," X, p. 485.

¹⁶²Ibid.

¹⁶³The American Notebooks, VIII, p. 133.

out before us at a distance, and gives us the illusion of being immediately present everywhere and being situated nowhere."¹⁶⁴ Tactile experience, on the other hand, "adheres to the surface of our body; we cannot unfold it before us, and it never quite becomes an object."¹⁶⁵ It is through the body itself that a subject opens onto the world. By internalizing a certain style as part of my motor potentiality, I thus disclose a perceptual field which immediately brings me into contact with phenomena, so that the world symbiotically invades me just as I respond to and accept its advances. Hawthorne implicitly understood this pre-objective structure of perception, and descriptively endeavored to bring us back in touch with our initial pre-reflective perception of the world prior to its apophantical interpretation. By reason of its indirect lighting, Hawthorne's gaze suggests the object through delicate operations which already begin to function cinematically. In order to create the perceptual "motion" of his pictures, however, Hawthorne was required to establish, if only unconsciously, the constant setting by which the world of his work would phenomenally cohere. If his indirect lighting were to articulate the objects of an emblematic gaze so that they virtually protrude to touch us, he would have to project a personal and concrete field which interpenetrates every experience of his world, and concomitantly allows for the inter-sensory unity of every "thing" in that world. Through this setting, we come into the possession of the world of Hawthorne's work. In other words, Hawthorne's emblematic gaze required a means at his disposal by which he could capture the reality of the world of his vision, and his appropriation of the emblem partially accomplished

¹⁶⁴Merleau-Ponty, Phenomenology, p. 316. ¹⁶⁵Ibid.

that task, for in the emblematic technique he discerned that indeterminate field which insinuates the object and perceptually enables it to come to life. Yet, the affective depth of his vision demanded something more, and he unearthed that key in the diorama:

If Hawthorne continued after his illness was over to shut himself away in order to look at things in the dark, if he displayed an interest in magic lantern shows and fairground dioramas, he did so in no dilettante spirit but with deliberate intent. It was upon a foundation of shadow that he built up his technique of indirect lighting. Light came for him, as it did for Van Gogh, through darkness.¹⁶⁶

This all-encompassing darkness which informs Hawthorne's vision, and which Melville so brilliantly acknowledged at the center of his art, not only structures our experience of that vision, but also sustains the general setting which circumscribes the perceptual situation as such. Hawthorne's interest in the confessional further reinforces his descriptive predilection for the dark. Clearly, it was the visual as well as the psychological phenomenon of the confessional that excited his imagination, for it provided a darkness which could articulate both "inside" and "outside" of a world. Already by 1842, he had observed this nuance in a journal entry: "A Father-Confessor--his reflections on character, and the contrast of the inward man with the outward, as he looks round on his congregation--all whose secret sins are known to him."¹⁶⁷ Similarly, Hilda's confession in The Marble Faun enables her to discard the personal burden of guilt, which she attaches to her own identity, by welcoming the anonymity of the enclosing dark. Only after-

¹⁶⁶Normand, p. 308. By "diorama," we mean throughout, not only a three-dimensional, translucent scene in miniature, but any such scene produced with similar effects as well, including those displayed before a collective audience--e.g., Daguerre's diorama a double effet.

¹⁶⁷The American Notebooks, VIII, p. 235.

wards, in the determinate world of the cathedral, is she compelled to discuss it face to face.¹⁶⁸ Yet, however much the confessional may have fired Hawthorne's imagination, it was the diorama which represented, for him, the most expressively intense perceptual model of how we primordially articulate the world. What best characterizes the dioramic experience is its ability to absorb a reflective identity via the circumambient darkness constitutive of the precondition for involvement. Speaking of this effect in contemporary cinema, V. F. Perkins has remarked:

In the(ideally) comforting, self-forgetting darkness of the movie-house we attain faceless anonymity, a sort of public privacy, which effectively distances the real world and our actual circumstances. That the darkness is an essential insulator will have been realized by any reader who has had to watch films in an insufficiently darkened cinema. The deterioration of the image on the screen matters far less than the absence of the 'shield' which darkness customarily offers. The erection of the shield seems to be the precondition of involvement.¹⁶⁹

Just as silence constitutes the ground of all communication, darkness makes it possible. Darkness is immanence.¹⁷⁰ Darkness recreates the interior of Being, the way in which the world makes its first appearance; for without a subject there could be no "world."

To speak in these terms, however, is not to place the subject perceptually or ontologically prior to the "world," for Hawthorne's dioramic darkness engages the spectator-reader by surrounding him, and thus establishes the specific situatedness by which a percipient makes

¹⁶⁸The Marble Faun, IV, pp. 357-58.

¹⁶⁹Film as Film (London: Penguin Books, Cox and Wyman Ltd., 1972), p. 134.

¹⁷⁰Wladimir Jankelevitch, "Le Romantisme allemand," quoted in Normand, p. 318.

the birth of Being possible in the first place. Reciprocally, because it encloses the spectator within the immediacy of its own perceptual re-enactment, this dioramic darkness concurrently generates the creation of a self-sufficient world.¹⁷¹ In fact, the spectator-reader has already been put into the situation by virtue of the presencing temporality of those images which spontaneously appear amidst the ground of chaotic darkness, and are already on the way toward a determinate order. Thus, Hawthorne's images are essentially cinematic. Against the enclosing dark, the cinematic image "takes shape," and prematurely stands out against this indeterminate field "like someone on the screen when the film is half over and one has only just walked into the darkness of the cinema. . . . the image, before one's eyes, is already in the present indicative."¹⁷²

Hawthorne's description of the dead Judge, for example, intimately engages the reader in this active, interior moment. From the twilight glooming upward, toward the swarthy whiteness of the Judge's face, and finally to that inscrutable blackness which annihilates all traces of any world "out there" beyond the window--Hawthorne's description paradoxically transforms the transparency of an objective world "without" into the ambiguous opacity of an interior space which ultimately locates the subject at the center of a world that is, ironically, himself. Like the cinematic vision which Georges-Michel Bovay, in his essay "Poésie et réalisme," defines as "la vision intérieure d'un monde,"¹⁷³ Hawthorne's diorama-like technique

¹⁷¹Cf. Raymond Durgnat, Films and Feelings (London: Faber and Faber Ltd., 1967), p. 99.

¹⁷²Jules Supervielle, "The Man Who Stole Children," trans. Alan Pryce-Jones, in Selected Writings (New York: New Directions, 1967), pp. 194-95.

¹⁷³Cinéma: un oeil ouvert sur le monde, ed. Georges-Michel Bovay (Lausanne: La Guilde du Livre, 1952), p. 95.

eliminates the traditional or daguerrean frame and enables us to perceive and complete the image in so far as we are situated; that is, engulfed by the surrounding darkness. Here, a commonplace event, the coming of night, "is transformed into apocalyptic revelation through description that conveys the internal vantage point of diorama--that conveys the sense of immersion in a changing scene in which real time expands into dioramic time, into dream time."¹⁷⁴ This perceptual, physical blackness which pervades Hawthorne thus yields the key that unlocks not only the perceptual habit of Hawthorne the man, but also discloses the interior, self-sufficient world of his oeuvre. As Lautréamont remarked: "It is only by admitting the night physically that one is able to admit it morally."¹⁷⁵ Thus, through the interplay of light and shade, grounded in dioramic darkness, Hawthorne was able to create "a total ambiguity that would enable him to achieve the freest possible interplay of substances, identities, and physical, moral, and psychological realities."¹⁷⁶

At the interior of this ambiguous vision, Hawthorne created the affective depth by which an expressive space superannuates the perspective distance of the daguerrean view. Through his dioramic gaze, the world no longer stands before the spectator as a representation, but rather becomes visible in its interior immediacy. The world is born anew. Because the daguerrean frame supports a view upon the outside in

¹⁷⁴Benjamin Lease, "Diorama and Dream: Hawthorne's Cinematic Vision," Journal of Popular Culture 5 (Fall 1971) : 321.

¹⁷⁵Comte de Lautréamont, Le Chants de Maldoror, trans. Guy Wernham (New York: New Directions, 1965), p. 306. Compare Goodman Brown, who cannot bring himself to accept the moral darkness he discovers in the forest. Is it, perhaps, because he cannot accept the physical darkness of the night itself?

¹⁷⁶Normand, p. 311.

terms of its optical relation to the world, it always represents a spectacle of something else--something outside of it. As Hawthorne observed on his journey up Green Mountain:

As we ascended the zig-zag road, we looked behind, at every opening through the forest, and beheld a wide landscape of mountain-swells, and vallies intermixt. . . . Over this wide scene, there was a general gloom; but there was a continual vicissitude of bright sunshine flitting over it; now resting for a brief space on portions of the heights, now flooding the vallies with green brightness But we, who stood so elevated above mortal things, and saw so wide and far, could see the sunshine of prosperity departing from one spot and rolling towards another; so that we could not think it much matter which spot were sunny or gloomy at any one moment.¹⁷⁷

Indeed, from such a "godly" vantage point, nothing much matters; it is all the same. This abstracted perspective, divorced from the affective details ("we could not think it much matter"), is simultaneously indifferent to time as well ("at any one moment"). Whenever it is seen in perspective, the external world is somehow always beyond time; for ultimately, everything can and will be located in its proper place. Even history arrays itself before us in its fastidious chronological order. Thus, in the preface to A Wonder Book, Hawthorne explains that he felt no reluctance to shape anew, "as his fancy dictated, the forms that have been hallowed by an antiquity of two or three thousand years."¹⁷⁸ Hawthorne's perceptual and reflective habits naturally gravitated toward man's interior facticity rather than his external factuality. Correspondingly, in the preface to his Biographical Stories for Children, he advances the personal and intimate approach to the history of a life: "It is here attempted to give our little readers such impressions as they

¹⁷⁷The American Notebooks, VIII, p. 129.

¹⁷⁸VII, p. 3.

might have gained, had they themselves been the playmates of persons, who have long since performed important and brilliant parts upon the stage of life."¹⁷⁹ At the other end of daguerrean objectification, the diorama initially investigates the spectacle for its own sake; it is first and foremost autofigurative: "The spectacle is first of all a spectacle of itself before it is a spectacle of something outside of it."¹⁸⁰ In Hawthorne, the image is able to exist for its own sake because it spontaneously emerges from a primordial darkness which circumscribes the percipient, and touches him with its animate becoming. Hawthorne's dioramic blackness engages us from a situated point of view whereby an object becomes an object in its specific carnality before our very eyes and, at the same time, engenders or suggests an affectively unified world: "Every new aspect of the mountains, or view from a different position, creates a surprise in the mind."¹⁸¹ Elsewhere Hawthorne observes: "The mountains look much larger and more majestic some times than at others--partly because the mind may be variously situated so as to comprehend them."¹⁸² Unlike Wordsworth's transparent and ubiquitous perspective from the top of Mount Snowdon, Hawthorne's dioramic technique guarantees the ambiguous contour of Being for, within the expressive space of its interior, it makes the object determinate only to the extent that it reverses the objective dimensions of "locality." The spectator thus assumes a spatial relation to the thing in terms of his restricted

¹⁷⁹VI, p. 213.

¹⁸⁰Merleau-Ponty, Primacy, p. 181.

¹⁸¹The American Notebooks, VIII, p. 104.

¹⁸²Ibid., p. 125.

situation, and not the transparently ubiquitous position of optical perspective, which merely treats the body as another object in external space. Hawthorne appreciated the individual and limited aspect of a thing, and employed a descriptive technique that surprises us with every new appearance of the image. In a journal entry of 1 June 1842, he expressed it thus:

The greater picturesqueness and reality of back-yards, and everything appertaining to the rear of a house; as compared with the front, which is fitted up for the public eye. There is much to be learnt, always, by getting a glimpse at rears. When the direction of a road has been altered, so as to pass the rear of farm-houses, instead of the front, a very noticeable aspect is presented.¹⁸³

By definition, a situated point of view can only see one aspect at a time; in such a light, the object is ultimately destined to remain partially unknown. The perceptual aspect of a thing, in turn, substantiates the limited ability of the gaze at all times; it constitutes the Rubicon which can never be crossed perceptually. Thus, aspectivity always puts "solidity" on the hither side of the distinction between affective and rational space in so far as it dynamically animates the primordial depth of the visible. Hawthorne knew what Cezanne was to discover, and what cubism would repeat: "that the external form, the envelope, is secondary and derived, that it is not that which causes a thing to take form, that this shell of space must be shattered."¹⁸⁴ At the same time, pure forms, possessing an apparent solidity internally determined, can never disclose the interstitial aspect of depth. During his middle period, Cezanne experimented in this direction, "and came to find that inside this space,

¹⁸³Ibid., p. 239. Eight years later, Hawthorne indulged in just such a sketch; see pp. 496-97.

¹⁸⁴Merleau-Ponty, Primacy, p. 180.

a box or container too large for them, the things began to move, color against color; they began to modulate in instability. Thus we must seek space and its content as together."¹⁸⁵ Only between the double horizon of physical and expressive space, then, does an object begin to secure its perceptual and ontological dimensions. "Aspectivity" thus confirms the reciprocity between subject and object in a world common to both, and disparagingly makes nonsense of each apart from the other. Within the interior of its expressive space, Hawthorne's dioramic gaze confers upon perception a facticity which daguerrean objectification merely relegates to the sun-drenched status of the factual. Indeed, once the world of factual objects is abolished, perception gravitates toward a world entirely devoid of any objects whatsoever. This approximates, in fact, the dioramic or cinematic world prior to the appearance of its first image. It impersonates the night, that pure and simple being-in-the-dark. Analogously, it is the night which brings me back in touch with my contingency:

Night is not an object before me; it enwraps me and infiltrates through all my senses, stifling my recollections and almost destroying my personal identity. I am no longer withdrawn into my perceptual look-out from which I watch the outlines of objects moving by at a distance. Night has no outlines; it is itself in contact with me and its unity is the mystical unity of the mana. Even shouts or a distant light people it only vaguely, and then it comes to life in its entirety; it is pure depth without foreground or background, without surfaces and without any distance separating it from me.¹⁸⁶

If the reflective attitude sustains its space by thinking the illuminated relation of its parts, the pre-reflective interior of dioramic darkness, on the other hand, unites me to an affective space precisely because it

¹⁸⁵Ibid.

¹⁸⁶Merleau-Ponty, Phenomenology, p. 283.

intimately merges with the surface of my body, and threatens to absorb the very reflective identity which can always disperse it by "turning on the lights." Because it constitutes a dimension in which I am entirely enveloped, darkness thus recreates the depth of an interior space wherein I am perceptually situated at all times. Without anchor in externally objective co-ordinates, Hawthorne's dioramic darkness grounds the world of his work in the ambiguous affectivity of a subject, that zone of not-being-in-front-of whereby things are primordially able to come to light, and, on the descriptive level, provides the very darkness necessary in the cinema in order to show up the performance.¹⁸⁷

However, if dioramic space can be distinguished from the daguerrean view in so far as it essentially envelops us rather than spreading its content out before us, and therefore outside of us, it also distinguishes itself on another equiprimordially meaningful level. Like the scientific-technological world picture, the daguerrean view fixes the content of its frame in order to secure the object with finality. The scientific-technological posture thus impetuously appropriated the daguerreotype, for in so doing it felt it had at last discovered the absolute means of making a "lasting impression," in fact, a permanent one--one, moreover, which would be true for all times, places, and Dasein. Grounded in its steadfastly frozen genuflection to infinity, this world-view naturally despises that which it attempts to control with absolute mastery; that is, situated time and space. Thus, to guarantee its continuous domination of "nature," which uncompromisingly gets the better of it because nature always holds the upper hand, it professes salvation in

¹⁸⁷Ibid., pp. 100-101.

the heavenly beatitude of a repressed, omnipotent goal, and consciously takes the form: "If only we could eliminate the awkward discomfort of time and place once and for all" Yet the other side of "angel" is always "devil," and one demands the other--in fact, calls it into being; for on the hither side of Being, where both reside, they are one and the same. Hawthorne knew it better than anyone. Within the technological frame of his age, he detected the survival of an ancient witchcraft, whose roots "lay in the very lowest of human instincts"--instincts which were bound "to people the world with monstrous shapes."¹⁸⁸ Hawthorne alone was first to discern the monster gnawing at man's heart, obscuring his vision, isolating him from his own world in the name of objectivity. Beneath the Janus-faced exterior of scientific optimism, Hawthorne espied the demon loosed upon the world in the name of progress; it haunted the recesses of his imagination as severely as it threatened the freedom of his vision. That monster was, of course, the machine. It represented the plunderous extent to which man had been dispossessed of his world by the scientific promise of salvation and its insidiously concomitant evils. Amidst the beauty of the pre-technological garden, Hawthorne perceived the fiendish whistle of the locomotive; its devastating potential leveled his perceptual and aesthetic sensitivity as it would Faulkner a century later. In the steam engine, he anticipated the twentieth-century horrors inevitable in the race for technological supremacy, the battle between opposing world-views which endangers the very life of the planet today. The referential surface of the technological world picture could no longer assuage the subsequently frightening

¹⁸⁸Normand, p. 182.

disjunction of its own applied content. While describing a passenger waiting in the station for a train, Hawthorne elicits his fundamental disorientation as the train approaches:

and comes down upon you like fate, swift and inevitable. In a moment, it dashes along in front of the Station-house and comes to a pause A moment passes, while the baggage men are putting on the trunks and packages; then the bell strikes a few times, and away goes the train again; quickly out of sight of those who remain behind, while a solitude of hours again broods over the Station House, which, for an instant, has thus been put in communication with far-off cities, and then has only itself

Meantime, the passenger, stepping from the solitary station-house into the train, finds himself in the midst of a new world, all in a moment; he rushes out of the solitude into a village; thence through woods and hills; into a large inland town¹⁸⁹

Grounded in alchemy and with the help of technology, science was now able, via the machine, "to realize certain of the ancient magicians' dreams, such as that of abolishing distance: in the flight of the two 'suspects,' the two 'owls,' the railroad becomes a substitute for the witch's broom."¹⁹⁰ Even Hawthorne could not foresee the extent to which his own monsters were anticipations of history: "He saw himself, and his work as well, excluded from the world of the machine. He had no idea that men would return to his own 'chimaeras' in order to explain some very real monstrosities to come."¹⁹¹ Moreover, like the train which it describes, the new perceptual moment in Hawthorne ironically and most significantly obtains from motion.

III

If Hawthorne discovered, in the diorama, the circumscriptive black in which the shape of his images could make their first appearance, he

¹⁸⁹The American Notebooks, VIII, p. 488.

¹⁹⁰Normand, p. 182. ¹⁹¹Ibid., pp. 75-76.

also detected an interior "motion" by which they unfold before us and come to life. By Hawthorne's time the "moving picture" had already undergone several revolutionary advances. Originally the invention of Philippe de Loutherbourg, this new art first appeared in London in 1781 under the name of Eidophusikon. De Loutherbourg's invention, however, was in no way comparable to the later panoramic productions, amounting to a kind of panoramic moving peep show.¹⁹² Shortly thereafter, Robert Barker's "cyclorama" appeared, "the picture that encircled its spectators with actual objects carrying the painted detail out beyond the foreground."¹⁹³ When word reached Charles Willson Peale in Philadelphia, 1784, he was immediately captivated by the prospect of pictures "that lived and moved, changed color, a magic release from the static character of all art hitherto."¹⁹⁴ By the autumn of 1784, Peale was already adding a skylighted room to the end of his long gallery in order to house the equipment, while the pictures were to be viewed from the seats in the gallery itself.¹⁹⁵ The Pennsylvania Packet advertized the exhibit in the following terms: "Mr. Peale, respectfully informs the public, that with great labour and expence, he hath prepared a number of perspective views, with changeable effects, imitating nature in various movements."¹⁹⁶ Historically, Peale's moving pictures represent the first appearance in America of the startling progress in pictorialism which began in England during the 1780's, most notable the inventions of De Loutherbourg and

¹⁹²John Francis McDermott, The Lost Panoramas of the Mississippi (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958), p. 175.

¹⁹³Charles Coleman Sellers, Charles Willson Peale (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1969), p. 211.

¹⁹⁴Ibid., p. 204. ¹⁹⁵Ibid., p. 205. ¹⁹⁶Ibid.

Barker. Some years later, Rubens Peale would display colored magic-lantern projections in motion. Yet, it was not until the 1820's that the moving picture received its major impetus, where its development closely paralleled that of photography. Investigations into the persistence of vision led Roget to publish his paper, "Persistence of Vision with regard to Moving Objects," in 1824.

Optical toys based on this principle began to appear shortly afterwards. The first, manufactured in 1826, was a flat disc with a picture on each side; spinning the disc made the pictures seem to merge. This simple toy was described by its makers as a 'Thaumatrological Amusement. To illustrate the seeming paradox of Seeing an Object which is Out of Sight and to demonstrate the faculty of the Retina of the eye to retain the impression of an object after its disappearance'. In 1832 there appeared a new toy, the Phenakistoscope, which made more sophisticated use of the principles formulated by Roget; a series of drawings, depicting separate stages in an action, was printed on a cardboard disc. Rotated, and viewed in a mirror through slots in its circumference, the Phenakistoscope disc provided the first genuine moving pictures.¹⁹⁷

Along similar lines, Daguerre too was working toward the production of pictorial illusions. Widely known in France and England as a scene designer and operator of supremely persuasive dioramic presentations long before the invention of photography, Daguerre's three-dimensional views "of a storm in the Alps or of a midnight mass in a great cathedral were so effective that visitors from the provinces threw coins onstage to test the apparent spatial depth they thought they saw."¹⁹⁸ In 1822, Daguerre and Bouton exploited panoramic effects in their first diorama by using the rotonde "as an auditorium that turned on a pivot before huge stationary pictures."¹⁹⁹ Of even greater significance, however, were the dioramas a double effet which Daguerre began showing toward the commence-

¹⁹⁷Perkins, p. 41. ¹⁹⁸Rudisill, p. 37.

¹⁹⁹McDermott, Lost Panoramas, p. 6.

ment of 1831:

A typical example was his Midnight Mass at Saint-Etienne-du-Mont. The first view of this picture, daylight, showed an empty church. Gradually day gave way to twilight and then to night. The sanctuary lighted up and the church was seen crowded with people. All this was done within one frame and on one piece of canvas. The effects were achieved by painting the clearer picture on the right side of the canvas and the second on the back, and by careful manipulation of the lighting. Effects of sky and distance, and sometimes of fire and of moonlight, could be obtained also by another device: the use of two or more transparent surfaces on separate frames placed a short distance apart. Sometimes part of these surfaces might be cut away to create highlights.²⁰⁰

In its dioramic effects of lighting, Daguerre's Midnight Mass strikingly resembles Hawthorne's description of the dead Judge, where twilight gradually fades to night; and it is even more startling when we consider that Hawthorne was most probably nescient of these technical developments which preceded his mature works. Yet, one final step was necessary for the dioramic effects utilized by the massive panoramas of the 1840's, and with which Hawthorne was undoubtedly familiar: designing the machinery by which they could move.

²⁰⁰Ibid. For further discussion of these effects, cf. W. Williams, Transparency Painting on Linen. London: Winson and Newton, n.d. McDermott quotes the following from the above mentioned work:

The sky and distance being seen through two transparent surfaces have their tints modified and softened, insomuch, that a surprising aerial effect is obtained. The objects also, on the second surface, being seen through the first, maintain their tone of middle distance, and the boldness of the foreground objects on the front surface, secures for the combined subject a powerful and truthful appearance. . . . By such arrangements, very successful effects of moonlight, of winter scenery, and of fire, are obtainable. In some instances, portions of the middle and back surfaces are cut away, in such forms as will admit of light being thrown on particular spots on the front surface, in order to secure at those places the highest points of light. Thus, in employing two surfaces, we may, by cutting from one, or both surfaces, the quantity corresponding with the extent of the light, throw a bright light upon foreground figures, buildings, or other near objects, and communicate to them a striking reality of relief and brilliancy. Moonlight scenes, with reflection on water, sharp bright lights on the trees, and the ruined tower, all enhanced by the contrast of an expanse of sombre tone and shade, are subjects well adapted for this treatment(pp. 175-76).

In its earliest form, the panorama consisted of nothing more than a circular painting, arranged so that the spectator, placed in the center of the room, saw only the subject portrayed: "The frame around an ordinary landscape or historical scene constantly reminded one that he was after all looking at a picture. The panorama, inclosing him, made him feel that he was in the midst of the scene about him. He was not standing before a work of art but in the very 'presence of nature.' Nothing existed but the picture and the spectator."²⁰¹ In order to achieve this effect, the exhibitor required a circular hall with a conical roof.

In the center of such a room there was provided a platform on which the spectator was placed in order that he might be kept at an even distance from the painting. An opening in the lower part of the roof permitted the light to fall from above and behind on the painting, while a shelter over the head of the spectator allowed him to see the full picture but nothing above it. To accustom him to the change from the outside world the spectator was taken through a dark passage so that the reality of the picture might be doubly effective.²⁰²

As early as 1829, a moving panorama was exhibited in London, the movement simply achieved by unrolling the canvas from one upright roller and winding it back on another. Thus, by 1840 technical advances were more than adequately able to accommodate the huge panoramic canvases which characterized the decade. For example, during the 1840's the St. Louis newspapers mention five panoramas of the Mississippi River which measured anywhere from four hundred and forty yards up to twelve hundred and fifty in length by four in height, and were exhibited as moving newsreels or travelogues.²⁰³ Hence, even the newsreel or travelogue is

²⁰¹Ibid., p. 5. ²⁰²Ibid., pp. 5-6.

²⁰³Ibid., p. vii. In one way or another, all these artists had career connections with St. Louis, two of the panoramas having been painted there, and three of them exhibited in the home town (pp. vii-viii).

no invention of the twentieth century, as many would like to think, for by the 1840's it had already attained an aristocratic demeanor: "It had grown to a length that required an audience to sit for two or three hours while hundred of yards of colorful canvas were slowly unwound from one cylinder and wound onto another."²⁰⁴ And though it did not talk, it provided an elaborate program in which a commentator offered all necessary explanation while "a handsome young lady rendered appropriate accompaniment on the pianoforte."²⁰⁵ Ironically, by a lamentable quirk of history, Henry Lewis' vast panorama of the Mississippi showed late in the summer of 1850 at Salem. Unfortunately, by April of that very same year, Hawthorne had already left Salem, never to return. What marvelous literary chef d'oeuvre might have obtained from such an encounter we shall never know. Nevertheless, by the 1850's the panorama had reached prodigious popularity, and its production was now implemented by the daguerreotype itself. John Wesley Jones' Pantoscope of California was painted not only from artist's sketches, but also from some fifteen hundred daguerreotypes taken by himself; and after showing at Hope Chapel, New York, in November, it was still doing business the following March.²⁰⁶ Finally, in 1861, three years before Hawthorne's death, Peale's grandson, Coleman Sellers, Jr., first showed photography in motion by means of his "Kinematescope."²⁰⁷ Thus, daguerreotype and diorama mutually conditioned the advancement of each other, though each was to retain its own distinctive characteristics throughout its development. Meanwhile, other

²⁰⁴Ibid., p. 7. ²⁰⁵Ibid.

²⁰⁶McDermott, "Gold Rush Movies," California Historical Society Quarterly 33 (March 1954) : 30.

²⁰⁷Sellers, p. 461.

inventions, using the same basic method as the "Phenakistiscope," were to direct the diorama toward both its logical and technological termination in the modern cinema: the "Heliocinegraphe" (1850), the "Zoetrope" (1860), and finally Reynaud's "Praxinoscope Theatre" (1877). According to Perkins, "Reynaud, the inventor of the Praxinoscope, devised a machine to combine his toy with the magic lantern. Using drawings printed on a long roll of paper instead of the usual short and repetitious strip, Reynaud's 'Théâtre Optique' presented a moving picture show to a large audience. This, the earliest form of cinema, was quite independent of photography."²⁰⁸ Thus, the refinement and development of the diorama, with its numerous variations, represents a history in Europe and America which both occasioned the application of photography while it culminated in the "motion picture" as we know it today. Through its manifold effect of lighting, the diorama initiated this inherent movement which eminently characterizes the modern cinema of the twentieth century.

Hawthorne's dioramic lighting, his perception of light in dark, creates an affective depth at its interior, a depth which expresses the very motion characteristic of the perceptual act itself. The images which engage us during the showman's exhibit in "Main-Street," and which animate a past, bringing it to life before our very eyes, simultaneously refute the daguerrean attitude of the critic in the audience, who would always make it a point "to see things precisely as they are."²⁰⁹

In my daily walks along the principal street of my native town, it has often occurred to me, that, if its growth from infancy upward, and the vicissitude of characteristic scenes that have passed along

²⁰⁸Perkins, pp. 41-42.

²⁰⁹"Main-Street," XI, p. 52.

this thoroughfare, during the more than two centuries of its existence, could be presented to the eye in a shifting panorama, it would be an exceedingly effective method of illustrating the march of time. Acting on this idea, I have contrived a certain pictorial exhibition . . . by means of which I propose to call up the multiform and many-colored Past before the spectator, and show him the ghosts of his forefathers, amid a succession of historic incidents, with no greater trouble than the turning of a crank. Be pleased, therefore, my indulgent patrons, to walk into the show-room, and take your seats before yonder mysterious curtain the lamps are trimmed, and shall brighten into noontide sunshine, or fade away in moonlight, or muffle their brilliancy in a November cloud, as the nature of the scene may require; and in short, the exhibition is just ready to commence.²¹⁰

In typically ironic fashion, these images which shift, fade, and come into variously sharpened focus with no more effort than the turning of a crank, represent the pre-reflective way by which we take them up in perception. Like the dwellings of Balch, Norman, and Woodbury—"such is the ingenious contrivance of this piece of pictorial mechanism," that these images "seem to have arisen, at various points of the scene, even while we have been looking at it."²¹¹ Indeed, with Endicott's arrival, "We seem to hear it with our own ears; so perfectly is the action represented in this life-like, this almost magic picture."²¹² Hawthorne's images depend upon their internal visual composition, and the inter-relation of each to the other, to such an extent that they pre-figure the visual aesthetic of the silent movie some fifty years before its inception. The critic of the showman's exhibit, however, refuses to assume a situated point of view whereby "the proper light and shadow will transform the spectacle into quite another thing,"²¹³ even as the Puritan meeting-house fades, before his very eyes, into another image where carpenters are busy in constructing a new one. What Hawthorne is

²¹⁰Ibid., pp. 49-50. ²¹¹Ibid., p. 54.

²¹²Ibid., p. 56. ²¹³Ibid., p. 57.

concerned with, here, is nothing less than the modern cinematic technique of montage or, more precisely, superimposition. The image of the carpenters is literally "supered" over the image of the meeting-house, as it fades into the altered image which succeeds it. Such a radical technique demands a new level of perceptual awareness in order to be apprehended, a level toward which the critic of the exhibit refuses to respond, just as the innovative techniques of D. W. Griffith demanded a revolutionary perceptual level in order to be incorporated into the twentieth-century film aesthetic. In fact, by Hawthorne's time, dioramic effects of lighting were already able to produce such contemporary cinematic effects as the "dissolve." For example, an ad in the St. Louis Missouri Republican for 13 September 1849, commented on Leon Pomarede's panorama of the Mississippi that it would conclude "with a beautiful dissolving view of the Great Fire at St. Louis, on the night of 17th May, representing that awful and terrific conflagration in all its fury Gradually the devouring element subsides, and daylight appears, like a messenger from God, to stay the wreck of destruction."²¹⁴ Similarly, Hawthorne's lighting characteristically exhibits such dioramic effects; as with the death of Judge Pyncheon, the showman in "Main-Street" displays admirable mastery of the dissolve. From the gray light of early morning, "slowly diffusing itself over the scene,"²¹⁵ the image effortlessly shifts to dusk, then night, in the twinkling of an eye.

It will be hardly worth our while to wait two, or it may be three, turnings of the hour-glass, for the conclusion of the lecture. Therefore, by my control over light and darkness, I cause the dusk,

²¹⁴quoted in McDermott, Lost Panoramas, p. 145.

²¹⁵"Main-Street," XI, p. 65.

and then the starless night, to brood over the street; and summon forth again the bellman, with his lantern casting a gleam about his footsteps, to pace wearily from corner to corner, and shout drowsily the hour to drowsy or dreaming ears.²¹⁶

If on an elementary level the diorama initiated the vast repertoire of "shots" peculiar to modern cinema, it is Hawthorne's cinematic imagination itself, nonetheless, which securely places him among the twentieth-century masters of light and shade such as Griffith, Eisenstein, Renoir, Cocteau, Bergman, and Bunuel. His use of indirect lighting creates the interiority of cinematic depth, like the landscape by Claude in The House of the Seven Gables, "where a shadowy and sun-streaked vista penetrated so remotely into an ancient wood, that it would have been no wonder if . . . fancy had lost itself in the picture's bewildering depths."²¹⁷ Hawthorne's klieg-like beams of light glimmer in transfigured shapes which entrap us amidst their evanescent mutability, like the Pyncheon garden whose aspect becomes incarnate in the movement of the lighting which animates it, bringing it to life. At night, this daytime "green play-place of flickering light" transmutes into "a great, wet mass of tangled and broad-leaved shadow."²¹⁸ Equally, the Letter illuminates a world, disclosing the objects of a perceptual consciousness by reason of the transfigurative and ambiguous lighting which emanates from it, and which simultaneously projects its own shape onto the blank screen of the darkened night-sky. Hawthorne's dioramic technique fosters the "interior shot," anticipating Bergman especially in its use of darkened, oscillatory areas within the composition of the image. Typically, Hawthorne manipulates the blackened silhouette against an even more obscurely

²¹⁶Ibid., p. 67. ²¹⁷II, p. 203.

²¹⁸Ibid., pp. 145 and 246, respectively.

darkened background: the figures of Hepzibah, Dimmesdale, Goodman Brown, Chillingworth, Judge Pyncheon, Clifford, Ethan Brand--all appear before us, at one time or another, within the ambiguous and opaque lighting of the diorama, as in a dream. Reciprocally, this obscurity reflects an interior light which radiates from the center out, as the dark countenance of Reverend Burroughs emanates an inward light that "glorifies his figure, in spite of the soil and haggardness of long imprisonment,--in spite of the heavy shadow that must fall on him, while Death is walking by his side."²¹⁹ More abruptly, Hawthorne's lighting disrupts this abstruse world with a dazzling brilliance which blinds us, as when the black sky is invaded by the flaming Letter, "dilating like a luminous eye upon a screen,"²²⁰ or when Pearl's reflection in the armor resplendently beguiles us like the multi-faceted Madeira glass²²¹ through whose brilliant medium we behold the simultaneously-faceted images of a compound arthropod eye, as in a Kandinsky painting.

More often, however, Hawthorne resorts to less obvious effects; such is his use of the "soft focus," whereby an image appears within the toned-down atmosphere or "neutral territory" of a more diffused or "gray medium," as in the blurred cinematic portrait of Hepzibah whose features disappear "behind the warm and misty glow."²²² As Normand remarks, Hawthorne's technique, here, "not only renders the faces indistinct, evasive, but also means that we do not see them until after they have

²¹⁹"Main-Street," XI, p. 76.

²²⁰Normand, p. 311.

²²¹"Fancy's Show Box," IX, p. 221; cf. also, Schubert, p. 25.

²²²The House of the Seven Gables, II, pp. 117 and 106, respectively.

passed across the screen: it filters out the details, the features, and then allows them to settle gradually into their final forms."²²³ Thus, like the portrait of her ancestor upon which Hepzibah gazes:

In one sense, this picture had almost faded into the canvas, and hidden itself behind the duskiness of age; in another, she could not but fancy that it had been growing more prominent, and strikingly expressive, ever since her earliest familiarity with it, as a child. For, while the physical outline and substance were darkening away from the beholder's eye, the bold, hard, and, at the same time, indirect character of the man seemed to be brought out in a kind of spiritual relief.²²⁴

As with the pre-reflective gaze prior to the perception of color as such, these "inward traits" insinuate themselves "into the essence of the picture," and are seen only "after the superficial coloring has been rubbed off by time."²²⁵ In conjunction with the above technique, Hawthorne deftly employed the "dissolve," as when, for example, the showman in "Main-Street" executes a temporal transition without abrupt spatial displacement: "Under cover of a mist that has settled over the scene, a few years flit by, and escape our notice. As the atmosphere becomes transparent, we perceive a decrepit grandsire, hobbling along the street."²²⁶ Conversely, with the dissolve, Hawthorne has simultaneously mastered the "fade:"

Behold here a change, wrought in the twinkling of an eye, like an incident in a tale of magic, even while your observation has been fixed upon the scene. The Main-street has vanished out of sight. In its stead appears a wintry waste of snow, with the sun just peeping over it, cold and bright, and tinging the white expanse with the faintest and most ethereal rose-color. This is the Great Snow of 1717, famous for the mountain-drifts in which it buried the whole country.²²⁷

²²³Normand, p. 312.

²²⁴The House of the Seven Gables, II, p. 58.

²²⁵Ibid., p. 59. ²²⁶XI, p. 79. ²²⁷Ibid., p. 80.

In "The Wives of the Dead," the indistinct and bulky silhouette of Mary, hovering over the slumbering Margaret, temporarily merges with the massive shadows reflected on the lantern-lit wall, before fading into the darkness of the night.²²⁸ Moreover, with the fade, Hawthorne also discovered the "cross-fade:" chapter III of The Scarlet Letter fades out as Hester is returned to the prison. "With the same hard demeanour, she was led back to prison, and vanished from the public gaze within its iron-clamped portal. It was whispered, by those who peered after her, that the scarlet letter threw a lurid gleam along the dark passage-way of the interior."²²⁹ Her image immediately returns at the commencement of chapter IV in sharp focus: "After her return to the prison, Hester Prynne was found to be in a state of nervous excitement that demanded constant watchfulness."²³⁰ And shortly thereafter, as the Physician is admitted to her cell, Hawthorne zooms in for a more arresting close-up: feeling her pulse, Chillingworth gazed into Hester's eyes with a calm and intent scrutiny, "a gaze that made her heart shrink and shudder, because so familiar, and yet so strange and cold."²³¹ Elsewhere, Hawthorne employs the cross-fade to incorporate chapters XI and XII, as Dimmesdale disappears into the night ("he stole softly down the staircase, undid the door, and issued forth"), only to return beside the pillory the very next instant ("Walking in the shadow of a dream, as it were, and perhaps actually under the influence of a species of somnambulism Mr. Dimmesdale reached the

²²⁸XI, p. 199.

²²⁹The Scarlet Letter, I, p. 69.

²³⁰Ibid., p. 70.

²³¹Ibid., p. 72.

spot, where, now so long since, Hester Prynne had lived through her first hour of public ignominy"),²³² And again, Hawthorne integrates the conclusion of chapter XIV with the opening segment of chapter XV as Chillingworth, with a wave of his hand, recedes from Hester to gather herbs, and then returns in sharp focus, decrepitly bent, nearly crawling along the ground.²³³

Even then, Hawthorne's repertoire of cinematic shots is by no means exhausted. The "traveling shot" which follows Robin through the labyrinthian streets of the town²³⁴ also attends Kenyon through the serpentine streets of Rome at Carnival time.²³⁵ Hawthorne's traveling shots naturally capture the visual frenzy of one of his favorite themes, the procession, although he reciprocally employs a stationary camera placed above the scene in order to apprehend the larger, more general pattern of a processional image. Placed in a window, for example, the stationary downward shot permits the camera eye to seize the motion of those objects which frenetically pass it by: from the "arched window," Clifford views the microscopic activity of the town as part of the larger macrocosm of a world--a vision which tempts him toward a greater involvement with humanity by virtue of its homogeneous constitution:

As a mere object of sight, nothing is more deficient in picturesque features than a procession, seen in its passage through narrow streets. The spectator feels it to be fool's play, when he can distinguish the tedious common-place of each man's visage In order to become majestic, it should be viewed from some vantage-

²³²Ibid., pp. 146 and 147, respectively.

²³³Ibid., pp. 174-75; see also, Normand, p. 325.

²³⁴"My Kinsman, Major Molineaux," XI, pp. 209-12, 215-16, 219.

²³⁵The Marble Faun, IV, pp. 444-54.

point, as it rolls its slow and long array through the centre of a wide plain, or the stateliest public square of a city; for then, by its remoteness, it melts all the petty personalities, of which it is made up, into one broad mass of existence.²³⁶

Similarly, from his window, Giovanni spies the lovely Beatrice and conspires to join her in the garden;²³⁷ from the steeple, the narrator distinguishes various processions converging at right angles from two different streets, and likewise discerns the ironic situation of a lover, an old man, and his daughters;²³⁸ from the balcony, Hilda discovers Kenyon as the crowd of revelers repetitiously flows beneath her.²³⁹ At other times, Hawthorne reverses this precipitous angle of the camera, preferring to shoot upward, as when the camera assumes Kenyon's point of view, gazing toward the balcony on which Hilda appears,²⁴⁰ or the monkey's point of view, turning his wrinkled visage toward the arched window from whence Phoebe and Clifford watch the organ-grinder's performance, a point of view or attitude, moreover, that mimics the organ-grinder's previous pecuniary observation ("With his quick professional eye, he took note of the two faces watching him from the arched window, and, opening his instrument, began to scatter its melodies abroad").²⁴¹

The "long shot" enables Hawthorne to alter dramatic distance and involvement by forcing the spectator to gaze even more intensely: toward

²³⁶The House of the Seven Gables, II, p. 165.

²³⁷"Rappaccini's Daughter," X, pp. 96-97.

²³⁸"Sights from a Steeple," IX, pp. 194-97.

²³⁹The Marble Faun, IV, p. 453.

²⁴⁰*Ibid.*, pp. 450-52.

²⁴¹The House of the Seven Gables, II, pp. 164 and 162, respectively.

the middle ground, Sir Richard Saltonstall greets Governor Winthrop in the street; the image blurs and, toward the background, further down the same street, the camera focuses on Emanuel Downing and his son; then even further back it glimpses the eccentric mannerisms of Nathaniel Ward.²⁴² In like fashion, the entire square recedes from the close-up of its own image reflected off the breastplate of John Endicott, just as Endicott himself not only integrates a spatial long shot of the square as its central object, but also determines the vanishing point of a temporal retrospect historically leading to the Revolutionary "foreground;"²⁴³ Hester emerges from the prison gloom into the crowd of Puritans at a "respectable" distance which not only amplifies her isolation from humanity, but also encourages us to ascertain a closer look;²⁴⁴ Donatello regresses toward the gleam and shadow of the forest paths within the Villa Borghese while awaiting his tryst with Miriam, just as the personified figure of Death invisibly anticipates the unsuspected wanderer during the full heat of summer at the end of a dim vista;²⁴⁵ the Gray Champion suddenly appears at the end of a deep perspective, "a paved solitude, between lofty edifices," before advancing toward the Governor and his party.²⁴⁶ At the other extreme, Hawthorne's cinematic vision selects a close-up or "tight shot" whenever the dramatic action dictates an altered level of consciousness: following the Gray Champion's advance, the

²⁴²"Main-Street," XI, pp. 61-62.

²⁴³"Endicott and the Red Cross," IX, pp. 434, 436, and 441, respectively.

²⁴⁴The Scarlet Letter, I, p. 52.

²⁴⁵The Marble Faun, IV, pp. 74 and 73, respectively.

²⁴⁶"The Gray Champion," IX, p. 14.

Governor and his party hastily bring their mounts forward, "as if they would have pressed their snorting and affrighted horses right against the hoary apparition;"²⁴⁷ the apprehensive faces of Leonard Doane and his sister accost the narrator's inquisitive gaze before he leads the fated pair to the newly made grave;²⁴⁸ the frozen figure at the entrance of a cave repulses the glance of the farmer who uncovers the mystery of its forbidding frown;²⁴⁹ the Reverend Lynn slowly issues from the obscure forest into the sunlit street, gradually drawing nearer until we virtually overhear him memorizing his sermon out loud;²⁵⁰ the half-length image of Ethan Brand touching his heart in a "medium shot," instantaneously "zooms" to a single detail of the face as he breaks into scornful laughter--a whale-sized mouth protrudes to devour us like Jonah;²⁵¹ the meteor encroaches so palpably close upon the minister's field of vision, "that it seemed still to remain painted on the darkness" long after it had vanished, "with an effect as if the street and all things else were at once annihilated."²⁵² Perhaps Hawthorne's most affective tight shot, however, attends the death of Judge Pyncheon; it significantly concludes that phantasmagoric scene, and composes the final image of the Judge before returning to the street outside, at dawn: "And there we see a fly--one of your common house-flies, such as are always buzzing on the

²⁴⁷Ibid., p. 15.

²⁴⁸"Alice Doane's Appeal," XI, p. 275.

²⁴⁹"The Man of Adamant," XI, p. 168.

²⁵⁰"Main-Street," XI, p. 66.

²⁵¹"Ethan Brand," XI, p. 87.

²⁵²The Scarlet Letter, I, p. 156.

window-pane--which has smelt out Governor Pyncheon, and alights now on his forehead, now on his chin, and now, Heaven help us, is creeping over the bridge of his nose, towards the would-be chief-magistrate's wide-open eyes!"²⁵³ Hawthorne not only deploys his camera in imaginative space, but utilizes the very syntactic nature of the written word as well; after abruptly jumping from forehead to chin, and then to nose, Hawthorne's syntactic "eye" intersperses three hyphenated words before landing on the eyes--would-be: chief-magistrate's: wide-open: eyes. To the vacant stare of the dead Judge, this focused speck of a fly no longer even constitutes the terrifying shadow flitting about at the periphery of a visual field. The camera reciprocates this vacancy: freeze frame--a compound arthropod eye stares into nothingness!

Hawthorne often balances the internal composition of his image in order to emphasize the significant relation of its parts: "But the one edifice, which gives the pledge of permanence to this bold enterprise, is seen at the central point of the picture. There stands the meeting-house, a small structure, low-roofed, without a spire;"²⁵⁴ "Ever since sunrise, Daniel Fairfield has been standing on the steps of the meeting-house, with a halter about his neck . . . Dorothy Talby is chained to a post at the corner of Prison Lane . . . while, through the bars of that great wooden cage, in the centre of the scene, we discern either a human being or a wild beast, or both in one, whom this public infamy causes to roar;"²⁵⁵ "hemmed in by the dark wall of the forest, arose a rock, bearing

²⁵³The House of the Seven Gables, II, p. 283.

²⁵⁴"Main-Street," XI, p. 57.

²⁵⁵Ibid., p. 66.

some rude, natural resemblance either to an altar or a pulpit, and surrounded by four blazing pines, their tops aflame, their stems untouched, like candles at an evening meeting;"²⁵⁶ "Next, moving slowly, with a confused clatter of hoofs on the pavement, rode a party of mounted gentlemen, the central figure being Sir Edmund Andros;"²⁵⁷ "The central object, in the mirrored picture, was an edifice of humble architecture, with neither steeple nor bell to proclaim it,--what nevertheless it was,--the house of prayer;"²⁵⁸ "And there stood the minister, with his hand over his heart; and Hester Prynne, with the embroidered letter glimmering on her bosom; and little Pearl, herself a symbol, and the connecting link between those two."²⁵⁹ By ordering and balancing his imagery from within, Hawthorne subtly leads us from "representation" to "composition;"²⁶⁰ the intensity of perception increases in direct proportion to the augmented demands of the pattern. Through the interplay of human experience, Hawthorne arrives at the structural elements of a phenomenon, and correspondingly composes these elements into visuals which most affectively structure the human emotions from which they derive. Furthermore, the structural composition of the image itself often discloses not only the camera-narrator's attitude toward his audience as well as himself, but also toward the art work. For example, the triadic image of Pearl upon the scaffold connects her to both Hester and

²⁵⁶"Young Goodman Brown," X, p. 84.

²⁵⁷"The Gray Champion," IX, p. 12.

²⁵⁸"Endicott and the Red Cross," IX, p. 434.

²⁵⁹The Scarlet Letter, I, p. 154.

²⁶⁰Cf. Eisenstein, The Film Sense, p. 192.

Dimmesdale, not only as the "focal point" of their relationship, but also as the expressive center of Hawthorne's tone throughout the work. Specifically, it is through Pearl that we discover Hawthorne's attitude toward the novel. In this case, the history or "construction" of Pearl is grounded in the very same law by which the art work itself is determined. Thus, when Hawthorne raises the question whether she has any discoverable principle of Being, it is, most simply, rhetorical. The question has already been answered; she is the Letter in another form, "the scarlet letter endowed with life!"²⁶¹ Moreover, as an art work Pearl is neither subject nor object, but abides somewhere between the two: she is both. In lavishing her time and ingenuity upon the Letter, Hester succeeds in creating "an analogy between the object of her affection, and the emblem of her guilt and torture. But, in truth, Pearl was the one, as well as the other; and only in consequence of that identity had Hester contrived so perfectly to represent the scarlet letter in her appearance."²⁶² The labor of art, the labor of childbirth, art work and child, both are products of flesh, blood, and sweat. Hence, against the Romantic notion of inspiration, Hawthorne, through the "mask" of Pearl, blasphemously remarks: "I have no Heavenly Father!"²⁶³ Both art work and child are grounded in the finitude of masculine and feminine principles; that is, Being. Like Virginia Woolf's Orlando, the Haunted Mind is androgynous. As with Pearl, the art work requires that its "unquiet elements" be somehow "soothed away" or integrated into a larger structure before it can accommodate a world.²⁶⁴ In such a way, each partakes of "depth, too,

²⁶¹The Scarlet Letter, I, p. 102.

²⁶²Ibid. ²⁶³Ibid., p. 98. ²⁶⁴Ibid., pp. 94-95.

as well as variety."²⁶⁵ In typically ironic fashion, Hawthorne thus declares Pearl to be "the richest heiress of her day, in the New World."²⁶⁶ Indeed, she truly is the first great novel to be crafted on North American shores; it remained for another to refine and send her to foreign shores. When we read in the concluding pages that Pearl grew up an heiress and traveled abroad, "we realize that we can pursue her further adventures through the novels of Henry James."²⁶⁷

If, however, Hawthorne's internal composition affectively structures the image and subsequently determines the tone of the entire work, it is his manner of accommodating the relationship between images which most significantly constitutes the revolutionary aspect of his oeuvre. In the juxtaposition or, more properly speaking, the "transposition" of his images, we find Hawthorne's brilliant cinematic vision most pronounced. If his internal composition shapes the significant content of the image, it simultaneously forms those images which precede and succeed it, for the sequence of his imagery is predicated on the pre-reflective motion of perception, that motion in the visual field which "makes sense" of the objects it discovers. As Goethe remarked: "In nature we never see anything isolated, but everything in connection with something else which is before it, beside it, under it, and over it."²⁶⁸ Hawthorne's cinematic "shots" constantly alter in proportion to the extent of their discovery, for they continuously suit or accommodate the transfigurative motion of perception, the discernment of variously changing

²⁶⁵Ibid., p. 90. ²⁶⁶Ibid., p. 261. ²⁶⁷Levin, p. 78.

²⁶⁸Conversations with Eckermann, 1825, quoted in Eisenstein, Film Form, trans. Jay Leyda (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc., Harvest Book, 1949), p. 45.

figures against an indeterminate field or background. Thus, the "recognition" which initiates chapter III of The Scarlet Letter succinctly and compendiously describes the significant distinction between being conscious, which always partially includes the "self" as object, and the concomitant shift to perceptual consciousness, which necessarily excludes the "self" in absolute surrender to the object being discovered. At the beginning of chapter III, Hawthorne completely reverses the dominant point of view in chapter II; from being an object of consciousness and observation in her own right, Hester becomes a subject of perception, a camera eye which opens onto the surrounding scene in order to articulate it situatedly: "From this intense consciousness of being the object of severe and universal observation, the wearer of the scarlet letter was at length relieved by discerning, on the outskirts of the crowd, a figure which irresistibly took possession of her thoughts."²⁶⁹ This "double-exposure" which concludes one chapter and, at the same time, opens the next, universally characterizes the transpositional nature of Hawthorne's imagery and its subsequent motion. Like the modern art work, the succession of Hawthorne's images defies the daguerrean or allegorical framing of life, both perceptually and ontologically, by making the spectator a participant in the creation of a world. By super-imposing specific and individually situated points of view, Hawthorne's work, like that of the cubists, transcends the isolated, daguerrean frame and enters onto the world itself.

In the diorama, Hawthorne had already discovered montage. Hawthorne's mind, of course, had always delighted in the juxtaposition of

²⁶⁹The Scarlet Letter, I, p. 60.

two apparently unrelated things to produce a new third thing. In a journey to Shelburne Falls, 31 August 1838, which necessitated trans-
 versing Green Mountain, he remarked: "It was chill and bleak on the
 mountain-top, and a fire was burning in the bar-room."²⁷⁰ His specific
 use of the conjunction "and" reveals his facility to accommodate
 disparately concurrent images. Coincidentally or not, the passage
 immediately follows his description of the old Dutchman, who travels the
 country with his diorama, in a wagon: "We looked through the glass
 orifices of his machine, while he exhibited a succession of the very
 worst scratchings and daubings that can be imagined."²⁷¹ And Hawthorne
 concludes the passage with an image that rivals Griffith's first
 cinematic close-up of a huge "severed" head smiling at the public for the
 first time, which caused such panic in the theatre:²⁷² "When the last
 picture had been exhibited, he caused a country boor, who stood gaping
 beside the machine, to put his head within it, and thrust his tongue out.
 The head becoming gigantic, a singular effect was produced."²⁷³ Else-
 where, speaking of pigs, Hawthorne once observed: "I suppose it is the
 knowledge that these four grunTERS are doomed to die within two or three
 weeks, that gives them a sort of awfulness in my conception; it makes me
 contrast their present gross substance of fleshly life with the nothing-
 ness speedily to come."²⁷⁴ The superimposition of temporal frames within

²⁷⁰The American Notebooks, VIII, p. 131.

²⁷¹*Ibid.*, p. 130.

²⁷²Béla Balázs, Theory of the Film, trans. Edith Bone (London: Dennis Dobson, 1952), p. 35; see also, Perkins, pp. 72-73.

²⁷³The American Notebooks, VIII, p. 130.

²⁷⁴*Ibid.*, p. 204.

the mind's conception only serves to reaffirm the ek-static present in which perception is grounded. Hawthorne's dioramic gaze naturally bolstered this kind of contrast visually as well. In a passage strikingly reminiscent of Eisenstein's example of montage taken from Ambrose Bierce's "The Inconsolable Widow," Hawthorne relates an incident in which his son, Julian, arrives at a similar kind of conclusion from the juxtaposition of two separate images. Eisenstein quotes the following passage from Bierce, previously noted in chapter II:

A Woman in widow's weeds was weeping upon a grave.
 "Console yourself, madam," said a Sympathetic Stranger.
 "Heaven's mercies are infinite. There is another man somewhere,
 besides your husband, with whom you can still be happy."
 "There was," she sobbed--"there was, but this is his grave."²⁷⁵

Hawthorne notes the following remark, made by his son while looking through a series of drawings and engravings: "'What's that crying for his father?,' asks he, looking at a picture of a widow and her son."²⁷⁶ Both examples suggest a new image from the juxtaposition of two previous ones. Speaking of Julian, Hawthorne continues: "He brings me Flaxman's drawings of Juno and Minerva going to assist the Greeks, in a car, drawn through the celestial regions by two horses; and calls it 'Horses running so hard to get to the barn.'"²⁷⁷ Julian's "interpretation" of these images suggests conclusions similar to those which Eisenstein proposes in his

²⁷⁵quoted in Eisenstein, The Film Sense, p. 5.

²⁷⁶The American Notebooks, VIII, p. 416.

²⁷⁷Ibid.; cf. also: "Little Julian . . . now sits with a slate and pencil, drawing as he says a bird--and next, a chair--both objects being represented by a similar scratch"(p. 409): "Children always seem to like a very wide scope for imagination, as respects their babies, or indeed any playthings; this cushion, or a rolling-pin, or a nine-pin, or any casual thing, seems to answer the purpose of a doll, better than the nicest little wax figure that the art of man can contrive"(p. 410). Similarly, compare Hawthorne's description of Pearl: "The unlikeliest materials, a

works on film. In so far as the new image is qualitatively distinguishable from each component element viewed separately, it reduces "actuality" to "suggestion."²⁷⁸ The new image is in no way fixed, or ready-made, but arises from the process itself; thus, montage transforms the representational into the presentational, obliging the spectator to create the new image himself.²⁷⁹ Because it transcends or transforms the individually framed images which produce it, montage creates the illusion of motion--a cinematic phenomenon which exists "on the higher levels of film structure as well as on the very threshold of film illusion, for 'persistence of vision' from frame to frame of the film strip is what creates the illusion of film movement."²⁸⁰ Hawthorne employed the literary equivalent of montage in order to create a similar kind of motion in the mind's eye.

Hawthorne's images constantly manipulate the affective distance between spectator and scene not only as a function of space, but also in time. In addition to his various cinematic shots which, as we have seen, include such superimpositional techniques as the fade and cross-fade, he also regulates and modifies the tempo by which they appear. In a passage remarkably similar to Merleau-Ponty's discussion of pure transition, Hawthorne once observed of a bird in flight: "Then the shadow of a bird flitted across a sunny spot; there is a peculiar impressiveness in this mode of being made acquainted with the flight of a bird; it affects the

stick, a bunch of rags, a flower, were the puppets of Pearl's witchcraft, and, without undergoing any outward change, became spiritually adapted to whatever drama occupied the stage of her inner world" (The Scarlet Letter, I, p. 95).

²⁷⁸Eisenstein, The Film Sense, pp. 8 and 24, respectively.

²⁷⁹Ibid., pp. 30-31.

²⁸⁰Ibid., p. 80.

mind more than if the eye had actually seen it."²⁸¹ Speaking of the thematization of movement and its subsequent negation of a pure transition, Merleau-Ponty explains:

The something in transit which we have recognized as necessary to the constitution of a change is to be defined only in terms of the particular manner of its 'passing'. For example, the bird which flies across my garden is, during the time that it is moving, merely a greyish power of flight and, generally speaking, we shall see that things are defined primarily in terms of their 'behaviour' and not in terms of their static 'properties'.²⁸²

Perhaps the most analogous visual example of cinematic motion in the ordinary world obtained, for Hawthorne, from seeing an obscure image flit across a doorway or window. Such images, projected in motion against their functional "screen," frequently appear in the notebooks: watching the window of a house, Hawthorne observes, "occasionally, a lady's figure, either seated, or appearing with a flitting grace, or dimly manifest farther within the obscurity of the room;" and elsewhere he remarks, "In the interior region of the stable, everything is dim and undefined; half traceable outlines of stalls; sometimes the shadowy aspect of a horse, with a man in a white frock, and therefore more distinguishable, leading him along."²⁸³ Such attention to transition securely influenced Hawthorne's editorial technique of "cutting" and "splicing" the tempo of his narration. Sylph Etherege gazes at the superimposition of her own features with those of her lover (animus and anima) in the miniature portrait which she holds in her hand. Suddenly the focus blurs, the features change to bold, acrimonious strokes betraying a charcoal

²⁸¹The American Notebooks, VIII, p. 247.

²⁸²Phenomenology, p. 275.

²⁸³The American Notebooks, VIII, pp. 497 and 504, respectively.

sketch of her lover's secret face;²⁸⁴ disillusioned by this revelation, she resolves to seek the true image that she loves elsewhere, in death: the eye of the camera stares out into infinity.²⁸⁵ Hawthorne's camera-eye penetrates the interior texture of a world whose objects disclose the various "rhythms" of perceptual consciousness by virtue of their metamorphic displacement in space. The camera recreates perceptual consciousness in its endeavor to complete a situated and intentional "gestalt" via a series of temporally displaced figures which articulate a composite, yet indeterminate, field. Amidst a sequence of moving shots which firmly establish a particular setting, for example, Hawthorne's dioramic gaze will often come to a complete halt, permitting various "figures" to enter its "field:" after surveying the crowd which surrounds the prison, the camera freezes on the jail itself, as Hester emerges into the open air with Pearl;²⁸⁶ following its investigation of the darkened parlor, where the dead Judge slumps in his ancestral arm-chair while Hepzibah stares around the room from its threshold, the camera pauses as Clifford appears before her, obliquely emerging from within the room's interior, reflecting in his pale countenance the dark secret at its center;²⁸⁷ from the human commotion surrounding him along the road where he sleeps, David Swan remains the single, stationary figure of the solitary scene he so forcefully disrupts at the beginning.²⁸⁸

Hawthorne's images continually increase or decrease in tempo,

²⁸⁴"Sylph Etherege," XI, p. 116. Cf. also, Normand, p. 317.

²⁸⁵Normand, p. 317.

²⁸⁶The Scarlet Letter, I, p. 52.

²⁸⁷The House of the Seven Gables, II, p. 249.

²⁸⁸"David Swan," IX, p. 184.

displaying the pre-reflectively supple time and space of cinematic consciousness; his method of composition thus recreates perceptual consciousness itself. As Eisenstein has said of compositional embodiment in film, it asserts its own unique affect upon its perceivers, "not only because it is raised to the level of natural phenomena, but also because the laws of its construction are simultaneously the laws governing those who perceive the work."²⁸⁹ In "The Haunted Mind," Hawthorne's camera presents a stepped-up sequence of "supered" shots which create the depths of reverie from whence they derive;²⁹⁰ likewise, the supered images which revolve around the static image of Hester on the pillory, consolidate a rapid series of tableaux which reconstructs the associative process of memory,²⁹¹ just as the story itself moves through "a series of tableaux in which everything seems to stand still;"²⁹² the swift succession of cross-cuts shifting from room to house, house to street, and then back again, in "The Wives of the Dead," solidifies the hectic activity of the night, pre-figuring the final "freeze-frame" in close-up of a tear trickling down a cheek;²⁹³ the hasty progression of images instantaneously fabricated by Fancy, Memory, and Conscience in Mr. Smith's mind, convey the ineffable complexity and ambiguity of life,²⁹⁴ "almost as if a modern psychologist were putting us through one

²⁸⁹Film Form, p. 161.

²⁹⁰IX, pp. 306-07.

²⁹¹The Scarlet Letter, I, p. 58.

²⁹²Mark Van Doren, Nathaniel Hawthorne (New York: The Viking Press, 1949; reprint ed., Westport: Greenwood Press, 1972), p. 164.

²⁹³XI, p. 199.

²⁹⁴"Fancy's Show Box," IX, pp. 224-25.

of his tests in thematic apperception."²⁹⁵ More often, however, Hawthorne's visual effects do not demand fast cutting. Indeed, in many instances fast cutting would ruin the desired effect, for the movement is frequently located within the image and virtually demands a fixed, consistent camera-viewpoint.²⁹⁶ For example, with the escape of Clifford and Hepzibah on the train, Hawthorne more properly creates his affective visual tension by a sequence of long takes, rather than a series of brief, sporadic cuts which the locomotion superficially seems to demand. While Clifford's eyes take in the rapidly passing scenes that beseege him, Hepzibah's mind's eye returns to the iron fetters of the House, that ubiquitously fixed idea from which she cannot escape.

With miles and miles of varied scenery between, there was no scene for her, save the seven old gable-peaks, with their moss, and the tuft of weeds in one of the angles, and the shop-window, and a customer shaking the door, and compelling the little bell to jingle fiercely, but without disturbing Judge Pyncheon! This one old house was everywhere! It transported its great, lumbering bulk, with more than railroad speed, and set itself phlegmatically down on whatever spot she glanced at.²⁹⁷

Moreover, as the world races past these "two owls" ("Everything was unfixed from its age-long rest, and moving at whirlwind speed in a direction opposite to their own"), Hawthorne juxtaposes the interior life of the railroad car, wherein decelerated long shots of passengers engaged by such everyday past-times as reading, penny-papers, and ball off-set the accelerated montage of images which beleaguer them from without.²⁹⁸ Immediately thereafter, Hawthorne abridges both interior and

²⁹⁵Levin, p. 44.

²⁹⁶Cf. Durgnat, p. 35.

²⁹⁷The House of the Seven Gables, II, p. 258.

²⁹⁸Ibid., pp. 256 and 257, respectively.

exterior motion to a stand-still, as Clifford attracts the conversation of a passenger. Then, just as suddenly, the image once again shifts; we cut to a long shot outside the car, as the train comes to a stop and Clifford and Hepzibah terminate their giddy flight for a more stable perch on solid ground. Instantly, from the center of the track, a stable camera hypnotically gazes toward a vast infinity, and theoretically swallows the incompatibly perpendicular lines which threaten to explode the transparent perspective of a single horizon. The train, with all of its interior life, gradually recedes toward this external distance, rapidly lessening to a point which, in another moment, vanishes altogether.²⁹⁹ Clifford and Hepzibah re-enter a static prospectus framed by the House. The two owls become eagles.

Hawthorne's strong, eloquent arrangements between successive images, and within the single image (*mise-en-scène*),³⁰⁰ subsequently invites a further stylistic comparison with Eisenstein, especially his later style in *Ivan the Terrible*, where he had already evolved away from a rapid "cutting" style to a slow, elaborate pictorialism, stylistically nearer to Dreyer and Sternberg.³⁰¹ What Durgnat says of Eisenstein seems equally true of Hawthorne; both tend to think of each screen picture "as a little composition of its own, so deliberate and strong that one becomes aware of each image, organized as a whole, following and replacing its predecessor, with a little impact. The pictures are joined by their 'collision', which sets a kind of solid, hard-edged mood, much as brushstrokes set mood in painting."³⁰² Like the later Eisenstein,

²⁹⁹Ibid., p. 266. ³⁰⁰Cf. Durgnat, p. 35.

³⁰¹Ibid., p. 36. ³⁰²Ibid., p. 48.

Hawthorne's predominant tempo is slow; slow motion, delayed and deliberate cutting, these most suitably accommodate his preferred theme of the processional. Indeed, the more a work benefits from rapid change of image, the less it can draw on the equally expressive possibilities of change within the image.³⁰³ Hawthorne's proclivity toward slower tempos reflects not only his individual style, but the significance of his vision as well. By controlling the pace of his work, by constructing a coherent emphasis, Hawthorne simultaneously shapes his theme. The more closely he adjusts the relationship among the parts, the more intimate and personal the work becomes. Yet, in so far as Hawthorne's personal style reflects a way of seeing, it similarly encompasses a way of showing; it not only embodies his relationship to characters and objects, but also defines his relationship to us. If point of view determines the correlation between foreground and background, it is more readily understandable why Hawthorne prefers a slower movement between successive images, rather than a rapid cutting style, for it gives him more time to create an ambience, to animate the scene, to linger, to suggest--the speed, in short, which allows the most extensive interchange between his foreground figures and background objects. Through a series of reflected ricochets, the figures of Pearl, Endicott, Goodman Brown, and Ethan Brand variously reciprocate the armor, the breastplate, the fire, the lime-kiln, as these objects, in turn, define the figures they illumine.

To the extent that Hawthorne's dioramic darkness creates a center around which a world coheres, it simultaneously discloses the motion of

³⁰³Perkins, p. 115.

pre-reflective intentionality at the very heart of the perceptual act which allows a subject to be "missing" from himself in order to primordially dwell within the fabric of the world. I am always absent from myself at the center of Being, for if it were otherwise I could never inhabit a world as such; the interior of Being osmotically engages both subject and object in a single, "consubstantial" involvement. In a journal entry for 9 October 1841, Hawthorne descriptively implied this kind of perceptual engagement between a subject and his world: "Now, every tree seems to define and embody the sunshine. And yet, the spectator can diffuse himself throughout the scene, and receive one impression from all this painted glory."³⁰⁴ In so far as "seeing" is an act of the body, and not the mind, vision is always conjoined to movement, and prefigured in it. "What would vision be without eye movement? And how could the movement of the eyes bring things together if the movement were blind?"³⁰⁵ The inauthentic technological perception would have it precisely this way, for it conceives of perception as a function of thought which sets before the mind a representational picture of the world. Consequently, its only retreat is towards the invisible, where it finds safety and salvation from an incarnate world whose ambiguity it cannot tolerate. Authentic perception, on the other hand, opens itself onto a world whenever it is genuinely "looking," and thereby holds things around itself from an interior depth which is never merely a transparently measureable displacement in external space. When Hawthorne measures the Letter, its mathematical length reveals nothing. "Certainly, there was

³⁰⁴The American Notebooks, VIII, p. 213.

³⁰⁵Merleau-Ponty, Primacy, p. 162.

some deep meaning in it, most worthy of interpretation, and which, as it were, streamed forth from the mystic symbol, subtly communicating itself to my sensibilities, but evading the analysis of my mind."³⁰⁶ Within this expressive, heteroclitical space, the space of the heart, the dialectic of inside and out congeals to an ambiguous locality wherein "the mind has lost its geometrical homeland and the spirit is drifting."³⁰⁷ Amidst the world of Hawthorne's work, this interior and visible motion transpires within and between the images themselves, and designates the way in which they come to articulate the perceptual constancy of that world. Hawthorne's shadow and light, grounded in the finitude of an inclusive darkness, interpenetrate one another to such an extent that they autonomously express this double space of Being as it is realized in the double-horizoned structure of the perceptual act itself. The space of Hawthorne's imagery always constitutes both an interior concavity and an exterior convexity; the cave and mirror reflect the outside world "like an eye that has become, in its turn, a projector and is able to people the entire universe with its images in the manner of a magic lantern."³⁰⁸ Hawthorne's imagery is thus clearly cinematic; its interior motion reflects an intentional subjectivity beneath perception which not only accounts for the birth of a world, but also sustains the reality of that world. He anticipated the modern cinema by more than half a century, and in that process he prefigured the articulation of an affective spatial depth wherein perception primordially transpires.

³⁰⁶The Scarlet Letter, I, p. 31.

³⁰⁷Bachelard, Poetics of Space, p. 218.

³⁰⁸Normand, p. 154.

Thus Hawthorne's dioramic gaze displaces daguerrean representation with cinematic composition, pattern in motion.³⁰⁹ His descriptive technique transcends the representational nature of allegory, exemplifying Clive Bell's statement that "The representative element in a work of art may or may not be harmful; always it is irrelevant."³¹⁰ As a result, Hawthorne's use of montage creates an expressive space whereby individual figures and objects come to life by virtue of the motion which articulates them. As V.I. Pudovkin has remarked in his Film Technique and Film Acting: "every object, taken from a given viewpoint and shown on the screen to spectators, is a dead object, even though it has moved before the camera Only if the object be placed together among a number of separate objects, only if it be presented as part of a synthesis of different separate visual images, is it endowed with filmic life."³¹¹ Hawthorne's dioramic gaze pierces the prejudiced and conventional barriers of the technological world-view, for in its exploration of physical reality it exposes a world never seen before. As Siegfried Kracauer suggests: "physical nature has been persistently veiled by ideologies relating its manifestations to some total aspect of the universe The truly decisive reason for the elusiveness of physical reality is the habit of abstract thinking we have acquired under the reign of science and technology."³¹² Hawthorne's cinematic vision

³⁰⁹Cf. Vachel Lindsay, The Art of the Moving Picture, rev. ed. New York: The Macmillan Co., 1922.

³¹⁰Art (London: Chatto and Windus, 1923), p. 25.

³¹¹London: Vision Press, 1958, p. 25.

³¹²Theory of Film: The Redemption of Physical Reality (New York: Oxford University Press, 1965), pp. 299-300.

consistently proclaims reality to be more inclusive than any single view, for it must always remain primordially ambiguous in its opacity. Just as any dialogue is grounded in silence, and punctuates that ground with its meaning or significance, so Hawthorne's dioramic gaze is grounded in darkness, and intermittently pierces that dark with its ambiguously groping disclosures. Image and object become one in the pre-reflective gaze which articulates them.

Hawthorne's cinematic vision recreates the pure transition of the visual field in order to explore reality face to face against the world. Because it negotiates a world close-up, and not in terms of a uniformly fixed perspective, it mutually and proportionately conceals whatever it reveals. Hawthorne's dioramic gaze thus frees the image from its frame and, like the modern art work, matriculates it onto the world. Unlike the technological loco-motion of the train, which merely represents a transference in geographical space, this dioramic gaze reconstructs the intentional motion of a percipient and thereby accommodates a space both physical and virtual in which object and subject inclusively constitute that ambiguous reality called "world." With Hawthorne, therefore, it is never a question of "objective" space, but rather its subjectively heteroclitical equivalent which continuously refutes a homologously framed geometric-mathematic transparency devoid of Being. Light and shadow, external and internal world inosculate each other and simultaneously ratify an ambiguous dialectic of "without" and "within." Hawthorne's pre-objective gaze explodes the absolute, projected space of the daguerrean view, in favor of a space concurrently projected and interior, that double-horizoned space where object and image abide as one. Hawthorne prefigured on the screen of the mind's eye what Renoir would

project on the modern cinematic screen nearly a century later, prophetically liberating vision from its erroneous analogies with both perspective, and painting in general. As André Bazin said of Renoir:

In visual terms the screen is habitually equated with a picture-frame and, dramatically, with the proscenium. These parallels result in an organization of visual material whereby the image is composed in relation to the sides of the rectangle But Renoir saw clearly that the screen was simply the counterpart of the camera's viewfinder and therefore not a frame . . . but its opposite: a mask whose function is as much to exclude reality as to reveal it . . . ; what it shows draws its value from what it conceals.³¹³

As an originating consciousness, prior to objective knowledge as such, Hawthorne's dioramic gaze articulates a lived-through world of experience in which an object is never merely represented or identified, but contingently lingers as opaque and ambiguous; for being-in-the-world is primordially pre-objective, pre-apophantical, and decidedly personal. This is not, however, to place the burden of the world upon a subjective, "noetic" analysis, but rather to remain faithfully within the object itself, as Husserl defined his "noematic" reflection, in order to discover the world prior to any falling back upon ourselves: "it is the ambition to make reflection emulate the unreflective life of consciousness."³¹⁴ To the extent that Hawthorne's oeuvre reproduces this pre-reflective life of perceptual consciousness, disrupting the apophantical authority of the scientific-technological world-view, he is unequivocally "modern."

Finally, Hawthorne's revolutionary use of montage implicitly affirms the ontological priority of time itself. Cinematic "cutting"

³¹³Cahiers du Cinéma, 1952, quoted in Perkins, p. 38.

³¹⁴Merleau-Ponty, Phenomenology, p. xvi. This is, of course, the aim of Husserl's eidetic reduction.

ignores objective space; as such, its simultaneous spatial transposition of images reciprocally neglects the temporal displacement as well. The expressive space of cinematic montage confirms the possibility of pure transition, since it no longer "measures" time as a function of space--that is, how long it takes to get from one place to another. In so far as it is virtual, it obliterates the spatial priority of the world-view as a primordial function of time. Thus, like cinema, Hawthorne's spatial relationships become metaphors for human relationships. The virtual space of Hawthorne's dioramic gaze reduplicates the interior subjectivity of an intentional, perceptual motion, that motion grounded in the double horizon between both objective and affective space. Like the perceptual space of the visual field, cinematic space comes and goes. Thus, its most distinctive characteristic: "it creates a virtual present, an order of direct apparition. That is the mode of dream."³¹⁵ If the style of Hawthorne's gaze asserts the perceptual constancy of the thing as a completed function of time, it nevertheless continues to sustain the ontological ambiguity of a world. As the "measure" of Being, time underpins the lived-through experience of Hawthorne's fictional world. Yet, by definition, a world accommodates not only "objects," but "subjects" as well. In its subjective constitution, the vague phantasms which inhabit the world of Hawthorne's work are no less "real" than its perceptions. Because it is an individual which embraces every "thing," and not a collection of objects linked by causal relations, the world is always destined to remain the ambiguous theatre of all experiences.³¹⁶

³¹⁵Langer, Feeling and Form, p. 412.

³¹⁶Merleau-Ponty, Phenomenology, p. 343.

Hawthorne's fictional world exploits this antepredicative tolerance, "and our bewildering proximity to the whole of being in syncretic experience."³¹⁷ At its interior, Hawthorne's world appropriates this ontological proximity to Being in so far as it accommodates the expressive subjectivity of dream, which dwells at the very heart of its vision. To the extent that Hawthorne's dioramic gaze visually dislocates "reality," it adhibits the hypnagogic image--those images, as F. O. Matthiessen observed, "subsisting on the borderland of the unconscious which surrealism has seized for its peculiar domain."³¹⁸ Like the cinematic consciousness itself, the dream mode is able to draw the spectator into a creative act "in which his individuality is not subordinated to the author's individuality, but is opened up throughout the process of fusion with the author's intention."³¹⁹ Rather than close itself off within the self-evident certitude of a uniformly framed view, Hawthorne's dioramic gaze expressively affirms the equivocal nature of a world anterior to rational investigation. If anything, the superimposed questioning voice at the center of Hawthorne's narration constitutes the rhetorical negation of all certitude whatsoever. For example, the "supered" interrogative voice attending Hawthorne's description of the dead Judge ("Has it yet vanished? No!--yes!--not quite!"), reflects the universal epistemological ambiguity of his entire oeuvre. It is the disembodied voice of the dream, the secret witness whose vision we

³¹⁷Ibid.

³¹⁸American Renaissance (New York: Oxford University Press, 1941), p. 232.

³¹⁹Eisenstein, The Film Sense, p. 33. Cf. also, Ernest Lindgren, The Art of the Film (London: Allen and Unwin, 1948), p. 92: It is the spectator's own mind that moves.

share.³²⁰ Thus, what made dioramic effects particularly significant to the implementation of Hawthorne's descriptive gaze was their singular appropriateness to the world he characteristically evoked--"a dream world halfway between reality and fantasy in which truth is simultaneously, maddeningly, graspable and evanescent."³²¹ As with Montaigne, the world of Hawthorne's work confines itself to an interrogation which is never even formulated, for any such formulation would implicitly demand a determinate reply.³²² Conversely, Hawthorne's fictional world substantiates the lived-through identity of both Being and appearance, the ambiguous opacity of existence; in both cases, we have the same silence and the same void.³²³ It is toward the silence and the void of this world that we must now turn.

³²⁰Lease, p. 321.

³²¹Ibid.

³²²Cf. Merleau-Ponty, Phenomenology, p. 295.

³²³Ibid.

CHAPTER IV

HAWTHORNE'S ONTOLOGICAL ABODE: THE INTERIORITY OF BEING

If Hawthorne's dioramic gaze enabled him to reveal an indeterminate world no longer constituted by the daguerrean frame or world-view, it simultaneously structured a consciousness which was itself ambiguously circumvolved. Because cinematic consciousness projects a space which comes and goes, it subsequently creates an iconology whose jagged edges split and tear the image rather than seal it off.¹ In so far as these images which shift and fade occupy an haptic foreground, emerging to touch the cutaneous surface of our gaze, they articulate a concernfully situated posture rather than the objectively detached view of daguerrean representation. In other words, they are expressive. Vision in high definition always discourages empathy,² whereas Hawthorne's fragmented vision encourages participation by virtue of the indefinite edges of its "field," a field which affectively enters onto the expressive space of the world. At the interior of this disconnected, unenclosed vision, Hawthorne heuristically interrogates the meaning or significance of those apparitions which inhabit the world of his work. Left to its own devices, the visual sense always seeks to outrage the ambiguous opacity of appearances by seeking "reality" elsewhere; indeed, the rift between appearance and reality is already built into that kind of seeing which

¹McLuhan, Vanishing Point, p. 2.

²Ibid., p. 77.

pictures the world as a view. The seventeenth-century portrait, for example, which stares back at us in full view, evidences the correctness of itself--that is, the artist's view--in opposition to the ambiguous way it is drawn by the light. It similarly frames the spectator by placing him in the center of its own objectively correct space. The portrait becomes a baby-sitter. Beyond the ambiguous boundary of Being, man thus forfeits his right to live the world in any way other than as a detached observer. Reality subsequently becomes the representation of an isolated moment in time, a three-dimensional perspective of the mind, a concept. Man goes blind. The world of Hawthorne's work, on the other hand, previews the purely apparitional space of cinema and its irreverent disregard for objectivity by re-incorporating appearance and reality. In order to escape the rationalism of the visual frame which had dominated Western civilization for centuries, Hawthorne's oeuvre recovers an iconography whose interior vision once again involves the spectator as a participant in the world. Amidst a mosaic of appearances, Hawthorne's world refuses the spectator the possibility of escaping those questions which it raises. He can deny them, but he must address them first. Hawthorne's cinematic vision expresses this immediacy, the immediacy of its apparitions. Grounded in facticity, Hawthorne's world is thus formal only in so far as it is phenomenal; because it has no framework fixed in a physical or pictorial space, but merely structures the mobile reticulation of intention, it thus asserts, as its primary formal characteristic, a virtual present.³ It is in the mode of dream.

Hawthorne's fiction characteristically evokes a dream mode, a mode

³Cf. Langer, Feeling and Form, p. 412.

which like all of modern art brings its elements equally into the foreground. As Susanne Langer has remarked:

The most noteworthy formal characteristic of dream is that the dreamer is always at the center of it. Places shift, persons act and speak, or change or fade--facts emerge, situations grow, objects come into view with strange importance, ordinary things infinitely valuable or horrible, and they may be superseded by others that are related to them essentially by feeling, not by natural proximity. But the dreamer is always "there," his relation is, so to speak, equidistant from all events. Things may occur around him or unroll before his eyes; he may act or want to act, or suffer or contemplate; but the immediacy of everything in a dream is the same for him.⁴

The dream is thus essentially iconic, and not pictorial; the psychiatrist merely forms the story line.⁵ Like the dioramic gaze, Hawthorne's cinematic or dream consciousness is pervasively present; the dreamed reality "can move forward or backward because it is really an eternal and ubiquitous virtual present."⁶ The dream provided Hawthorne with a diastolic counterbalance to the ponderous systole of rationalism and its synchronic historical perspective. From a Freudian point of view, the dream project is disclosable (Darstellbarkeit) precisely to the degree that it is "over-determinate;" and this is what frustrates the rational attitude the most. As Freud observed, the principles of "over-determination" and "condensation" allow the dream mode to expressively transpose disparate and discontinuous elements or moments in time. Hawthorne implicitly understood this dynamic, and explicitly reconstructed the logic of dream consciousness in order to undermine the arrogant and manipulative certitude of the daguerrean view, thus undercutting the

⁴Ibid., p. 413.

⁵McLuhan, Vanishing Point, p. 137.

⁶Langer, Feeling and Form, p. 415.

subject-object dichotomy itself. As the narrator in "P.'s Correspondence" remarks: "More and more I recognize that we dwell in a world of shadows; and, for my part, I hold it hardly worth the trouble to attempt a distinction between shadows in the mind, and shadows out of it. If there be any difference, the former are rather the more substantial."⁷ Again, in The American Notebooks, Hawthorne said it another way: "students out to be day-dreamers, all of them--when cloud-land is one and the same thing with the substantial earth."⁸ Hawthorne typically adopted the stance of conscious dreamer⁹ so that the world of his work consistently remains opaque throughout. Against the transparency of scientific certitude, Hawthorne's fiction asserts the ambiguous concealedness of truth and its corresponding epistemological appropriation by a factual subjectivity which must call it into Being. And though his use of the "doppelganger" technique in such stories as "Monsieur du Mirroir" and "Graves and Goblins" represents a superficial attempt to get outside the "self," his most effective efforts addressing the problem of knowledge paradoxically derive from quite the opposite point of view. For it is only when Hawthorne delves to the very interior of consciousness that he ironically achieves his most poignantly perceptive angle of vision on the truth of the world.

By re-establishing the primacy of the phenomenon, Hawthorne's dream-like vision returns to the immediate order of apparitions as they make their first appearance in consciousness, and by which the world, in

⁷X, p. 367.

⁸VIII, pp. 122-23.

⁹Cf. Joseph C. Pattison, "Point of View in Hawthorne," PMLA, 82 (October 1967) : 365-66.

turn, originally announces itself. The dream enabled Hawthorne to structure a vision of the world primordially grounded in appearance, a vision indistinguishable from the "reality" it is presumed to re-present. Over and against the scientific-technological objectification of the world and its attendant manipulation of Being, Hawthorne's cinematic dream-consciousness concernfully enowns the facticity of things within the openness of Being. It encourages the thing to rest within itself,¹⁰ and likewise rescues truth from its invisibly transparent fixation in the mind. Reality becomes the oblique transformation of appearances, a lived-through structure whereby man's facticity announces itself anew. As Heidegger observed: "What is lasting in the presence of objective things is not their self-subsistence within the world that is their own."¹¹ Hawthorne implicitly recognized that the "worldly" character of truth implies the whole of Being: "Truth often finds its way to the mind close-muffled in robes of sleep, and then speaks with uncompromising directness of matters in regard to which we practice an unconscious self-deception, during our waking moments."¹² In opposition to the Platonic tendencies inherent in romanticism, transcendentalism, and the scientific-technological world-view, Hawthorne's fiction proclaims the phenomenal nature of "form," and thereby re-confirms the factual wholeness of Being itself. Since neither truth nor beauty subsist "objectively" within the whole of Being, they must be sought on the hither side of an artificial distinction between subject and object.

¹⁰Cf. Heidegger, Poetry, Language, Thought, p. 130.

¹¹Ibid.

¹²"The Birth-Mark," X, p. 40.

Both physical and metaphysical inquiry willfully ignore their own interrogative relation to the "nature" they so obdurately seek to disclose by virtue of the theoretical frame which they employ, and which subsequently places the "content" of their investigation outside of the inquirer himself. Because it divorces itself from the very inquiry it undertakes, an "objective" posture is always forced to judge the truth of its discoveries in terms of an absolute, impersonal "One" (das Man). For example, Kant's position from the outset is tantamount to "One knows" Thus, the transcendental unity of apperception is no one's in particular. In so far as both rationalism and idealism demand the same "objective" point of view, then, they demand in fact no point of view at all--that is, Leibniz's perspectiveless posture. In other words, "one knows" in the same way "one sees," by virtue of a ubiquitous and uniform rational space, the uniform space of perspective. It is this very dynamic, or lack of it, which makes the body-less point of view inauthentic; it lacks a "self." It constitutes the care-less voice of the "they" (das Man), as when we explain what is "correct," for example, with the exclamation: "one does this" or "one does that." Only in this way can the perspectiveless posture accommodate a contradiction it denies to "reality" itself: the distinction between natural and unnatural. Pascal knew better: "The nature of man is wholly natural There is nothing he may not make natural; there is nothing natural he may not lose."¹³ To the extent that Being is always "at home" with itself, it autonomously relegates the "unnatural" to the

¹³Blaise Pascal, Pensées, in "Pensées" and "The Provincial Letters" trans. W. F. Trotter and Thomas M'Crie (New York: The Modern Library, 1941), p. 37.

realm of the absurd. Man can do things to nature, for nature, against nature; but they are never unnatural, for the formal possibilities of a world are already alongside each other in so far as a world is structured by whatever can be. Hawthorne expressed it thus: "Nothing comes amiss to Nature--all is fish that comes to her net. If there be a living form of perfect beauty instinct with soul--why, it is all very well, and suits Nature well enough. But she would just as lief have that same beautiful, soul-illuminated body, to make worm's meat of, and to manure the earth with."¹⁴ For Hawthorne, the dream mode cancelled out the abstracted and theoretical logic of second-order consciousness; the truth of the world no longer obtains from its non-contradictory agreement within a fixed and sterile mental perspective of correct and true ideas. Indeed, dream even distorts the "probable," that quantitative security-blanket by which the masses live their lives mathematically. As Pascal has remarked: "Take away probability, and you can no longer please the world; give probability, and you can no longer displease it."¹⁵

Hawthorne's interior world of dream translates the dioramic gaze into the "subjective" realm of metaphysics as an analogous model of logic. In contrast to the mediate, reflective consciousness of the rational attitude, this new interior consciousness reveals a logic immediately in touch with Being. In so far as he "occupies" a finite middle between two infinite extremes, man must learn to seek repose within the center of Being itself, a sphere whose circumference is nowhere. "For in fact what is man in nature? A Nothing in comparison

¹⁴The American Notebooks, VIII, p. 272.

¹⁵Pensées, p. 318.

with the Infinite, an All in comparison with the Nothing, a mean between nothing and everything. Since he is infinitely removed from comprehending the extremes, the end of things and their beginning are hopelessly hidden from him in an impenetrable secret."¹⁶ Thus, Owen Warland, whose butterfly becomes a heap of glittering fragments, at last enowns the object of his life-long labors only when it ceases to be objective: "the symbol by which he made it perceptible to mortal senses became of little value in his eyes, while his spirit possessed itself in the enjoyment of the Reality."¹⁷ Only outside Being does man objectify the object; within the concernfully solicitous sphere of his existence, the object is objective only in so far as it "objects." Hawthorne's ontological turn toward the interior of Being discloses a logic which converts the immanent objectness of consciousness into the heart's innermost region.¹⁸ Within this intimate space, the heart takes up the things of the world as they proximally express the nearness of Being. The drama which transpires amidst the world of Hawthorne's work articulates an affective "locale" wherein the object virtually comes to life; this Ovidian universe announces itself to the degree that it becomes animate. The Letter, the House, the statue, the ribbon, the pipe, the oaken lady, the mountain, the lime-kiln¹⁹--these objects touch us with their own reality only to the extent that they kindle an affective life within. The

¹⁶Ibid., p. 23.

¹⁷"The Artist of the Beautiful," X, p. 475.

¹⁸Cf. Heidegger, Poetry, Language, Thought, p. 131.

¹⁹The Scarlet Letter, I; The House of the Seven Gables, II; The Marble Faun, IV; "Young Goodman Brown," X; "Feathertop," X; "Drowne's Wooden Image," X; "The Great Stone Face," XI; "Ethan Brand," XI.

controlling consciousness at the center of Hawthorne's vision is thus discovered in the heart's inner space; the logic of the heart brings things into the fullness of Being where a restructured consciousness accommodates the very nearness of Being itself: "Bringing near in this way, nearness conceals its own self and remains, in its own way, nearest of all."²⁰

That the remoteness of Being, which the perspective of the scientific-technological attitude takes for granted, represents the most pressing dilemma of a visual culture is already indicated in the growing sense of division between appearance and reality; thus, in conjunction with its aforementioned evils, the perspective of a world view also introduced an obsession with the problem of hypocrisy: witness Molière's Tartufe, Tourneur's Revenger's Tragedy, and Fielding's Tom Jones.²¹ Rather than reflect the Baroque quest for depth through duality,²² Hawthorne's oeuvre, like the mirrors which populate it, seeks to direct or turn consciousness away from itself, and back to a single-minded injunction long forgotten since Socrates. And it is now remembered in the same way that we recall a friend who was once dear to us. Because this single-minded injunction constitutes the forgetting of itself in a particularly personal way, it is now recalled with an affective ardor that surprises us with the immediacy of its truth--an immediacy which forms a revolutionary directive for the future. At the same time, this injunction evokes a "general image"²³ which initially hovers before the

²⁰Heidegger, Poetry, Language, Thought, p. 178.

²¹McLuhan, Vanishing Point, p. 99. ²²Ibid., p. 101.

²³Cf. Eisenstein, The Film Sense, p. 31.

world of Hawthorne's work, and which completes the work itself. And though Hawthorne's metonymic iconology manipulates its "space" so that it freely moves about, his interior consciousness and its corresponding logic of the heart's inner space nevertheless creates an intimate and unified bearing toward the world of his work, a bearing spiritedly at odds with the continuous and fixed attitude of the world-view. It is this intimate and unified bearing which recalls the single-minded injunction long since forgotten: "to thine own self be true!" This imperative so immediately undercuts the hypocritical duality of the world-view that its recognition at once illuminates the deceitful disposition of the technological attitude and its attendant evils. As Pascal remarked of his own age, which was already on the way toward the technological era: "I set it down as a fact that if all men knew what each said of the other, there would not be four friends in the world."²⁴ For Pascal, as for Hawthorne, man can only transcend the hypocritical tendencies of the rational attitude by beginning with the "self." Like Hawthorne's single-minded injunction, Pascal asserts the factual beginning of Being: "One must know oneself. If this does not serve to discover truth, it at least serves as a rule of life, and there is nothing better."²⁵ By being true to himself, man can at last learn to accept the reciprocal "reality" of appearance and its formal relation to the structure of the world. Hawthorne's oeuvre attests this fact, and solicits the truth of Being within the ambiguous openness at the interior of the heart's inner space. Hawthorne's work accomplishes this venture by transforming the technological dominion of purposeful self-assertion in the objective into the

²⁴Pensées, p. 41. ²⁵Ibid., p. 20.

saying of an inner recall; and it inaugurates this transformation with the single-minded injunction. Once Being has been dared this way, it now lies in the balance. As Heidegger expressed it: "The hard thing consists not only in the difficulty of forming the work of language, but in the difficulty of going over from the saying work of the still covetous vision of things, from the work of the eyes, to the 'work of the heart.'"²⁶ The venture thus begins in going over from objective representation to the logic of the heart,²⁷ where Being lies in the balance. The world of Hawthorne's work safely negotiates this balance once it executes the saying of the inner recall. In going over from the calculating will to the interior of the heart, the world's inner space, the conversion is therein complete, whereby consciousness secures Being for itself. Thus, the conversion of consciousness at the interior of Hawthorne's world appropriates a "physics of the exception"²⁸ rather than the rule; it care-fully takes man beyond the protective rule of uniformity toward that interior space which bears the personal and unique stamp of Being. Hawthorne's oeuvre arrives out of the future; the future is present in it: "The greater the concealment with which what is to come maintains its reserve in the foretelling saying, the purer is the arrival."²⁹ In "The Hall of Fantasy," the narrator's guide explains it thus: "If a man be in advance of his age, he must be content to make his abode in this hall, until the lingering generations of his fellow-

²⁶Cf. Heidegger, Poetry, Language, Thought, p. 138.

²⁷Ibid., p. 133.

²⁸Cf. Gaston Bachelard, The Psychoanalysis of Fire, trans. Alan C. M. Ross (Boston: Beacon Press, A Beacon Paperback, 1968), p. 82.

²⁹Heidegger, Poetry, Language, Thought, p. 142.

men come up with him. He can find no other shelter in the universe. But the fantasies of one day are the deepest realities of a future one."³⁰ It was only the destitution of his own age which, unaware of what it was doing, prevented Hawthorne's work from becoming timely.³¹ The world of Hawthorne's work is present to us now.

I

More often than not, Hawthorne considered life itself a dream. He did so with the implicit recognition that those passing apparitions which besiege the interior life of consciousness, especially those which assail the "haunted mind" somewhere between waking and slumber, bespeak of a reality at odds with the noonday certitude of everyday experience, and yet constitute a unified aspect of that experience. Like the narrator of "The Celestial Rail-Road," it is easy to dismiss the ambiguous interior of consciousness with the facile cliché, "it was only a dream."³² For Hawthorne, however, this cliché represents the ultimate, pathetic gesture in escape from self-knowledge.³³ It is always those characters who reject the dream that are most foolish. Assuming of course, that only one who is intelligent can be foolish,³⁴ Hawthorne's work attests the bankruptcy of that intelligence which denies its own apparitions. At

³⁰X, p. 179.

³¹Heidegger says the same of Hölderlin's poetry; cf. Poetry, Language, Thought, p. 142.

³²X, p. 206.

³³Joseph C. Pattison, "'The Celestial Rail-Road' as Dream-Tale," American Quarterly, 20 (Summer 1968) : 236.

³⁴Cf. Max Scheler, Man's Place in Nature, trans. Hans Meyerhoff (New York: Farrar, Straus and Cudahy, The Noonday Press, 1961), p. 29.

Blithedale, Coverdale's ultimate failure is already prefigured on one of his first nights in the community by his dismissal of a dream: "Had I made a record of that night's half-waking dreams, it is my belief that it would have anticipated several of the chief incidents of this narrative, including a dim shadow of its catastrophe."³⁵ In the preface, Hawthorne had observed that his own experience at Brook Farm was "essentially a day-dream, and yet a fact . . . offering an available foothold between fiction and reality."³⁶ Hawthorne's fiction addresses a perceptive audience whose sensibility, as he said of his daughter Una, "is more readily awakened by fiction than reality."³⁷ Similarly, with the Pyncheons, "rejection of dream at cost to their humanity is characteristic Haughtily as the Pyncheons bear themselves in the noonday streets, however, they are 'no better than bondservants to these plebian Maules, on entering the topsy-turvy commonwealth of sleep'."³⁸ As with the world-view, those who reject dream inevitably find themselves cut off from their own humanity and the world which they inhabit--witness Goodman Brown: "A stern, a sad, a darkly meditative, a distrustful, if not a desparate man, did he become, from the night of that fearful dream."³⁹ Throughout his life, everything predisposed Hawthorne to day-dreaming, toward unfocused diversions of the mind and senses;⁴⁰

³⁵The Blithedale Romance, III, p. 38; cf. also, Pattison, "'The Celestial Rail-Road' as Dream-Tale," p. 227.

³⁶Ibid., p. 2.

³⁷The American Notebooks, VIII, p. 415.

³⁸Pattison, "'The Celestial Rail-Road' as Dream-Tale," p. 227.

³⁹"Young Goodman Brown," X, p. 89.

⁴⁰Normand, p. 107.

single-mindedly, his work accomplished this oneiric transformation of reality, articulating a world constituted by images both from without and within. In a journal entry, 1842, he expressed it thus: "To write a dream, which shall resemble the real course of a dream, with all its inconsistency, its strange transformations, which are all taken as a matter of course, its eccentricities and aimlessness--with nevertheless a leading idea running through the whole. Up to this old age of the world, no such thing ever has been written."⁴¹

As the spectator of his own dreams, Hawthorne's cinematic consciousness reclaims the Ovidian universe as man's primordial homeland:

We find ourselves on the borders of the region of primitive romance, of the supernatural, of dreams. We are entering a land of chimeras where everything is possible, where everything is capable of metamorphosis: houses transformed into vegetables, human trees, wooden figureheads with faces of flesh--we stand once again in the province of magic--in which objects and beings are simultaneously themselves and other than themselves, change their faces, their forms, their colors, appear and disappear . . . the country in which things become animate, in which living beings suddenly become statues, in which the dead move, in which man is on the same scale as nature⁴²

Against the scientific-technological world-view, which always makes man "larger than" nature as the "measure" or subjectum, Hawthorne's convoluted dream mode not only gives man back to nature, and nature to man, but also places him within the circular sphere of Being. Indeed, because it puts him on the same scale as nature, it re-replaces man within the ambiguous texture of the existent. Through the dream mode, Hawthorne's iconic imagery recreates the expressive labyrinth of a world whose ownmost image is itself to be discovered at the interior of the

⁴¹The American Notebooks, VIII, p. 240.

⁴²Normand, p. 294.

heart's inner space. Each work being a sphere, the interwoven texture of the world finds its reciprocal convexity and concavity enclosed by mutually opposing mirrors which constantly reflect the ambiguous image of Being back upon itself:⁴³ the echoes which ricochet from the hills are exclusively supported by the hollow, perpetually drawing them back to its center;⁴⁴ the images of the past which circle around Hester are inclusively maintained within the frozen silence of the pillory;⁴⁵ the images which evolve inside the showman's box are ultimately grounded by its finite, temporal center;⁴⁶ the interior labyrinth which Goodman Brown discovers in the forest paradoxically encloses that which it reveals, as the forest itself reciprocally revolves about him.⁴⁷ The dream-like contour of Hawthorne's convoluted sinuosities actively provokes the antagonism of the straight line, and the acute aggressive angle.⁴⁸ Antipodal to the transparent perspective of the daguerrean view, and its explicit sanctification of the straight line and acute angle, the dream process opposes all reflective distance by which we "know" the objects of a world. As with the equidistant images which revolve around Hester on the pillory, dream puts us directly in touch with the objects of a consciousness immediately our own. It thus articulates a world independent of a priori, rational or mental constructs; it is the

⁴³Cf. *Ibid.*, p. 298.

⁴⁴"The Hollow of the Three Hills," IX, p. 201.

⁴⁵The Scarlet Letter, I, pp. 58-59.

⁴⁶"Main-Street," XI, pp. 49-50.

⁴⁷"Young Goodman Brown," X, pp. 83-84.

⁴⁸Normand, p. 300.

incarnate reality of immediate appearance. As Werner Wolff points out: "Most investigators of the dream knowledge that the dream is a reflection of waking experiences, but none has stated that our waking experiences are also reflections of our dreams;" and though in dream man searches for the fulfillment of reality, the opposite is equally true as well: "in reality, man searches for the figures of his dream."⁴⁹ Similarly, Hawthorne's narrator often questions the "reality" of events; he merely states a "fact" and then casts doubt upon it. Thus, the narrator achieves a kind of dream logic in the "telling." The ambiguous references to illusion and reality accommodate Hawthorne's opaque technique without precisely having to define the nature of the experience--for example, whether it is "actual" or "imaginary."

In dream, objects of the conceptual mind become but dim shadows to the "eye;" the image returns to the incarnate setting of a world. "The Haunted Mind" defines the oneiric urgency of this moment: "Passion and Feeling assume bodily shape, and the things of the mind become dim spectres to the eye."⁵⁰ As with Keats' "negative capability," the haunted mind relinquishes its will to will in favor of a sensibility more or less entirely passive, a sensibility, moreover, which invites the world to it in order to appear. "In an hour like this, when the mind has a passive sensibility, but no active strength; when the imagination is a mirror, imparting vividness to all ideas, without the power of selecting or controlling them; then pray that your griefs may slumber, and the

⁴⁹The Dream: Mirror of Conscience (New York: Grune and Stratton, 1952), pp. 299-300. Cf. also, Erich Fromm, The Forgotten Language. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1951.

⁵⁰IX, p. 306.

brotherhood of remorse not break their chain."⁵¹ For centuries, the ontical world of science had contented itself with "observation," a procedure which Hawthorne found at best superfluous. In so far as scientific observation merely notices or "takes note of" the conspicuous, it is redundant. For this kind of "seeing," the world, as merely the sum of all those individual entities that we encounter in it, becomes significant only as a concept in the mind. That this theoretical framework became the sole model for dis-covering the world is still evidenced today in the expression, "do you see what I mean!" For Hawthorne, however, "to see" is to perceive the inconspicuous, to discover something in a way which is peculiarly original. In this sense, seeing is always a uniquely singular activity. At the old Manse, for example, Hawthorne once observed: "The trees have a singular appearance in the midst of waters; the curtailment of their trunks quite destroys the proportions of the whole tree; and we become conscious of a regularity and propriety in the forms of Nature, by the effect of this abbreviation."⁵² As with the diorama, Hawthorne employed the analogous pre-reflective consciousness of dream in order to disclose the world anew.

Unlike the objective analytic of the scientific-technological world-view, which "subjects" the world to a determinate number of discrete entities or "categories," dream expresses the existential unitary structure of the world itself. As Freud observed: "Dreams are particularly fond of reducing antitheses to uniformity, or representing them as one and the same thing."⁵³ Ambiguity is thus central to the dream

⁵¹Ibid. ⁵²The American Notebooks, VIII, p. 381.

⁵³Sigmund Freud, The Interpretation of Dreams, trans. A. A. Brill (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1937), p. 304.

logic. By ambiguity, for example, the Letter comes to mean things opposite to the Puritan conception of sin.⁵⁴ Dream both reveals and yet conceals that which can never be seen by the willful and arrogant "view." It is, in other words, that mode which best lends itself to "burrowing . . . into the depths of our common nature," which Hawthorne found most suitable to the purposes of "psychological romance;" and whosoever pursues his researches in such a dusky region must necessarily do so as much "by the tact of sympathy as by the light of observation."⁵⁵ Moreover, while dream often reveals that which most affectively "lies" closest to us, it always does so in disguise. In fact, the hypnagogic image discloses that which is most "closed off" from the reflective "self," including its attitudes about itself. Coverdale's central dream refutes the abstract, reflective logic of his waking moments, that logic which gets articulated through his narration, while it expressively confirms the logic of his heart, the truest and most profound feeling which the narration itself denies. Although he constantly refers to himself as a minor figure in the drama of Blithedale, his intermediate position between Zenobia and Hollingsworth, as they stand on either side of the bed reaching across to exchange a kiss, amidst the torment of his dream, reveals in fact that he considers himself central to both their lives; indeed, as he beholds this passionate exchange between the two, the image of Priscilla entirely fades away so that the dream itself discloses what even his final confession conceals: he was in love with Zenobia and not Priscilla.⁵⁶ Similarly, if Goodman Brown's experience in the forest was

⁵⁴Pattison, "Point of View in Hawthorne," p. 369.

⁵⁵Preface to The Snow-Image, XI, p. 4.

⁵⁶The Blithedale Romance, III, pp. 153 and 247, respectively. See,

only a dream, "alas! it was a dream of evil omen;"⁵⁷ for in denying the evil in himself, he henceforth severed himself from both his wife and the remainder of humanity as well.

Furthermore, in its deployment of images, the dream mode always functions cinematically. Consequently, even those works which do not explicitly concern themselves with dream nevertheless appropriate its technique, for it is a rare work of Hawthorne's which avoids the immediate mode of "appearance," and usually one of significantly lesser artistic quality. "Hawthorne was simply consciously exploiting the cinematic resources of the soul. He was one of the first to discover, and to demonstrate in dazzling fashion, that the cinema had always existed potentially in our imagination, and that it is part of our mental activity."⁵⁸ Conversely, because the moving photograph satisfies our sense of reality, it subsequently became an ideal medium for making fantasy seem real.⁵⁹ The interior landscape of "Young Goodman Brown" engages us as urgently as if we were "actually" there. Through the cinematic play of light and shade, this ambiguous nightmare arrests our attention at the very surface of its dramatic "screen:" up front and center. It is entirely private. In a similar way, the action of "My Kinsman, Major Molineux" refutes a public space and time, but rather "rearranges" its materials by means of montage as in a dream: "Indeed, in the sense of the rapid succession of images that the story gives us

Claire Sprague, "Dream and Disguise in The Blithedale Romance," PMLA, 84 (May 1969) : 596-97.

⁵⁷"Young Goodman Brown," X, p. 89.

⁵⁸Normand, p. 329.

⁵⁹Durgnat, p. 31.

and in the definite effect of condensation and acceleration involved . . . we almost seem--as though we were Robin--to dream rather than read the story."⁶⁰ The focus of Robin's gaze alters in proportion to its discoveries, and with an alacrity which immediately reflects the dramatic situation itself: rooftops become walls, walls become mansions, mansions become balconies, balconies become pillars, pillars become a gothic window.⁶¹ This montage, however, disappears abruptly at the end. The procession fades out first, leaving the scene by itself; the sense of location goes last as the procession moves on, bequeathing a silent street behind--and out of this silence, there comes the break in the fabric of the dream.⁶² Hawthorne's sharp focus at the conclusion of the story merely punctuates the solitary privacy of his vision, and re-situates us toward the public space and time outside the labyrinthian interior from which Robin has emerged. And in a final ambiguous gesture, the gentleman refuses Robin's request: "'Will you show me the way to the ferry?' 'No, my good friend Robin, not to-night, at least,' said the gentleman. 'Some few days hence, if you continue to wish it, I will speed you on your journey. Or, if you prefer to remain with us, perhaps, as you are a shrewd youth, you may rise in the world, without the help of your kinsman, Major Molineaux.'"⁶³ Obviously, Robin's perception of his kinsman at the conclusion of this illusively shattering experience is diametrically opposed to that which he had before when his kinsman

⁶⁰Franklin B. Newman, "'My Kinsman, Major Molineux': An Interpretation," University of Kansas City Review, 21 (March 1955) : 205.

⁶¹"My Kinsman, Major Molineux," XI, p. 221.

⁶²Newman, p. 209.

⁶³"My Kinsman, Major Molineaux," XI, p. 231.

visited him in the country, the very a priori conception he brought with him when he first entered the town. Yet, everyman may have two faces. So Robin's laughter at the end, as loudest of all, supplants even that of the double-visaged figure, suggesting that his momentary perception of the world as ambiguous and often contradictory reinforces the underlying irony of all things, and further implies a new and different kind of wisdom as the modern image of the conventional jester.

In addition to nightmare and dream, however, the haunted mind accommodates reverie as well; indeed, "it contains the entire cinema of consciousness, with its methods, its technique, its screen, its camera."⁶⁴ Properly speaking, Hawthorne's haunted mind more closely approximates what, today, contemporary psychology calls the "theta state." "You sink down in a flowery spot, on the borders of sleep and wakefulness, while your thoughts rise before you in pictures, all disconnected, yet all assimilated by a pervading gladsomeness and beauty;" or, to vary the metaphor, "you find yourself, for a single instant, wide awake in that realm of illusions, whither sleep has been the passport, and behold its ghostly inhabitants and wondrous scenery, with a perception of their strangeness, such as you never attain while the dream is undisturbed."⁶⁵ Like reverie, a world of fragmented images arises before the haunted mind within "the space of a summer night;"⁶⁶ images which reveal the depths of the heart; it is the present moment of a time thoroughly detached from all biographical perspective, a time

⁶⁴Normand, p. 329.

⁶⁵"The Haunted Mind," IX, pp. 308 and 304, respectively.

⁶⁶Ibid., p. 305.

without past or future. "Yesterday has already vanished among the shadows of the past; to-morrow has not yet emerged from the future. You have found an intermediate space, where the business of life does not intrude; where the passing moment lingers, and becomes truly the present; a spot where Father Time, when he thinks nobody is watching him, sits down by the way side to take breath."⁶⁷ It is the time of "conscious sleep."⁶⁸ Like the images which engage us when we are seated before a fire, each lingers in the mind's eye long after darkness has swallowed the reality.⁶⁹ Around the principle of the haunted mind, Hawthorne thus structures his most effective tales; through reverie-like associations, he transcends the everyday world of conventional consciousness. Harassed by the phantasms which arise before him, Goodman Brown struggles forward through the gloom of the forest;⁷⁰ plagued by the panorama of her past, Hester momentarily displaces the anguish of the pillory with that of another;⁷¹ compelled by his curious sense of unreality, the adventurer of the "Night Sketches" hastens through the black of the night, guided only by an occasional flicker of light--a reverie of street-lamps rather than fire.⁷² And so the consciousness of reverie articulates a parallel between human life and itself: "In both you emerge from mystery, pass through a vicissitude that you can but imperfectly control, and are borne onward to another mystery."⁷³

⁶⁷Ibid. ⁶⁸Ibid., p. 307. ⁶⁹Ibid., p. 308.

⁷⁰"Young Goodman Brown," X, p. 81.

⁷¹The Scarlet Letter, I, p. 58.

⁷²IX, pp. 428 and 431, respectively.

⁷³"The Haunted Mind," IX, p. 309.

Beside the blaze of the fire, Ethan Brand struggles against those images that beseege him, recalling the smoldering panorama of his life within a single instant. More than anything else, fire invites reverie. As Bachelard observes: "If fire, which, after all, is quite an exceptional and rare phenomenon, was taken to be a constituent element of the Universe, is it not because it is an element of human thought, the prime element of reverie?"⁷⁴ Hawthorne's own life reveals a marked fascination, if not obsession, with this phenomenon--as does his oeuvre. In Salem, as a child, he often went to watch the fires that broke out; and if one occurred late at night, he used to send his sister to investigate, reporting back to him whether it was worth getting out of bed to see.⁷⁵ Both the notebooks as well as the fiction abound with references to the fireside. Distinct from the attention of observation and contemplation, reverie before a fire expresses the unitary structure of a total phenomenon. Thus, Ethan Brand "sat listening to the crackling of the kindled wood, and looking at the little spirits of fire that issued through the chinks of the door. These trifles, however, once so familiar, had but the slightest hold of his attention; while deep within his mind, he was reviewing the gradual, but marvellous change, that had been wrought upon him by the search to which he had devoted himself."⁷⁶ The fire itself reflects this sudden change, the withering of a heart having "ceased to partake of the universal throb."⁷⁷ In a typically

⁷⁴The Psychoanalysis of Fire, p. 18.

⁷⁵Normand, p. 21.

⁷⁶"Ethan Brand," XI, p. 98.

⁷⁷Ibid., p. 99.

astute psychological perception, Hawthorne thus conjoins this transformation to both the stunted life of the fire and the plenary life of the lime-kiln, a world unto its own, as Ethan ascends the hill toward the top of the structure. In its own way, of course, the reverie has already accomplished this task:

Fire is for the man who is contemplating it an example of a sudden change or development and an example of a circumstantial development. Less monotonous and less abstract than flowing water . . . fire suggests the desire to change, to speed up the passage of time, to bring all of life to its conclusion, to its hereafter. In these circumstances the reverie becomes truly fascinating and dramatic; it magnifies human destiny; it links the small to the great, the hearth to the volcano, the life of a log to the life of a world. The fascinated individual hears the call of the funeral pyre. For him destruction is more than a change, it is a renewal.⁷⁸

Thus Ethan, through identification, surrenders the cold marble of his own heart to the heart of the flames. Unlike the mayfly, however, this incomplete lesson in eternity leaves a trace--the shape of his heart endures upon the surface of the lime.⁷⁹ Yet, once the lime-burner crushes the remains, the lesson is complete: Ethan paradoxically reappropriates the warmth of humanity's common bond, the heart. Ironically, death in the flames is the least lonely of deaths; through it, Ethan attains the cosmic: an entire world is reduced to nothingness.⁸⁰ Only the dream remains: "That night the sound of a fearful peal of laughter rolled heavily through the sleep of the lime-burner and his little son; dim shapes of horror and anguish haunted their dreams, and seemed still present in the rude hovel when they opened their

⁷⁸Bachelard, The Psychoanalysis of Fire, p. 16.

⁷⁹Cf. *Ibid.*, p. 17.

⁸⁰Cf. *Ibid.*, p. 19.

eyes to the daylight."⁸¹

In so far as it thus accommodates nightmare, dream, and reverie, the haunted mind evades objective time and space; because it envelops a personal consciousness, the haunted mind exemplifies the plenitude of a world where intentional subjectivities primordially abide. Within this ambiguous and opaque abode, the transparent "cogito" gets thrown back upon its equivocal, subjective adherence in pre-objective phenomena. Like the gothic edifice in "The Hall of Fantasy," the haunted mind, as with fantasy itself, admits the light of "heaven" or reason "only through stained and pictured glass, thus filling with many-colored radiance, and painting its marble floor with beautiful or grotesque designs; so that its inmates breathe, as it were, a visionary atmosphere, and tread upon the fantasies of poetic minds."⁸² This edifice of poetic fantasy forever remains man's true and lasting homeland, for though it superficially gives "the impression of a dream, which might be dissipated and shattered to fragments, by merely stamping the foot upon the pavement," yet, "with such modifications and repairs as successive ages demand, the Hall of Fantasy is likely to endure longer than the most substantial structure that ever cumbered the earth."⁸³ Hence, the logic of the haunted mind is nothing less than poetic; it articulates the interior growth of consciousness, that unchartered region which we are so prone to isolate from "reality," either to grant it an immaterial existence apart or to deny its existence altogether. Indeed, Hawthorne's world converts the poetic consciousness into an organ, a thing of flesh and

⁸¹"Ethan Brand," XI, p. 100.

⁸²X, p. 172. ⁸³Ibid., pp. 172-73.

blood "whose substance may be tenuous but which can also become extremely dense and weigh down with a great weight in the physical world."⁸⁴ Because the haunted mind identifies itself with the substance of its images, the very identity between object and image, it is always already alongside or, better, inherent in the reality it discloses: "consciousness awake and consciousness asleep--consciousness questing or fleeing, following its own arabesques, mingling with itself, fighting against itself without cease."⁸⁵ For this reason, great poets should have iron sinews.⁸⁶ Likewise, as with the Hall of Fantasy, "we see but a small portion of the edifice,"⁸⁷ for the poetic consciousness is incarnate; it scorns the intellectual transparency of the world-view whose schemes for "fixing the reflections of objects in a pool of water, and thus taking the most life-like portraits imaginable,"⁸⁸ must always go awry.

Hawthorne's poetic consciousness, furthermore, reasserts the primacy of time over and against the spatial objectivity of the world-view. In its convulsive, Laocoön-like sinuosity, poetic consciousness unequivocally rejects the infinite transparency of heaven for the finite "apparency" of earth: "I fear that no other world can show us anything just like this."⁸⁹ Grounded in time, the poetic consciousness of the haunted mind appropriates the appearance as a significant part of the reality it discloses. As Lessing observed: "All bodies, however, exist

⁸⁴Normand, p. 350. ⁸⁵Ibid.

⁸⁶"P.'s Correspondence," X, p. 375.

⁸⁷"The Hall of Fantasy," X, p. 173.

⁸⁸Ibid., p. 178. ⁸⁹Ibid., p. 184.

not only in space, but also in time. They continue, and, at any moment of their continuance, may assume a different appearance and stand in different relations."⁹⁰ Moreover, in so far as he inhabits the Hall of Fantasy daily, "the poet knows his whereabouts, and therefore is less likely to make a fool of himself in real life."⁹¹ He thus ironically occupies the solid ground of earth more often than the dream-tower to which the scientific attitude always assigns him: "the root of human nature strikes down deep into this earthly soil; and it is but reluctantly that we submit to be transplanted, even for a higher cultivation in Heaven. I query whether the destruction of the earth would gratify any one individual; except, perhaps, some embarrassed man of business, whose notes fall due a day after the day of doom."⁹² Rather than analyze its constituent elements, the poet invites the earth to his bosom endearingly, and for the sake of her own apparent beauty, and not her abstracted schematization in the mind. To be sure, the multitude generally desires that the earth continues to endure as well; yet its reasons are invariably selfish: "In short, nobody seemed satisfied that this mortal scene of things should have its close just now. Yet, it must be confessed, the motives of the crowd for desiring its continuance were mostly so absurd, that, unless Infinite Wisdom had been aware of much better reasons, the solid Earth must have melted away at once."⁹³ The poet, on the other hand, accepts the solicitous call to Being:

⁹⁰Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, Laocoön: An Essay Upon the Limits of Painting and Poetry, trans. Ellen Frothingham (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, The Noonday Press, 1969), p. 91.

⁹¹"The Hall of Fantasy," X, p. 177.

⁹²Ibid., pp. 182-83. ⁹³Ibid., p. 183.

For my own part, not to speak of a few private and personal ends, I really desired our old Mother's prolonged existence, for her own dear sake.

"The poor old Earth!" I repeated. "What I should chiefly regret in her destruction would be that very earthliness, which no other sphere or state of existence can renew or compensate. The fragrance of flowers, and of new-mown hay; the genial warmth of sunshine, and the beauty of a sunset among clouds; the comfort and cheerful glow of the fireside . . . even the fast-falling snow, and the gray atmosphere through which it descends--all these, and innumerable enjoyable things of earth, must perish with her."⁹⁴

This new poetic consciousness in Hawthorne embraces the finite as its very ground and, in so doing, subsequently hands back the truth of Being to the illusive and ambiguous sphere of "beauty" from whence the truth of Being primordially makes its first appearance. Indeed, appearance is beauty. Hence, the beautiful does not occur alongside and apart from this truth, but "belongs to the advent of truth, truth's taking of its place."⁹⁵

Poetic consciousness thus penetrates the dream-like opacity of the haunted mind only in so far as it articulates those interior voids or subjectivities which dwell within the fold of Being, those impenetrable gaps in the texture of the existent which both disclose and conceal the universal veil of Being itself. As P. remarks: "The reality--that which I know to be such--hangs like remnants of tattered scenery over the intolerably prominent illusion. Let us think of it no more."⁹⁶ Like his "irrational" correspondence, the dream-like consciousness of the haunted mind disrupts the synchronic standpoint of the world-view and its distanced chronological perspective, in favor of an ek-static present which diachronically appropriates the past with Care (Sorge). As the

⁹⁴Ibid., pp. 183-84.

⁹⁵Heidegger, Poetry, Language, Thought, p. 81.

⁹⁶"P.'s Correspondence," X, p. 371.

correspondent explains:

My unfortunate friend P. has lost the thread of his life, by the interposition of long intervals or partially disordered reason. The past and present are jumbled together in his mind, in a manner often productive of curious results The poor fellow . . . meets, in his wanderings, a variety of personages who have long ceased to be visible to any eye save his own. In my opinion, all this is not so much a delusion, as a partly wilful and partly involuntary sport of the imagination⁹⁷

In having lost the "thread" of his life, P. disrupts the synchronically detached standpoint itself. Against the dis-interested standpoint of rational observation, his interested "repetition" or recollection forward dialogically engages him with the whole of Being. Reality ceases to be prior and becomes, in turn, ontologically grounded in the Being of Dasein, for reality is dependent upon Care.⁹⁸ Because it thus refers the metaphysical "reality" of the idea (eidōs) back to the phenomenon of Care, the unitary structure of Dasein, the unorthodox logic of P.'s "irrational" mind simultaneously returns the idea itself back to the ambiguous, incarnate texture of Being from whence it makes its initial appearance. Similarly, this unorthodox logic spontaneously consolidates itself "into almost as material an entity as mankind's strongest architecture. It is sometimes a serious question with me, whether ideas be not really visible and tangible, and endowed with all the other qualities of matter."⁹⁹ Like the recollected figure of Keats in P.'s own haunted mind, who has "thrown his poem forward into an indefinitely remote future,"¹⁰⁰ P.'s poetic consciousness likewise recollects the past forward, in interested

⁹⁷Ibid., p. 361.

⁹⁸Heidegger, Being and Time, p. 255.

⁹⁹"P.'s Correspondence," X, p. 362.

¹⁰⁰Ibid., p. 375.

repetition, in order to dialogically recall the most primordial question of Being, a question which the metaphysical tradition of Western civilization had forgotten since Parmenides--the ontological question of Being, and not the pseudo-problematic of those ontical "beings" constitutive of a world. In so far as "appearance" itself--that is, the phenomenon--primordially discloses the truth of the world, it simultaneously reveals to what extent reality is ontologically grounded in a factual subjectivity which makes the birth of Being possible, and to whom the question of Being can become an issue in the first place. Open to its ownmost possibilities, P.'s haunted mind recreates the visionary moment of anticipatory resolution, that authentically historical temporality which "deprives the 'today' of its character as present."¹⁰¹ Like the Proustian consciousness, those figures which populate P.'s past persistently haunt his present as well by virtue of an interested recollection forward, and by which they have become incarnate: "Were it only possible to find out who are alive, and who dead, it would contribute infinitely to my peace of mind. Every day of my life, somebody comes and stares me in the face, whom I had quietly blotted out of the tablet of living men, and trusted never more to be pestered with the sight or sound of him."¹⁰² Heidegger has said it another way: "When, however, one's existence is inauthentically historical, it is loaded down with a legacy of a 'past' which has become unrecognizable, and it seeks the modern. But when historicity is authentic, it understands history as the 'recurrence' of the possible, and knows that a possibility will recur only if

¹⁰¹Heidegger, Being and Time, p. 444.

¹⁰²"P.'s Correspondence," X, p. 377.

existence is open for it fatefully, in a moment of vision, in resolute repetition."¹⁰³ Similarly, "the fantasies of one day are the deepest realities of a future one."¹⁰⁴

The poetic consciousness thus assures the appearance of its reciprocal place in reality. Through its dream-like vision, the world of Hawthorne's work opens a phenomenal ingress to the question of Being, without which the poetic consciousness would leave that very world behind. Hence, dream provides the necessary link between both subject and object which indivisibly cohere within the unitary structure of a world. As Merleau-Ponty has remarked:

In the same way, though it is indeed from the dreamer that I was last night that I require an account of the dream, the dreamer himself offers no account, and the person who does so is awake. Bereft of the waking state, dreams would be no more than instantaneous modulations, and so would not even exist for us. During the dream itself, we do not leave the world behind: the dream space is segregated from the space of clear thinking, but it uses all the latter's articulations; the world obsesses us even during sleep, and it is about the world that we dream.¹⁰⁵

Because the haunted mind recreates a consciousness whose fluid interior unceasingly equivocates the transparent picture that scientific consciousness demands, it expresses the very situated structure of Being itself, a structure wherein free and multiple consciousnesses articulate the hidden reality of a world beyond the edges of an objective frame. "What a strange, incongruous dream is the life of man!"¹⁰⁶ Hawthorne's fiction resuscitates the psychic vitality and validity of dream in order to secure

¹⁰³Heidegger, Being and Time, p. 444.

¹⁰⁴"The Hall of Fantasy," X, p. 179.

¹⁰⁵Phenomenology, p. 293.

¹⁰⁶"P.'s Correspondence," X, p. 373.

the world's inner space, the space of the heart. The dream can never "lie;" its truth is inherently there, though often in disguise. By reason of its own logic, dream discloses those aspects of the "self," and its relation to the world, which intellectual observation would deny. "Ordinary people have the power of not thinking of that about which they do not wish to think."¹⁰⁷ Similarly, the heart has reasons of which reason itself knows nothing.¹⁰⁸ Hawthorne's world expresses the bankruptcy of an objective view grounded in the intellect, for only the reality of the heart can touch man in his whole nature, allowing him to openly hold his world around him in wonder and awe. "How many kingdoms know us not!"¹⁰⁹ The logic of the heart is thus extraordinary in so far as it takes man beyond the protective and self-defensive bounds of objectification, the self-assertive domination of Being. Only within the openness of man's own heart is he secure. Speaking of Shelley's later works, P. expresses it thus: "They are warmer with human love, which has served as an interpreter between his mind and the multitude. The author has learned to dip his pen oftener into his heart, and has thereby avoided the faults into which a too exclusive use of fancy and intellect was wont to betray him."¹¹⁰ Long before Freud, Hawthorne knew his psychology well. Within the logical structure of the dream, Hawthorne discovered an analogous logic of the heart--the interior logic of the world's inner space which both expresses the poetic consciousness itself

¹⁰⁷Pascal, *Pensées*, p. 91.

¹⁰⁸*Ibid.*, p. 95.

¹⁰⁹*Ibid.*, p. 75.

¹¹⁰"P.'s Correspondence," X, p. 373.

and, at the same time, recalls the single-minded injunction long forgotten since Socrates: "Be true! Be true! Be true! Show freely to the world, if not your worst, yet some trait whereby the worst can be inferred!"¹¹¹ In an age when men's minds were still oriented toward moral analysis, Hawthorne's fiction brought about a psychological revolution in American literature, "a revolution that in no way prefigured the introduction into the average American's everyday life of a psychoanalysis imbued with a superstitious regard for the social norm, but, on the contrary, that upheld both the rights of the outstanding individual and the rights of the poet."¹¹² As Dimmesdale's life attests:

It is the unspeakable misery of a life so false as his, that it steals the pith and substance out of whatever realities there are around us, and which were meant by Heaven to be the spirit's joy and nutriment. To the untrue man, the whole universe is false,--it is impalpable,--it shrinks to nothing within his grasp. And he himself, in so far as he shows himself in a false light, becomes a shadow, or, indeed, ceases to exist.¹¹³

II

Because it abnegates the distanceless remoteness of the world-view, Hawthorne's oeuvre turns the transient and therefore preliminary character of object-things away from the invisible region of the producing consciousness and toward the true interior of the heart's space: "Only what we thus retain in our heart (par coeur), only that do we truly know by heart."¹¹⁴ Those objects which populate the interior space of Hawthorne's world synecdochically express the whole of Being at

¹¹¹The Scarlet Letter, I, p. 260.

¹¹²Normand, p. 236.

¹¹³The Scarlet Letter, I, p. 146.

¹¹⁴Heidegger, Poetry, Language, Thought, p. 130.

its most primordially affective depth, a depth whose meaning obtains from an opposing "ob-," that factual subjectivity which initially calls the ob-ject into Being.¹¹⁵ Thus, Hawthorne's superficial observance of historical objectivity often merely constitutes an ironic posture; like Goethe and Tieck, he delighted in destroying this "objectivity" every chance he got. Indeed, Hawthorne's irony frequently satirizes the past as a value in itself. Whereas only one glass of whiskey suffices to produce the rather doubtful "Edward Randolph's Portrait," for example, the story of Lady Eleanor represents the product of three glasses of madeira.¹¹⁶ Hawthorne's ambiguously ironic pose persistently refutes the object as objective, redeeming its synoicous essence while simultaneously returning it to the incarnate setting of a world. Against the scientific-technological objectification of the world, which distances the thing by virtue of its frame or view, Hawthorne's interior logic of the heart reappropriates the thing for man, and man for the thing. Being is near whenever it stays the object in its presence, just as man appropriates the nearness of Being whenever he allows it to come up to itself and back into the nature of its truth.¹¹⁷ The dichotomy between "head" and "heart" which pervasively characterizes Hawthorne's work, and which the critics have so often discussed, subsequently structures the "nearness" and "farness" of Being within a larger metaphysical picture, a picture whose referential surface Hawthorne's oeuvre sets out to destruct or de-structure. Because the scientific or "intellectual" attitude, that of

¹¹⁵Ibid., p. 177.

¹¹⁶Alfred H. Marks, "German Romantic Irony in Hawthorne's Tales," Symposium, 7 (November 1953) : 278.

¹¹⁷Heidegger, Poetry, Language, Thought, p. 131.

the head, sets man at odds with nature, and thus with himself, it simultaneously sets him apart from the world he seeks to "picture" or know. Such is the case with all of Hawthorne's villains. Chillingworth manipulates Dimmesdale with the detached perspective of a behavioral psychologist observing the reactions of his guinea pigs;¹¹⁸ Westervelt controls both Zenobia and Priscilla with an intensity equalled only by his monomaniacal attachment to his own dark schemes;¹¹⁹ Aylmer tinkers with an insignificant imperfection in his wife only to discover that in curing the "disease" he has killed the patient;¹²⁰ Rappaccini experiments on his daughter with no more affection than he displays toward the noxious plants within the encapsulated garden, a garden which not only isolates them from the world, but from each other as well--that is, he treats her ob-noxiously;¹²¹ even Hollingsworth, whose philanthropy has turned inward and back upon itself to the point of madness, obsessively envisions mankind as one vast body in desperate need of reform.¹²²

Hawthorne's villains unanimously deny the supplications of the heart; at best, the heart becomes an object of investigation. Because they intellectually separate themselves from whatever object their investigation undertakes, both the scientist and reformer sever their "self" from its affective relation to the world. The nature and purpose

¹¹⁸The Scarlet Letter, I, pp. 129-38.

¹¹⁹The Blithedale Romance, III, pp. 158-59 and 201-02.

¹²⁰"The Birth-Mark," X, p. 56.

¹²¹"Rappaccini's Daughter," X, p. 114.

¹²²The Blithedale Romance, III, pp. 70-71.

of their investigation has already determined this. In so far as they must "undertake" the object of their investigation in order to discover it objectively, they have already placed themselves outside the solicitous sphere of Being. Indeed, the infinite remoteness necessary for holding the object at bay precludes their ownmost freedom to "take it up" affectively. Since they cannot take the object to themselves--that is, bring themselves to it--Hawthorne's villains "undertake" the world in the very same way we undertake a disagreeable chore. The world henceforth becomes a necessary evil, an evil whose existence must be tolerated in order to theoretically transfer it to the mind where its material resistance ceases to be an obstacle entirely. A theory thus becomes the world, and the world becomes "becoming" to the subjectum. At the same time, however, because this "space" has receded toward the purely human, indifferent to the intentional space of "others," it has already gone insane. "It is remarkable, that persons who speculate the most boldly often conform with the most perfect quietude to the external regulations of society. The thought suffices them, without investing itself in the flesh and blood of action."¹²³ Even Hester is not exempt from this inclination: "Much of the marble coldness of Hester's impression was to be attributed to the circumstance that her life had turned, in a great measure, from passion and feeling, to thought;" standing alone in the world, "she cast away the fragments of a broken chain. The world's law was no law for her mind."¹²⁴ Hester's love and concern for Dimmesdale, however, secures her from the total isolation

¹²³The Scarlet Letter, I, p. 164.

¹²⁴Ibid.

experienced by Hawthorne's villains, who "by an iron framework of reasoning"¹²⁵ obdurately seek to verify their own stunted intellectual convictions. By imposing their "space" on others, both scientist and reformer religiously take upon themselves the burden of the world--that is, the freedom and responsibility of others. They become, in other words, religious fanatics. And as Pascal so forcefully points out: "Men never do evil so completely and cheerfully as when they do it from religious conviction."¹²⁶

Chillingworth deceptively begins his initial investigation "with the severe and equal integrity of a judge, desirous only of truth, even as if the question involved no more than the air-drawn lines and figures of a geometrical problem, instead of human passions, and wrongs inflicted on himself."¹²⁷ Yet, such an over-simplified attitude is easily distorted since it neglects its own facticity: "But, as he proceeded, a terrible fascination, a kind of fierce, though still calm, necessity seized the old man within its gripe, and never set him free again, until he had done all its bidding."¹²⁸ At the same time, Dimmesdale's natural bent exhibits similar tendencies, for his entire bearing toward the world has been "etherealized" by extended years of weary toil among his books; all he lacked "was the gift that descended upon the chosen disciples, at Pentecost, in tongues of flame; symbolizing, it would seem, not the power of speech in foreign and unknown languages, but that of addressing the whole human brotherhood in the heart's native language."¹²⁹

¹²⁵Ibid., p. 162. ¹²⁶Pensees, p. 314.

¹²⁷The Scarlet Letter, I, p. 129.

¹²⁸Ibid. ¹²⁹Ibid., pp. 141-42.

Like Hester, however, the burden of guilt and complicity with mankind irrevocably stays his intellectual tendencies, ironically bestowing upon him that very faculty the pentecostal flame ignites: "But this very burden it was, that gave him sympathies so intimate with the sinful brotherhood of mankind; so that his heart vibrated in unison with theirs, and received their pain into itself, and sent its own throb of pain through a thousand other hearts, in gushes of sad, persuasive eloquence."¹³⁰ It is, of course, this brotherhood which Goodman Brown rejects. Nevertheless, so long as Dimmesdale remains untrue to himself, this hidden complicity continues to gnaw at his heart, while even his eyes reflect the deep secret at his interior; thus, "it was the clergyman's peculiarity that he seldom, now-a-days, looked straightforth at any object, whether human or inanimate."¹³¹ What subsequently differentiates Dimmesdale, however, from the true villain, is that his human complicity, though hidden, interpenetrates the solicitous sphere of Being, whereas Goodman Brown, for example, deliberately chooses to stand apart from the existent as a whole.

This self-imposed isolation characterizes all of Hawthorne's villains. They lack heart; "they would not make a friend of it."¹³² Instead, they often seek to penetrate its secrets, to analyze its operations, to rationalize its "reasons," to objectify its ambiguous and evasive logic. Hawthorne's villains are thus chronically deceived in their obsessive endeavors, for though a disease of the heart may very well affect, or infect, the body, it can never become transparent to an

¹³⁰Ibid., p. 142. ¹³¹Ibid., p. 131.

¹³²Pascal, *Pensées*, p. 73.

intellectually comprehensive view. Although the propositions of the intellect are inferred, the principles of the heart are always intuited: "it is as useless and absurd for reason to demand from the heart proof of her first principles, before admitting them, as it would be for the heart to demand from reason an intuition of all demonstrated propositions before accepting them."¹³³ As Dimmesdale remarks to Chillingworth: "There can be, if I forebode aright, no power, short of the Divine mercy, to disclose, whether by uttered words, or by type or emblem, the secrets that may be buried with a human heart."¹³⁴ Ironically, the secret buried within Dimmesdale's own heart discloses itself emblematically; but even then, as a psychosomatic phenomenon, this tell-tale emblem emblazoned on his bosom shows signs of a disturbance in its purely symptomatic manifestation. Even after the physician discovers the burning emblem on Dimmesdale's breast, stealing into the room while he sleeps, it only encourages Chillingworth's curiosity the more. His compulsion forces him to delve deeper and deeper into an investigation which has no perceptible end in view. Like the vanishing point of a perspective, it is infinitely remote. The "reasons" of the heart can never array themselves before the intellect within a single, unified picture; the heart, like the body itself, evades such a transparent manipulation precisely because it is always situated. We can never have it before us, entirely in view. Because it equivocates the objectification to which Hawthorne's villains would subject it, the heart throws the intellectual attitude back upon itself

¹³³Ibid., p. 96.

¹³⁴The Scarlet Letter, I, p. 131.

where it is now further frustrated by its insatiable attempt to know or objectify not only the "other," but its "self" as well. The villain becomes his own most dangerous enemy. Trusting no one, he can no longer recognize the enemy when he actually appears. By treating the "other" as an object in an object-world, he subsequently loses his ownmost "self." Having once created this affective void at the center of his being, the villain, bereft of a world, must thereafter depend upon the object of his investigation for his own existence. He thus paradoxically becomes an active agency only in so far as he expropriates the being of the "other." He ceases to participate in the life of the existent as a whole. Hence, with Dimmesdale's death, Chillingworth is doomed as well:

All his strength and energy--all his vital and intellectual force--seemed at once to desert him; insomuch that he positively withered up, shrivelled away, and almost vanished from mortal sight, like an uprooted weed that lies wilting in the sun. This unhappy man had made the very principle of his life to consist in the pursuit and systematic exercise of revenge; and when, by its completest triumph and consummation, that evil principle was left with no further material to support it,--when, in short, there was no more devil's work on earth for him to do, it only remained for the unhumanized mortal to betake himself whither his Master would find him tasks enough, and pay him his wages duly.¹³⁵

Similarly, all of Hawthorne's villains maniacally attach themselves to the disembodied ubiquity of a transparent idea; and all are equally destined to forfeit the object of their solitary pursuit: governed by the obsession to eliminate the crimson imperfection on Georgiana's cheek, Aylmer employs his utmost energy only to lose her in the end;¹³⁶ encouraged by his feeble curiosity and the dispassionate desire to see Beatrice transcend the sphere of ordinary women, Rappaccini rears his

¹³⁵Ibid., p. 260.

¹³⁶"The Birth-Mark," X, p. 56.

only daughter amidst the poisonous experiments of his garden only to behold her death at the hands of an ironically fatal antidote;¹³⁷ haunted by the quest to discover the Unpardonable Sin, Ethan searches throughout the world only to destroy himself in impotent surrender to the blaze of the lime-kiln;¹³⁸ driven by his will to power, Westervelt deploys his hypnotic skills toward Zenobia and Priscilla only to forfeit both.¹³⁹ Like Mr. Lindsey in "The Snow-Image," Hawthorne's villains utilize an inflexible, systematic frame by which they negotiate the world without exception. In this sense, they are uniformly unexceptional. Furthermore, the reformer is, in many ways, the most dangerous of all the Hawthorne villains, for since his object of concern is always the "other," the sphere of his power is most often prone to run away from the very responsibility his view professes. What Hawthorne concludes of Mr. Lindsey holds equally true for all of his reformers; it would make profitable reading today in a curriculum for social workers: "it behoves men, and especially men of benevolence, to consider well what they are about, and, before acting on their philanthropic purposes, to be quite sure that they comprehend the nature and all the relations of the business in hand. What has been established as an element of good to one being, may prove absolute mischief to another."¹⁴⁰ Perhaps Hollingsworth's character itself best describes that extreme to which the "benevolent" attitude is most disposed:

¹³⁷"Rappaccini's Daughter," X, p. 128.

¹³⁸"Ethan Brand," XI, p. 100.

¹³⁹The Blithedale Romance, III, pp. 203 and 234, respectively. Cf. also, "The Man of Adamant," XI, and "The Ambitious Guest," IX.

¹⁴⁰"The Snow-Image," XI, p. 25.

admitting what is called Philanthropy, when adopted as a profession, to be often useful by its energetic impulse to society at large, it is perilous to the individual, whose ruling passion, in one exclusive channel, it thus becomes. It ruins, or is fearfully apt to ruin, the heart; the rich juices of which God never meant should be pressed violently out, and distilled into alcoholic liquor, by an unnatural process; but should render life sweet, bland, and gently beneficent, and insensibly influence other hearts and other lives to the same blessed end. I see in Hollingsworth an exemplification of the most awful truth in Bunyan's book of such;-- from the very gate of Heaven, there is a by-way to the pit!¹⁴¹

As the novels of Henry James so aptly confirm, the unattainable ideal makes monsters of us all. Within the finite realm of Being, those who would be God would be Satan as well, for the other side of Angel is always Devil. "Man, as man, has always measured himself with and against something heavenly. Lucifer, too, is descended from heaven."¹⁴² Pascal has said it another way: "Man is neither angel nor brute, and the unfortunate thing is that he who would act the angel acts the brute."¹⁴³

Hawthorne's reformers are not alone in this respect; for both the scientist and the intellectual in general are precariously poised above this egocentric "pit." Since, by definition, the monomaniacal enterprise undertakes its mission with its gaze fixed solely on an isolated "objective" which constitutes the infinitely remote vanishing point of its view, it ignores, like the inauthentic technological perception, that which lies closest to its immediate "field." In other words, it avoids, at all costs, the responsibility for itself. Because it has not questioned its own *raison d'être*, it simultaneously denies itself the possibility of self-reproach for whatever failure it encounters. If

¹⁴¹The Blithedale Romance, III, p. 243.

¹⁴²Heidegger, Poetry, Language, Thought, p. 221.

¹⁴³Pensées, p. 118.

ever, the lesson is learned too late. Thus, Ethan's final, "involuntary recognition of the infinite absurdity of seeking throughout the world for what was the closest of all things to himself, and looking into every heart, save his own, for what was hidden in no other breast,"¹⁴⁴ ironically terminates eighteen years of futile, blind volition. What else is left to will of any significance but his own death? Similarly, years after his experience at Blithedale, Hollingsworth has yet to reform a single criminal;¹⁴⁵ after seven years of uninterrupted observation, Chillingworth has yet to whole-heartedly entrap his prey;¹⁴⁶ after complete surrender to an ideal quest, Owen Warland has yet to permanently materialize the aim of his original intention;¹⁴⁷ after a twenty-year leave of "absence" from his wife in order to observe her, Wakefield has yet to discover that the final joke is on him.¹⁴⁸ And we may confidently assume the same of Aylmer, Rappaccini, and Westervelt. Even Dimmesdale, who likewise learns his lesson too late, exhibits the egotistic tendencies of Hawthorne's villains. His perception of the Letter against the darkened night sky is thus imputed solely to the disease of his own eye and heart---"Not but the meteor may have shown itself at that point, burning duskily through a veil of cloud; but with no such shape as his guilty imagination gave it; or, at least, with so little definiteness, that another's guilt might have seen another symbol in it."¹⁴⁹ Hawthorne

¹⁴⁴"Ethan Brand," XI, p. 87.

¹⁴⁵The Blithedale Romance, III, p. 243.

¹⁴⁶The Scarlet Letter, I, p. 256.

¹⁴⁷"The Artist of the Beautiful," X, p. 475.

¹⁴⁸"Wakefield," IX, p. 140. ¹⁴⁹The Scarlet Letter, I, p. 155.

further comments:

But what shall we say, when an individual discovers a revelation, addressed to himself alone In such a case, it could only be the symptom of a highly disordered mental state, when a man, rendered morbidly self-contemplative by long, intense, and secret pain, had extended his egotism over the whole expanse of nature, until the firmament itself should appear no more than a fitting page for his soul's history and fate.¹⁵⁰

Paradoxically, then, the intellectual attitude inclines toward both extremes of consciousness: in its quest for the "objective" this attitude implicitly places itself above all "others," while at the opposite extreme it may turn in upon its "self" out of frustration so that the "self" explicitly becomes its own "object." In either case, the "self" becomes divine.

The ruinous effects of egotism or the "bosom-serpent," however, are nowhere more pronounced than in Roderick Elliston. Tortured by the void of his own heart, Roderick must socialize his "disease" in order to maintain any sense of individuality--he must show himself to the world. In his nothingness he henceforth becomes the supreme egotist, for he cannot bear the emptiness of his heart alone.

All persons, chronically diseased, are egotists, whether the disease be of the mind or body; whether it be sin, sorrow, or merely the more tolerable calamity of some endless pain, or mischief among the cords of mortal life. Such individuals are made acutely conscious of a self, by the torture in which it dwells. Self, therefore, grows to be so prominent an object with them, that they cannot but present it to the face of every casual passer-by. . . . for it is that cancer, or that crime, which constitutes their respective individuality.¹⁵¹

Thereafter, Roderick draws his misery around him like a cape, and looks triumphantly down upon all whose interior nourishes no deadly

¹⁵⁰Ibid.

¹⁵¹"Egotism; or, The Bosom-Serpent," X, p. 273.

monster.¹⁵² Indeed, it is this very emptiness which operates as an antidote against any who would attempt a cure, for nothing can come up to it; it is incomparable. Like a "black hole" in space, it blindly swallows all "other" intentions in its own intentional void. Its only remedy is in forgetting that which it cannot forget, and in remembering that which it has repressively forgotten--the "other:" "Could I, for one instant, forget myself, the serpent might not abide within me. It is my diseased self-contemplation that has engendered and nourished him!"¹⁵³ As Coverdale remarks at Blithedale:

It is not, I apprehend, a healthy kind of mental occupation, to devote ourselves too exclusively to the study of individual men and women. If the person under examination be one's self, the result is pretty certain to be diseased action of the heart, almost before we can snatch a second glance. Or, if we take the freedom to put a friend under our microscope, we thereby insulate him from many of his true relations, magnify his peculiarities, inevitably tear him into parts, and, of course, patch him very clumsily together again. What wonder, then, should we be frightened by the aspect of a monster, which, after all--though we can point to every feature of his deformity in the real personage--may be said to have been created mainly by ourselves.¹⁵⁴

Unlike most of Hawthorne's villains, however, Roderick learns his lesson in time; with the appearance of his estranged wife, Rosina, the cure is affected. Roderick thus typifies the extremity of those two qualities which Pascal universally ascribes to the "self:" "it is unjust in itself since it makes itself the centre of everything; it is inconvenient to others since it would enslave them; for each Self is the enemy, and would like to be the tyrant of all others."¹⁵⁵

Isolated from the world they seek to know, both Hawthorne's

¹⁵²Ibid., p. 274. ¹⁵³Ibid., pp. 282-83.

¹⁵⁴The Blithedale Romance, III, p. 69.

¹⁵⁵Pensees, p. 151.

scientists and reformers are necessarily forced to turn back upon themselves as the ultimate object of their own consciousness, for in having refuted a situated consciousness in favor of the absolute truth of a ubiquitous vision, they paradoxically deny themselves the very objectivity they so obsessively wish to impose upon the world.

This is always true of those men who have surrendered themselves to an over-ruling purpose. It does not so much impel them from without, nor even operate as a motive power within, but grows incorporate with all that they think and feel, and finally converts them into little else save that one principle. When such begins to be the predicament, it is not cowardice, but wisdom, to avoid these victims. They have no heart, no sympathy, no reason, no conscience. They will keep no friend, unless he make himself the mirror of their purpose; they will smite and slay you, and trample your dead corpse under foot, all the more readily, if you take the first step with them, and cannot take the second, and the third, and every other step of their terribly straight path. They have an idol, to which they consecrate themselves high-priest, and deem it holy work to offer sacrifices of whatever is most precious, and never once seem to suspect--so cunning has the Devil been with them--that this false deity, in whose iron features, immitigable to all the rest of mankind, they see only benignity and love, is but a spectrum of the very priest himself, projected upon the surrounding darkness. And the higher and purer the original object, and the more unselfishly it may have been taken up, the slighter is the probability that they can be led to recognize the process, by which godlike benevolence has been debased into all-devouring egotism.¹⁵⁶

In negating themselves the very objectivity they claim to acquire, Hawthorne's villains reciprocally commit one of the two most all-inclusive of human errors enumerated by Pascal: "1. To take everything literally. 2. To take everything spiritually."¹⁵⁷ The first of these intellectual over-simplifications applies to the scientist, the second to the reformer. Against the over-simplified intellectual attitude, Hawthorne's oeuvre explores the "interior" of reality vis-a-vis a revolutionary conversion of consciousness. By "translating" both

¹⁵⁶The Blithedale Romance, III, pp. 70-71.

¹⁵⁷Pensées, p. 217.

the daguerrean and dioramic "postures" into their analogously respective modes of logic, they subsequently become subjective, metaphysical spheres of consciousness in their own right--Hawthorne's dichotomy between "head" and "heart." Thus determined, that mode of consciousness proper to the daguerrean model corresponds to the logic of calculating reason: Descartes' consciousness of the ego cogito. On the other hand, that mode of consciousness proper to the dioramic model corresponds to the world's inner space: Pascal's logic of the heart,¹⁵⁸ Consequently, daguerrean logic, if we may speak of it thus, delineates what Heidegger (via Rilke) calls "customary consciousness," whereas dioramic logic articulates "uncustomary consciousness." The interior conversion of consciousness central to Hawthorne's world metaphysically subsists within this opposition of consciousness, wherein the head remains directed outward while the heart turns toward its own interior, the interiority of the world's space. Hawthorne's oeuvre begins to negotiate this conversion at the psychological level of psychosomatic disturbances.

That Hawthorne anticipated modern psychology is all the more impressive when we consider his constant desire to make moral "diseases" appear as corresponding physical diseases. Throughout his life, Hawthorne was incessantly concerned with the body's relation to both the world and it's "self." "What happened in the heart became manifest in the flesh; and, conversely, one could arrive at inner truths by scrutinizing appearances or by watching their reflections in a mirror."¹⁵⁹ A note-book entry for 27 October 1841 already reveals Hawthorne's fascination

¹⁵⁸Cf. Heidegger, Poetry, Language, Thought, pp. 127-28.

¹⁵⁹Cowley, p. 562.

with the psychosomatic problem: "To symbolize moral or spiritual disease by disease of the body;--thus, when a person committed any sin, it might cause a sore to appear on the body;--this to be wrought out."¹⁶⁰ And again, on 1 June 1842: "A physician for the cure of moral diseases."¹⁶¹ The idea, of course, is exquisitely "wrought out" in The Scarlet Letter. In his exhortation to Dimmesdale to deal with Hester, the Reverend Wilson ironically betrays the very issue most central to Dimmesdale's own conscience: "Truly, as I sought to convince him, the shame lay in the commission of the sin, and not in the showing of it forth."¹⁶² From the outset, Chillingworth detects some dark secret fatally lodged within the intense sensibility of Dimmesdale's breast: "Wherever there is a heart and an intellect, the diseases of the physical frame are tinged with the peculiarities of these. In Arthur Dimmesdale, thought and imagination were so active, and sensibility so intense, that the bodily infirmity would be likely to have its groundwork there."¹⁶³ Thus, Chillingworth early decides upon his plan of attack, delving to the most profound interior of his patient's bosom: "A man burdened with a secret should especially avoid the intimacy of his physician."¹⁶⁴ The investigator himself, however, is no more immune from the psychosomatic disease than the patient, so that Chillingworth's own physical aspect undergoes a reciprocal change. Moreover, the crowd is readily disposed to perceive this change only in so far as it "forms its judgment, as it usually does,

¹⁶⁰The American Notebooks, VIII, p. 222.

¹⁶¹*Ibid.*, p. 235.

¹⁶²The Scarlet Letter, I, pp. 65-66.

¹⁶³*Ibid.*, p. 124. ¹⁶⁴*Ibid.*

on the intuitions of its great and warm heart," whereas whenever it "attempts to see with its eyes, it is exceedingly apt to be deceived."¹⁶⁵

On the other hand, Dimmesdale too is able to perceive the change transpiring both within himself, and without, and rightfully attributes it to its first cause: "so Mr. Dimmesdale, conscious that the poison of one morbid spot was infecting his heart's entire substance, attributed all his presentiments to no other cause."¹⁶⁶ Indeed, the heart not only "colors" our perceptions, but also speaks its own language, a language whose meaning may often contradict the spoken word itself. Thus it is with Dimmesdale's final sermon before the "revelation:"

But even when the minister's voice grew high and commanding . . . still, if the auditor listened intently, and for the purpose, he could detect the same cry of pain. What was it? The complaint of a human heart, sorrow-laden, perchance guilty, telling its secret, whether of guilt or sorrow, to the great heart of mankind; beseeching its sympathy or forgiveness,--at every moment,--in each accent,--and never in vain! It was this profound and continual undertone that gave the clergyman his most appropriate power.¹⁶⁷

In so far as it is ontologically prior, the heart always knows far in advance of the head--indeed, amasses its reasons while reason itself stumbles. Hence even in his sermon, Dimmesdale is already alongside what must inevitably follow by "reason" of a logic more swift and subtle than any intellectual exercise could devise. Articulating a context which both logically and psychologically completes the central scaffold scene, Dimmesdale approaches the pillory where Hester had encountered the world's ignominious stare some seven years before: "There stood Hester, holding little Pearl by the hand! And there was the scarlet letter on her breast!"¹⁶⁸ After an anxious delay, Dimmesdale at last consummates the

¹⁶⁵Ibid., p. 126. ¹⁶⁶Ibid., p. 140.

¹⁶⁷Ibid., pp. 243-44. ¹⁶⁸Ibid., p. 251.

central image of the novel, and brings it full circle as he ascends the scaffold, supported on the one hand by Hester's arm which twines about him, while clasping the tiny hand of Pearl with the other. Having displaced Pearl as the central figure of the triad, he reveals the final secret of a heart untrue to itself: imprinted on his flesh, the scarlet letter gleams. Those best able to appreciate the minister's sensibility, and the reciprocal operation of the heart upon the body, "whispered their belief, that the awful symbol was the effect of the ever active tooth of remorse, gnawing from the inmost heart outwardly."¹⁶⁹ In typically ambiguous fashion, however, Hawthorne leaves the psychosomatic supposition open to interpretation; for others, who professed never once to have removed their eyes from Dimmesdale, "denied that there was any mark whatever on his breast, more than on a new-born infant's."¹⁷⁰ And the narrator even more ambiguously concludes: "Without disrupting a truth so momentous, we must be allowed to consider this version of Mr. Dimmesdale's story as only an instance of that stubborn fidelity with which a man's friends--and especially a clergyman's--will sometimes uphold his character; when proofs, clear as the mid-day sunshine on the scarlet letter, establish him a false and sin-stained creature of the dust."¹⁷¹ As Alfred Marks has said of this uncertain resolution: "Clear as the mid-day sunshine on the scarlet letter," however, to the twentieth-century reader who notices what Hawthorne does with sunshine, on the one hand, and the scarlet letter, on the other, means something equivalent to "clear as mud."¹⁷²

¹⁶⁹Ibid., p. 258. ¹⁷⁰Ibid., p. 259.

¹⁷¹Ibid. ¹⁷²p. 284.

Nevertheless, Hawthorne's fascination with the psychosomatic problematic is nowhere more in evidence than in its meticulously detailed exploration and analysis in The Scarlet Letter. Yet, other tales examine a similar phenomenon from variously perceptive angles. In her complexion, for example, Beatrice betrays a marked similarity to the plants; she is the semblance of but another flower, "the human sister of those vegetable ones, as beautiful as they . . . but still to be touched only with a glove, nor to be approached without a mask."¹⁷³ Even her voice betrays an all too vivid bloom, "a voice as rich as a tropical sunset, and which made Giovanni, though he knew not why, think of deep hues of purple or crimson, and of perfumes heavily delectable."¹⁷⁴ Herkimer remarks that Roderick's complexion "had a greenish tinge over its sickly white, reminding him of a species of marble out of which he had once wrought a head of Envy, with her snaky locks."¹⁷⁵ And as with Dimmesdale, Roderick's symptoms produce an endless perplexity and speculation among the crowd: "They knew not whether ill health were robbing his spirits of elasticity; or whether a canker of the mind was gradually eating, as such cankers do, from his moral system into the physical frame, which is but the shadow of the former."¹⁷⁶ Similarly, among the guests at "The Christmas Banquet," there was a man whose misfortune it was "to cherish within his bosom a diseased heart, which had become so wretchedly sore, that the continual and unavoidable rubs with the world . . . made ulcers in

¹⁷³"Rappaccini's Daughter," X, p. 97.

¹⁷⁴Ibid., pp. 96-97.

¹⁷⁵"Egotism; or, The Bosom-Serpent," X, p. 269.

¹⁷⁶Ibid., p. 271.

it. . . . he found his chief employment in exhibiting these miserable sores to any who would give themselves the pain of viewing them;" there was a man of "nice conscience" as well, "who bore a blood-stain in his heart;" then there was an aged lady, "who had lived from time immemorial with a constant tremor quivering through her frame;" and then again, a certain Mr. Smith, "afflicted with a physical disease of the heart, which threatened instant death on the slightest cachinnatory indulgence, or even that titillation of the bodily frame, produced by merry thoughts."¹⁷⁷ That Hawthorne is so often concerned with the psychosomatic phenomenon reveals to what extent his fiction is grounded in the situation. In so far as the body equally links us to our "self" and the "world," it articulates both the psychological and physiological context of intentionality which constitutes the single, unitary phenomenon, being-in-the-world.

Hawthorne's understanding of this phenomenon has already put itself ahead of the subject-object dichotomy, and its concomitant conceptual schema: form-content. As a unitary structure, this phenomenon transpires alongside two simultaneous, spatial horizons, two horizons moreover which are neither parallel nor conjoined in infinity. Grounded in a space which is neither geometric-geographic (physical) nor affective (intentional), but both, the phenomenon itself thus undercuts the entire arsenal of machinery which representation has at its command. Furthermore, because its content is entirely formal, its truth is discovered solely in the appearance, in what remains hidden or concealed. And this essential ambiguity which remains hidden is its truth: the "subject" of this phenomenon is at once its own "object." Correspondingly, so long as

¹⁷⁷X, pp. 287-88, 294, and 295, respectively.

it can never be a fact or proposition, it can never be "correct." In other words, rational (mind) and irrational (body) diachronically constitute apparent manifestations of a single truth, the truth of simultaneous horizons--that is, the ek-static structure of being human. The psychosomatic phenomenon thus expresses man's existential facticity, the situated structure of Being. Hawthorne's treatment of this phenomenon attests to what extent he implicitly understood its situated dynamic. In protest to a one-sided "rationalism," Hawthorne's oeuvre ironically asserts the very "irrationalism" of such a proposition, for the heart must have its say as well. It can make its complaints "known," however, through the only intermediary both head and heart address in the same "language." The void which Hawthorne's villain experiences at the center of his being, and to which the body subsequently bears witness, is the very emptiness of his heart. The circle, moreover, is vicious. Without a heart, he lacks a common bond with the "other." At the same time, in severing his relation to the "other," he simultaneously severs his own relationship to "self" in so far as the "other" is a constitutive element of the "self"--that is, the unitary structure being-in-the-world. The self-assertive domination of the rational subjectum and its objectification of Being places Hawthorne's villain outside all care, but only from a theoretical point of view. The body can never escape its situation, and thus rebels against the reasonless proposition of reason alone as the only redeeming link between the "selfishness" of the head and the "otherness" of the heart. Metaphysically, as a subjective mode of consciousness, the head can never have its "reason" without the heart; and conversely, the heart too becomes a blind and wilful proposition or imposition, void of its own "reason," without the head. Each, without

the other, reduces itself to absurdity.

From an existential point of view, this distinction takes the form: en soi-pour soi. For the one, witness Ethan Brand; for the other, Owen Warland. In the end, they are the same. That is not to say they are identical, but rather constitute two aspects of a single phenomenon. Their dynamic is the same. Hawthorne's oeuvre discloses the Pascalian truth that we are always searching for what we have already found. Thus, Ethan Brand spends eighteen years in search of a truth he is at last to discover, beside the blaze of the lime-kiln, within his own heart alone. Against the deficiency disclosed in measuring the distance between himself and his ideal, Hawthorne's villain deserts the very ground of Being. By seeking to be the equal of his ideal, he thus reduces Being to the dull unity of mere uniformity.¹⁷⁸ That is to say, he has already measured this distance mathematically or, better, geometrically. Such is the supreme reductio ad absurdum which the scientific-technological attitude negotiates, the reduction of Being to quantitative measurement; and such is the imperfection which troubles Aylmer. As representative of the scientific posture of his age, his experiment on his own wife reveals his absolute faith in science and its ultimate ability to control nature: "The higher intellect, the imagination, the spirit, and even the heart, might all find their congenial aliment in pursuits which . . . would ascend from one step of powerful intelligence to another, until the philosopher should lay his hand on the secret of creative force, and perhaps make new worlds for himself."¹⁷⁹ His wife becomes the probability

¹⁷⁸Heidegger, Poetry, Language, Thought, p. 219.

¹⁷⁹"The Birth-Mark," X, p. 36.

of this new "world," for he had devoted himself too unreservedly to scientific studies, "ever to be weaned from them by any second passion"--which is to say, by any passion whatsoever; indeed, his "love for his young wife might prove the stronger of the two; but it could only be by intertwining itself with his love of science, and uniting the strength of the latter to his own."¹⁸⁰ Though Aylmer seeks to make Georgiana more than she is factually, he concurrently seeks to make himself more than he is factically; and it is in this sense that he deserts the ground of Being. Indeed, to Aylmer, this minor imperfection represents the very "visible mark of earthly imperfection."¹⁸¹ In striving to come up to perfection, to become its equal as "creator," Aylmer has already measured this dimension quantitatively. The ideal of perfection is, by definition, infinitely removed from man's own factual being, for only number as quantity can negotiate the idea of infinity. As Max Scheler has expressed it: "Man takes his own emptiness of heart for the 'infinite emptiness' of space and time."¹⁸² "Empty" means, to begin with, an expectation that is not satisfied; man's original emptiness is, then, the emptiness of his own heart.¹⁸³ It is the emptiness or lack of what we desire. In order to take this emptiness to himself, man must measure this dimension with his own intentional metric;¹⁸⁴ only thus does man bring Being into its ground plan--that is, his own facticity. Aylmer, on the other hand, addresses an expectation which in itself is infinitely

¹⁸⁰Ibid., pp. 36-37. ¹⁸¹Ibid., p. 37.

¹⁸²Man's Place in Nature, p. 45.

¹⁸³Ibid., p. 44.

¹⁸⁴Cf. Heidegger, Poetry, Language, Thought, p. 221.

remote. As such, the original emptiness of his heart is inhuman from the start, for its desire is already outside its own possibility.

Similarly, the void at the interior of Gervayse Hastings' being is without ground: "he is such a being as I could conceive you to carve out of marble, and some yet unrealized perfection of human science to endow with an exquisite mockery of intellect; but . . . the demands that spirit makes upon spirit, are precisely those to which he cannot respond."¹⁸⁵

As Gervayse says of himself: "It is a chillness--a want of earnestness--a feeling as if what should be my heart were a thing of vapor--a haunting perception of unreality! Thus, seeming to possess all that other men have--all that men aim at--I have really possessed nothing, neither joys nor griefs."¹⁸⁶ Roderick's preface to the story of Gervayse hits on a further truth; such a man most probably is never "conscious of the deficiency."¹⁸⁷ Neither of course is Ethan Brand, whose marble heart reflects the utter desolation and solitude of daguerrean consciousness. Like all of Hawthorne's villains, Ethan "carelessly" expects to come up to the ideal, to identify at some point in the future with the infinitely remote. He thus becomes a fiend; in fact, began to be so from the moment that his heart had ceased to keep pace with his intellectual development, a development which in its progress,

disturbed the counterpoise between his mind and heart. The Idea that possessed his life had operated as a means of education; it had gone on cultivating his powers to the highest point of which they were susceptible; it had raised him from the level of an unlettered laborer, to stand on a star-light eminence, whither the philosophers of the earth, laden with the lore of universities, might vainly strive to clamber with him. So much for the intellect!

¹⁸⁵"The Christmas Banquet," X, p. 284.

¹⁸⁶Ibid., p. 304. ¹⁸⁷Ibid., p. 285.

But where was the heart? That, indeed, had withered--had contracted--had hardened--had perished! It had ceased to partake of the universal throb. He had lost his hold of the magnetic chain of humanity. He was no longer a brother-man, opening the chambers or the dungeons of our common nature by the key of holy sympathy, which gave him a right to share in all its secrets; he was now a cold observer, looking on mankind as the subject of his experiment, and, at length, converting man and woman to be his puppets, and pulling the wires that moved them to such degrees of crime as were demanded for his study.¹⁸⁸

In this respect, Ethan is typical of the unfettered disregard for the being of others, which daguerrean consciousness merely posits as quanta of calculation.¹⁸⁹ To put the world "in order," it subsequently forces the existent as a whole to conform to the uniformity of its own view; it thereby levels down every ordo to that of the manipulatively "objective." Because its end, in fact, is never in the view itself, but rather invisibly lingers at the end of an infinitely remote, single horizon, the daguerrean imposition reciprocally and unknowingly cuts off or prevents any experience of itself; and for this reason alone it is never conscious of its deficiency. Therein subsists its greatest danger to Being: it is unaware of itself. Hence, the objectification of Being consists in nothing less than man's blind, purposeful self-assertion in everything.¹⁹⁰ Fittingly, Ethan's final recognition of the truth is involuntary: it comes in reverie, both out of the fire and back to his heart. His death is thus paradoxically possible only in so far as he has learned to identify with the finitude of his own facticity. In being brought back to himself, he is simultaneously restored to the solicitous sphere of Being.

¹⁸⁸"Ethan Brand," XI, pp. 98-99.

¹⁸⁹Cf. Heidegger, Poetry, Language, Thought, p. 129.

¹⁹⁰Ibid., p. 116.

Neither at home with themselves nor with the world, Hawthorne's villains are therefore doomed to isolation. Like Goodman Brown, the deceit which they practice upon themselves and the world inevitably comes back to haunt them. Caught up in the sanctimonious omnipotence of their ideal, they have already turned their eyes away from the earth, the very ground on which they stand and which alone can bring the figure of the "self" into the fullness of Being--that is, make it "stand forth." Unable to accept their own finitude, the slightest disagreement or divergence from their rigid, systematic frame becomes intolerable. As Kierkegaard remarked of Hegel's own such inflexible system, there is no room in it for a sneeze.¹⁹¹ So it is with the lady at the Christmas banquet, who had fallen short of absolute and perfect beauty "merely by the trifling defect of a slight cast in her left eye. But this blemish, minute as it was, so shocked the pure ideal of her soul, rather than her vanity, that she passed her life in solitude, and veiled her countenance even from her own gaze."¹⁹² The void or emptiness of heart that initiates this general movement away from the world and into the solitude of the "self" is thus already determined by wilfully appropriating the

¹⁹¹Cf. Martin C. D'Arcy, S. J., Dialogue With Myself (New York: Simon and Schuster, A Touchstone Book, 1966), p. 32.

¹⁹²"The Christmas Banquet," X, p. 289. At the other extreme, there are those who share an equal isolation with the egotist, having forfeited all ties to the world, although via a route somewhat circuitous to the most prominent of Hawthorne's villains. Such is the gentleman at the Christmas banquet who, ever since he was able to read a newspaper, "had prided himself on his consistent adherence to one political party, but, in the confusion of these latter days, had got bewildered, and knew not whereabouts his party was. This wretched condition, so morally desolate and disheartening to a man who has long accustomed himself to merge his individuality in the mass of a great body, can only be conceived by such as have experienced it." (Ibid., p.303) Nonetheless, Hawthorne's indictment of those who refuse to take up their own responsibility cannot be taken too lightly.

daguerrean consciousness, that logic of the head which cuts the subject off from the world in its objectification of Being. An authentic subject, on the other hand, comes into the fullness of the existent by leaving the "self" unprotected and open to Being. An authentic subject is thus taken to the world, taken toward the world; he is taken by the world as its own. He is taken by the world in the same way as he is taken by that toward which he is enthralled--in wonder and awe. In moving outside or beyond himself, he enowns the world both concernfully and solicitously, and thereby expresses the unitary structure of his own existence.

Though deceptively simple, Hawthorne's exquisite little piece entitled "Feathertop" poignantly explores this phenomenon, and the related question of authenticity. Mother Rigby sets the tone in her initial observation of the scarecrow: "Why, I've danced with a worse one, when partners happened to be scarce, at our witch meetings in the forest! What if I should let him take his chance among the other men of straw and empty fellows, who go bustling about the world?"¹⁹³ Once brought to life, however, Feathertop's existential situation becomes immediately apparent: "Why lurkest thou in the corner, lazy one? . . . Step forth! Thou hast the world before thee!"¹⁹⁴ With the world "before him," Feathertop must thence decide in what way he will negotiate it, how he will "enter it." The question of Being--that is, his existence (Existenz)--having thus been decided, there remains the twofold problematic regarding his own facticity: (being)-in-the-world and being-(with)-others. Feathertop resolutely accepts his factically limited situation, that "essential condition of his existence;" as Mother Rigby

¹⁹³X, p. 227. ¹⁹⁴Ibid., p. 229.

exhorts: "whatever may happen to thee, thou must stick to thy pipe. Thy life is in it; and that, at least, thou knowest well, if thou knowest naught besides."¹⁹⁵ Thus the scarecrow enters the world, and in its resolute demeanor, "strode manfully towards the town" in order to play its part "in the great world," where "not one man in a hundred . . . was gifted with more real substance than itself."¹⁹⁶ Ironically, amidst the general admiration which befalls the scarecrow, the only two who perceive a discrepancy beneath his appearance are a dog and a child. Unaware, however, Feathertop is soon to learn the truth of himself; and when at last he beholds his image in the mirror, "not the glittering mockery of his outside show, but a picture of the sordid patchwork of his real composition, stript of all witchcraft," Feathertop surrenders to the truth: "For perchance the only time, since this so often empty and deceptive life of mortals began its course, an Illusion had seen and fully recognized itself."¹⁹⁷ Having commenced the world in fear ("feeble and torpid natures, being incapable of better inspiration, must be stirred up by fear"), he terminates it in anxious responsibility to the truth of himself, and similarly takes upon himself his own "death:" "I've seen myself, mother!--I've seen myself for the wretched, ragged, empty thing I am! I'll exist no longer!"¹⁹⁸ Snatching the pipe from his mouth, "he flung it with all his might against the chimney, and, at the same instant, sank upon the floor, a medly of straw and tattered garments, with some sticks protruding from the heap; and a shrivelled

¹⁹⁵Ibid., pp. 234 and 235, respectively.

¹⁹⁶Ibid., pp. 236 and 232, respectively.

¹⁹⁷Ibid., p. 244. ¹⁹⁸Ibid., p. 245.

pumpkin in the midst"--the very image in which the child perceived him as he entered the town.¹⁹⁹ If it seems somewhat foolish to speak of the "life and death" of a scarecrow as we have in the above context, consider that Hawthorne's irony, throughout, continuously throws us back to what the tale itself presents as its most exclusive issue, an issue which addresses the conflict between the truth of oneself and the falsehood of the world in general. Mother Rigby summarily characterizes this world at the conclusion: "There are thousands upon thousands of coxcombs and charlatans in the world, made up of just such a jumble of worn-out, forgotten, and good-for-nothing trash, as he was! And why should my poor puppet be the only one to know himself, and perish for it?"²⁰⁰ Thus, the central problem is not, in fact, that Feathertop was an illusion, for the illusion turns out to be the only truth of the entire tale. Reality, on the other hand, or what is taken to be the reality in our average everyday life, turns out to be a single and continuous lie. Indeed, Feather-top "dies" precisely because he was true to himself. From the outset, Hawthorne had already rehearsed the logic of the conclusion in the ironic rejoinder Feathertop gives to Mother Rigby: "I will thrive, if an honest man and a gentleman may!"²⁰¹ The conclusion: he may not. Mother Rigby sums it up: "Poor Feathertop . . . I could easily give him another chance, and send him forth again to-morrow. But, no! his feelings are too tender; his sensibilities too deep. He seems to have too much heart to bustle for his own advantage, in such an empty and heartless world."²⁰² Clearly, then, the central issue at stake is that of

¹⁹⁹Ibid., pp. 245 and 239, respectively.

²⁰⁰Ibid., p. 245. ²⁰¹Ibid., p. 235. ²⁰²Ibid., p. 246.

authenticity. In his final moment of anticipatory resolution Feathertop forsakes the inauthenticity of the "they" (das Man), that condition of man's average everydayness whose essential tendency it is to level down the possibilities of Being, and in so doing he appropriates the fullness of Being as his own. In following the dictates of his heart, Feathertop effects the interior conversion of consciousness, that movement away from the self-assertion of daguerrean objectification which represents the constant negation of death.²⁰³ His "death," in turn, turns Being itself into the open, renouncing the negative reading of death that the daguerrean consciousness assigns to it.

This interior transformation within the space of the heart constitutes the conversion of consciousness which Hawthorne's oeuvre transacts. When consciousness turns toward and thus proceeds from the interior of the heart's inner space, it thereby secures for itself a safety, a safety thereafter liberated from daguerrean manipulation and its objectification of Being.²⁰⁴ What we have called dioramic consciousness, in reference to the explication of Hawthorne's world hitherto advanced, thus approximates the basic experience of being-open-to-Being. Accordingly, dioramic consciousness neither merely applies knowledge, nor decides beforehand.²⁰⁵ Furthermore, the resoluteness of those characters who turn the conversion of consciousness in Hawthorne's oeuvre does not constitute the deliberate action of a subject as such; otherwise, this movement would merely represent the subjectum of

²⁰³Cf. Heidegger, Poetry, Language, Thought, p. 125.

²⁰⁴Cf. Ibid., pp. 120-21.

²⁰⁵It is, in fact, the basic experience of "thinking" in Heidegger's Being and Time; cf. also, Poetry, Language, Thought, p. 67.

daguerrean consciousness itself. Rather, anticipatory resoluteness enables a subject to transcend the captivity of the actual by opening onto the possibility of Being. Through his resolute anticipation, for example, Dimmesdale articulates the phenomenal structure of care (Sorge) in so far as his comportment toward death reveals his ownmost possibility for Being; and to that extent his existence becomes authentic--if only in its dying. In the distinctive possibility of being his own, he has already wrenched himself away from the "they." This is made possible, in the end, when Dimmesdale's consciousness turns toward the interior of the heart: "It was a ghastly look with which he regarded them; but there was something at once tender and strangely triumphant in it."²⁰⁶ Appropriately, he invites both woman and child to his side; "Yet he trembled, and turned to Hester with an expression of doubt and anxiety in his eyes, not the less evidently betrayed, that there was a feeble smile upon his lips."²⁰⁷ In delivering himself over from the quantitative uniformity of daguerrean logic in the "they," Dimmesdale triumphantly reveals the burning letter on his bosom, the very symbol "of what has seared his inmost heart."²⁰⁸ By turning toward the truth of the caustic accusations of his heart, he qualitatively secures for himself a distinctive safety at the interior of Being, a safety made possible in the ineffable logic of the world's inner space. Dimmesdale has decisively come home to himself, and thus to Being as well. As Rilke expressed it in a letter of 11 August 1924,

²⁰⁶The Scarlet Letter, I, p. 252.

²⁰⁷Ibid., p. 254.

²⁰⁸Ibid.

However vast the "outer space" may be, yet with all its sidereal distances it hardly bears comparison with the dimensions, with the depth dimensions of our inner being, which does not even need the spaciousness of the universe to be within itself almost unfathomable. Thus, if the dead, if those who are to come, need an abode, what refuge could be more agreeable and appointed for them than this imaginary space?²⁰⁹

In this "imaginary space," as Rilke calls it, Dimmesdale is delivered over to Being: "and there was a sweet and gentle smile over his face, as of a spirit sinking into deep repose."²¹⁰ At the same time, Dimmesdale's single gesture secures the possibility of Being for the "other:"

Pearl kissed his lips. A spell was broken. The great scene of grief, in which the wild infant bore a part, had developed all her sympathies; and as her tears fell upon her father's cheek, they were the pledge that she would grow up amid human joy and sorrow, nor forever do battle with the world, but be a woman in it. Towards her mother, too, Pearl's errand as a messenger of anguish was all fulfilled.²¹¹

In coming up to the finitude of his own existence, then, Dimmesdale is touched from out of the widest orbit of Being: the will is shaken by the touch.²¹²

In the same way, Ethan Brand dares the venture "to be" in his ownmost possibility toward death. Having once ventured a glance inward toward the knowledge of his own heart, Ethan "was making himself at home in his old place, after so long absence that the dead people, dead and buried for years, would have had more right to be at home, in any familiar spot, than he."²¹³ In returning to the heartfelt sphere of Being he had so long neglected, Ethan now reclaims the precinct of Being

²⁰⁹quoted in Heidegger, Poetry, Language, Thought, p. 128.

²¹⁰The Scarlet Letter, I, p. 256. ²¹¹Ibid.

²¹²Cf. Heidegger, Poetry, Language, Thought, p. 125.

²¹³"Ethan Brand," XI, pp. 88-89.

as his own. His quest for the Unpardonable Sin returns full circle to its beginning: "It is a sin that grew within my own breast A sin that grew nowhere else! The sin of an intellect that triumphed over the sense of brotherhood with man . . . and sacrificed everything to its own mighty claims."²¹⁴ If, as Bartram remarks, "The man's head is turned he is a madman,"²¹⁵ Ethan's final act at least restores him to the integrity of "self." In turning toward the interior of his own heart, he thus returns himself to earth and so redeems the whole of Being: "Oh, Mother Earth . . . who art no more my Mother, and into whose bosom this frame shall never be resolved! Oh, mankind, whose brotherhood I have cast off, and trampled thy great heart beneath my feet! Oh, stars of Heaven, that shone on me of old, as if to light me onward and upward!--farewell all, and forever!"²¹⁶ The sunrise which follows confirms that Ethan's death has transformed the calculating logic of the head back into the interior of the heart's inner space, where both reside as one: "Earth was so mingled with sky that it was a daydream to look at it."²¹⁷ The transmutation of Being thus comes back into the "stilled repose of the balanced oneness of the two realms within the world's inner space."²¹⁸ In surpassing itself, the marble of Ethan's heart not only comes up to its own "self," but back into the finite nature of its truth as well: "At any rate, it is burnt into what looks like special good lime; and, taking all the bones together, my kiln is half a bushel

²¹⁴Ibid., p. 90. ²¹⁵Ibid.

²¹⁶Ibid., p. 100.

²¹⁷Ibid., p. 101.

²¹⁸Heidegger, Poetry, Language, Thought, p. 135.

the richer for him."²¹⁹ If Ethan takes upon himself the responsibility for his own death in anticipatory resoluteness, however, Beatrice's death, on the other hand, merely articulates to what extent the calculating and manipulative reason of daguerrean consciousness plunders the whole of Being without the conversion of its interior. By treating the "other" as an object, Rappaccini reveals the self-assertion of the scientific-technological objectification of Being at its most unbridled extreme. Yet, in his flagitious disregard for his daughter, he is not alone; even Giovanni, who professes to love her, carelessly imposes his own demands upon Beatrice out of the vacant selfishness of his own heart, and is therefore equally responsible for her death. Her final words, perforce, must fall upon ears long since deaf to the solicitous call of Being.

I would fain have been loved, not feared But now it matters not; I am going, father, where the evil, which thou hast striven to mingle with my being, will pass away like a dream--like the fragrance of these poisonous flowers, which will no longer taint my breath among the flowers of Eden. Farewell, Giovanni! Thy words of hatred are like lead within my heart--but they, too, will fall away as I ascend. Oh, was there not, from the first, more poison in thy nature than in mine?²²⁰

Although the solicitous call to Being characteristic of the conversion of consciousness may sometimes end in death, it does not always; the lesson, however, is always learned at great expense. Thus, Roderick Elliston ironically re-enters the common bond of humanity to tell it a story, a story of a man very much like himself before dislodging the serpentine egotism gnawing at his heart.²²¹ Nonetheless,

²¹⁹"Ethan Brand," XI, p. 102.

²²⁰"Rappaccini's Daughter," X, p. 127.

²²¹See, "The Christmas Banquet," X, pp. 284-85.

Hawthorne's irony is rarely so playful. The tale of Reuben Bourne bespeaks a sterner fate by far. "He regretted, deeply and bitterly, the moral cowardice that had restrained his words, when he was about to disclose the truth to Dorcas; but pride, the fear of losing her affection, the dread of universal scorn, forbade him to rectify this falsehood."²²² Having once concealed the truth out of intellectual pride, Reuben's "one secret thought, became like a chain, binding down his spirit, and, like a serpent, gnawing into his heart; and he was transformed into a sad and downcast, yet irritable man."²²³ Like Dimmesdale, however, the logic of his heart unwittingly works itself out toward an irrevocable resolution. Indeed, the further Reuben strays from the deliberate course he had originally set upon, the more immanently his retribution is at hand: "Unable to penetrate to the secret place of his soul, where his motives lay hidden, he believed that a supernatural voice had called him onward, and that a supernatural power had obstructed his retreat."²²⁴ And he accepts the call to Being, the call for a daring which surrenders to the dictates of the heart, hoping for an opportunity of expiating his selfish and deceitful past. Within the darkened interior at the "heart" of the forest, Reuben, like Ethan Brand, returns full circle. In opening up himself to what has been so hermetically closed off for years, he finally effects the transmutation of consciousness within the heart. Even so, this interior logical design is incomplete without the ironic killing of his son; for with the death of Cyrus, Reuben likewise negates his most indulgent claim to "self." The "self" enters onto the world:

²²²"Roger Malvin's Burial," X, p. 349.

²²³Ibid., p. 350. ²²⁴Ibid., p. 356.

"His sin was expiated, the curse was gone from him; and, in the hour, when he had shed blood dearer to him than his own, a prayer, the first for years, went up to Heaven from the lips of Reuben Bourne."²²⁵ Those lips now speak from the heart. And in the saying of the inner recall, which converts the will to im-pose into the innermost region of the heart's space, all being "other" than the heart turns inward and toward it: "Here everything is inward: not only does it remain turned toward this true interior of consciousness, but inside this interior, one thing turns, free of all bounds, into the other. The interiority of the world's inner space unbars the Open for us."²²⁶

Only when Being is ventured thus, does man create a safety; only thus is he secure; only then does man poetically dwell in the world with both himself and others. Being secure at the interior makes Being spacious. In opening onto the world, man opens the world for others; he thereby brings Being into its fullness. The conversion of consciousness in and toward the interior of the heart's inner space, which Hawthorne's oeuvre transacts, bespeaks the saying of the single-minded injunction, to thine own self be true. This simple axiom commences the world; it is the ground of all solicitous being-with-others; it is the truth of love. Through love, the truth of the heart sets itself to work in Hawthorne's world. Though it begins with "self," Being begins to be at home when it opens onto others, for Being is always situated.

The word "heart" is for Hawthorne the supreme mirror-word, the word enclosing all others: it is sphere, house, temple, prison, cave, grave, lake, fountain, and furnace. The word "head," its

²²⁵Ibid., p. 360.

²²⁶Heidegger, Poetry, Language, Thought, p. 130.

antithetical homologue, is, in comparison, lackluster, indigent, barren. And both the attic and the aerie, images of the observing and sovereign consciousness, refer us back yet again to the central organ that symbolizes better than any other all man's hidden inclinations. For Hawthorne, consciousness was not a brain but a heart And poetic language is not a language of the brain but of the heart.²²⁷

Hawthorne's work is thus decidedly onto-logical. Yet, both head and heart must come together in the conversion of consciousness which Hawthorne's world sets forth in so far as they metaphysically constitute subjective modes of consciousness. In this initial movement, the head remains directed outward while the heart turns inward toward itself. As Martin D'Arcy has expressed it, "Intellect and love work together in a reciprocal relationship, love being a blind beggar and intellect a cripple with good insight sitting on the shoulders of love."²²⁸ In the tradition of Augustine and Pascal, Hawthorne's world therefore articulates a metaphysic of consciousness wherein man abides in his wholeness and integrity, within the fullness of Being. As Pascal has said: "Nature has set us so well in the centre, that if we change one side of the balance, we change the other also."²²⁹ Ontologically, however, the conversion of consciousness most central to Hawthorne's oeuvre primordially transpires within the interior of the heart's own space, the inner space of the world--and there alone. In its ontological constitution, then, love inclusively expresses, within the single interior of its space, the dual metaphysical postures of head and heart. It does so, furthermore, at the level of situated Being, whereby man ek-statically

²²⁷Normand, p. 341.

²²⁸Dialogue With Myself, p. 31.

²²⁹Pensées, p. 21.

dwells within the double horizoned structure simultaneously constituted by his love of "self" as well as the "other." The world of Hawthorne's work thus dwells in love; it abides in its poetic saying of the inner recall. The heart must have its voice, for only in the heart does man transcend the metaphysical attitude itself, that referential surface of the world-view which Hawthorne's work internally disrupts: "And as for ripeness--and as for progress--let mankind always do the highest, kindest, noblest thing, that at any given period, it has attained to the perception of; and surely that thing cannot be wrong, nor wrongly timed!"²³⁰ At the interior of Hawthorne's world, then, love brings about the future, whereas daguerrean consciousness in and of itself can only be within the delimited confines of the actual, its present moment. In the end, the onto-logic of the head represents nothing more than a photograph album with fixed instances--"never the future coming about before us, the step from yesterday to today, the first prick of forgetfulness in the memory."²³¹ Hawthorne's world initiates that first prick of forgetfulness in the memory; it displaces the inauthenticity of the actual in favor of an authenticity grounded in the possibility of Being itself, and simultaneously gives man back to the ek-static temporality of his own existence.

Over and against the eternal present of daguerrean consciousness and its hypnotic gaze toward infinity, Hawthorne's world effects a present which holds a finite future in it, a present whose very temporality is grounded in that future. Reuben Bourne begins the possi-

²³⁰"Earth's Holocaust," X, p. 393.

²³¹Julio Cortazar, Hopscotch, trans. Gregory Rabassa (New York: New American Library, A Plume Book, 1966), p. 468.

bility of a future only when the burden of his synchronic past has been withdrawn;²³² Roderick Elliston initiates a new life with Rosina only when the eternal moment of his morbid egotism has been discarded;²³³ Owen Warland inaugurates a new beginning for his art only when the superficial motivation of his past endeavors has been nullified;²³⁴ Matthew and his bride embark upon a new life only when their impossible quest has been forsaken;²³⁵ Peter Goldthwaite launches a realistic future only when the pretense of his "castle in the air" has been exposed;²³⁶ Robin discovers he is his own man only when his immature dependence upon his kinsman has been displaced;²³⁷ Pearl enters onto the world only when the truth of her birth has been laid bare;²³⁸ the two "owls" ironically disengage themselves from a stifling past only when the House has been abandoned.²³⁹ Hawthorne's world attests the bankruptcy of all who would live a present either grounded in the sterile fixation of its past or the impossibility of its future. "In this world, we are the things of a moment, and are made to pursue momentary things, with here and there a thought that stretches mistily towards eternity, and perhaps may endure as long. All philosophy, that would abstract mankind from the present, is

²³²"Roger Malvin's Burial," X, p. 360.

²³³"Egotism; or, The Bosom-Serpent," X, p. 283.

²³⁴"The Artist of the Beautiful," X, p. 475.

²³⁵"The Great Carbuncle," IX, p. 165.

²³⁶"Peter Goldthwaite's Treasure," IX, pp. 383 and 406, respectively.

²³⁷"My Kinsman, Major Molineaux," XI, p. 231.

²³⁸The Scarlet Letter, I, p. 256.

²³⁹The House of the Seven Gables, II, p. 318.

no more than words."²⁴⁰ Pascal has said it another way:

We do not rest satisfied with the present. We anticipate the future as too slow in coming, as if in order to hasten its course; or we recall the past, to stop its too rapid flight. So imprudent are we that we wander in the times which are not ours, and do not think of the only one which belongs to us; and so idle are we that we dream of those times which are no more, and thoughtlessly overlook that which alone exists. For the present is never our end. The past and the present are our means; the future alone is our end. So we never live, but we hope to live; and, as we are always preparing to be happy, it is inevitable we should never be so.²⁴¹

Whereas the inauthentic existence of Hawthorne's villains appropriates an either infinitely remote past or future, authentic existence on the other hand appropriates the present as its own, a present which can be its own only in so far as its future is finite. "How sad a truth--if true it were--that Man's age-long endeavor for perfection had served only to render him the mockery of the Evil Principle, from the fatal circumstance of an error at the very root of the matter!"²⁴² Only within the heart, that "little, yet boundless sphere,"²⁴³ does man hold both a past and a future within the present. "Purify that inner sphere; and the many shapes of evil that haunt the outward, and which now seem almost our only realities, will turn to shadowy phantoms, and vanish of their own accord. But, if we go no deeper than the Intellect, and strive, with merely that feeble instrument, to discern and rectify what is wrong, our whole accomplishment will be a dream."²⁴⁴ For Hawthorne, then, the present is authentic only when it contains the finite possibility of its future, a present moreover which has already taken up the possibility of its own

²⁴⁰"Old News," XI, p. 133.

²⁴¹Pensées, pp. 60-61.

²⁴²"Earth's Holocaust," X, p. 403.

²⁴³Ibid. ²⁴⁴Ibid., p. 404.

death in anticipatory resolution. For death is man's final horizon, forever beyond his understanding, the plenary horizon of nothingness in which Being itself is grounded. As the skeleton at the Christmas banquet betokens:

And if, in their bewildered conjectures as to the purpose of earthly existence, the banqueters should throw aside the veil, and cast an inquiring glance at this figure of death, as seeking thence the solution otherwise unattainable, the only reply would be a stare of the vacant eye-caverns, and a grin of the skeleton-jaws. Such was the response that the dead man had fancied himself to receive, when he asked of Death to solve the riddle of his life; and it was his desire to repeat it when the guests of his dismal hospitality should find themselves perplexed with the same question.²⁴⁵

If Aylmer's life apparently contradicts the ek-static structure of man's existence in Hawthorne's work, it does so only paradoxically: "The momentary circumstance was too strong for him; he failed to look beyond the shadowy scope of Time, and living once for all in Eternity, to find the perfect Future in the present."²⁴⁶ In looking "beyond the shadowy scope of Time," authentic existence thus disrupts its synchronic, historical continuum, and thereby "stands out" from itself in an ek-static present animated by its own finite future. Hawthorne's villains, on the other hand, maniacally attach themselves to the infinite omnipotence of an idea, an idea grounded in the impossibility of a future in so far as it is unattainable. Forever closed off to possibility, Hawthorne's villains live an eternally repetitive present in which existence itself has already escaped their grasp. "Dr. Heidegger's Experiment" poignantly bears witness to this phenomenon, and the absurdity of its four "melancholy old creatures, who had been unfortunate

²⁴⁵"The Christmas Banquet," X, p. 287.

²⁴⁶"The Birth-Mark," X, p. 56.

in life, and whose greatest misfortune it was, that they were not long ago in their graves."²⁴⁷ Dr. Heidegger alone accepts the finitude of Being: "But the doctor's four friends had taught no such lesson to themselves. They resolved forthwith to make a pilgrimage to Florida, and quaff at morning, noon, and night, from the Fountain of Youth."²⁴⁸ Hawthorne knew better: "Death . . . is an idea that cannot easily be dispensed with, in any condition between the primal innocence and that other purity and perfection, which, perchance, we are destined to attain, after travelling round the full circle."²⁴⁹

Hawthorne's work is thus decidedly existential. In contrast to the inauthentic lives of its villains, "which end like literary articles in newspapers and magazines, so pompous on page one and ending up in a skinny tail, back there on page thirty-two, among advertisements for second-hand sales and tubes of toothpaste,"²⁵⁰ Hawthorne's world exhorts the free and daring venture of Being. Against the fear and ultimate despair of its villains, indicative of "every human existence which supposedly has become or merely wills to become infinite,"²⁵¹ Hawthorne's world sets forth a resolute anxiety characteristic of the conversion of consciousness, and ontologically grounded in the interior space of Being, Pascal's logic of the heart, Hegel's logic of quality. At this most inward interior, the space of the world becomes both the public and

²⁴⁷IX, p. 227. ²⁴⁸Ibid., p. 238.

²⁴⁹"Earth's Holocaust," X, p. 393.

²⁵⁰Cortazar, p. 409.

²⁵¹Kierkegaard, "The Sickness Unto Death," in "Fear and Trembling" and "The Sickness Unto Death," trans. Walter Lowrie (Princeton: Princeton University Press, Princeton Paperback Edition, 1968), p. 163.

private expression of a single, unitary structure. As Diderot's famous dialogue makes clear: "I'm down here in this world, and I'm staying here."²⁵² At home with both himself and the world, man thus creates a safety for Being wherein he dwells primordially secure. In his solicitous being with others, he articulates an authentic "public" life, a life hypothecated in openness and love. Hawthorne's treatment of the psychosomatic phenomenon illustrates, for example, the essential publicness of life, and prefigures its contemporary relation to the psychiatrist's couch. Accordingly, to make one's private "sins" public can sometimes cure the disease: witness Roderick Elliston. Similarly, Dimmesdale's interior conflict is finally assuaged when he reveals the truth of himself on the pillory. Even more persuasively, the entire novel is structured by an explicit alternation between public and private scenes, between the pillory and the pulpit on the one hand, and the interior drama of the heart on the other. In the same way, the avowed brotherhood at Blithedale reflects the morally untenable nature of those distinctions which separate man from man in society, just as the fact of the relation between Zenobia and Priscilla mirrors an implicit sisterhood decisively more significant than the playful masquerade Zenobia would make of it.²⁵³ In this respect, Westervelt epitomizes to what extent the daguerrean consciousness of the scientific-technological world-view manipulatively devastates the solicitous sphere of Being. As a phenomenon, Westervelt's control over both Zenobia and Priscilla constitutes

²⁵²Denis Diderot, "Rameau's Nephew," Selected Writings, trans. Derek Coltman (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1966), p. 140.

²⁵³A. N. Kaul, "The Blithedale Romance," in Hawthorne: A Collection of Critical Essays, ed. A. N. Kaul (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1966), p. 158.

a peculiarly sinister variation of the technological imposition, which makes a delusive show of "spirituality" while really imbued throughout with a cold and dead materialism: "it suggests the exploitative power which technology was putting into the hands of men: the power to bring individuals into total bondage while leaving them outwardly free and untouched. . . . against the brotherhood of voluntary love, which is based upon the magnetic chain of human sympathy, Westervelt's mesmeric union is enforced bondage, destructive of true individuality as well as true community."²⁵⁴ In its power of "remote control," the technological attitude thus typified by Westervelt reflects the equally remote infinity of its far-sighted vision as conclusively as it prefigures the technological ambition of the twentieth century itself: "Man puts the longest distances behind him in the shortest time. He puts the greatest distance behind himself and thus puts everything before himself at the shortest range."²⁵⁵ And yet, this frantic abolition of all distances brings no nearness. "What is least remote from us in point of distance . . . can remain far from us. What is incalculably far from us in point of distance can be near to us. Short distance is not in itself nearness. Nor is great distance remoteness."²⁵⁶ Solicitously counterpoised against the remoteness of the daguerrean view, Hawthorne's work appropriates a circumambient milieu which affectively brings man back into the nearness of Being, the interior of the heart's inner space wherein existence sustains him with its touch.

²⁵⁴Ibid., p. 159.

²⁵⁵Heidegger, Poetry, Language, Thought, p. 165.

²⁵⁶Ibid.

Yet, in its existential constitution, the world of Hawthorne's work not only negotiates man's being-with-others, but equiprimordially articulates the unaccommodated "self" as well. Unlike the modern philanthropist at the Christmas banquet, "who had become so deeply sensible of the calamities of thousands and millions of his fellow creatures, and the impracticableness of any general measures for their relief, that he had no heart to do what little good lay immediately within his power, but contented himself with being miserable for sympathy,"²⁵⁷ whosoever ventures the conversion of consciousness, like Dimmesdale, finds peace within himself, and in the resolute anticipation of death. Authentic existence enjoys its "self" within its ownmost factual mode as "thrown possibility."²⁵⁸ Hawthorne's own life bears the stamp of such an authenticity; although he loved to find himself among a circle of guests seated about a fire, and while he likewise enjoyed the physical intimacy of a crowd, he equally required life's most refreshing moments of solitude: "What would a man do, if he were compelled to live always in the sultry heat of society, and could never bathe himself in cool solitude?"²⁵⁹ This solitude, however, is decidedly not the solitary confinement Hawthorne's villains experience at the center of their Being, but rather constitutes a genuine enownment of the "self" in face of man's most existential problematic. Though unaccommodated in certain respects, man always comes up to himself and to the world whenever he obeys the saying of the inner recall, and its forward recollection of the single-

²⁵⁷"The Christmas Banquet," X, p. 303.

²⁵⁸Heidegger, Being and Time, p. 243.

²⁵⁹The American Notebooks, VIII, p. 26.

minded injunction: to thine own self be true. Nevertheless, existence is hard work, and brings with it its own demands. As Heidegger expressed it: "The hard thing is to accomplish existence."²⁶⁰ The difficulty is in the conversion, in going over from the self-assertive domination of the head to the work of the heart. And in this most existential of all man's acts, he is emphatically alone. Above all else, perhaps, Hawthorne's oeuvre expresses this radical solitude, man's indelible sense of apartness with which authentic existence must come to terms over and against the inauthentic, collective activity of the "they;" the world of Hawthorne's work is thus discovered beneath "the superficial, reassuring, consoling myths of an America on the road to prosperity and discount happiness."²⁶¹ But neither America nor the world has ever thanked anyone for disrupting its comic and conventional myths of the easy life, as Apollinaire so thoroughly managed for the twentieth century, in favor of the kind of tragic myths which "involve man in a wholly different way, thus forcing him to look at himself, not as he appears from his conventional gestures or in retouched and idealized photographs, but upon the screen of his own consciousness."²⁶² And so for the most part, Hawthorne's age did the best it could; it ignored him. Yet, Hawthorne's work arrives out of the future; his world is present to us now, a world which discredits the noisy talk and idle chatter of the "they," supplanting, in its stead, the solitude of silence wherein man abides uniquely hushed, and listens--to the resolute call of Being.

²⁶⁰Heidegger, Poetry, Language, Thought, p. 138.

²⁶¹Normand, p. 332.

²⁶²Ibid., pp. 332-33.

III

The tripartite structure of The Scarlet Letter not only conceals a deeper structure beneath it, but also reflects one which underpins the entire oeuvre, and which functions on a level closely approaching that of an obsession. For throughout Hawthorne's work, a single theme persistently surfaces to the top: that of the journey and return. Dimmesdale returns to the spot from which he strayed seven years prior; Coverdale enters the experiment at Blithedale only to return once again to the "world;" Goodman Brown journeys forth from the clearing at dusk and returns again at sunrise; the narrator of "The Celestial Rail-Road" re-enters the space of his dream only to dismiss it at the end with the "light" of reason from whence it originated; the narrator of "The Procession of Life" comes back to his own situation, it is not time for death; Feathertop commences the world only to return to the lifeless heap from which he began; Roderick finds salvation in being restored to the love of Rosina, the wife whom he had originally deserted so many years past; the Christmas banquet returns to itself each year, terminated only with the death of Gervayse Hastings; Drowne's art reverts to its dull mechanical style after his brief interlude with the lady of the wooden image; Roger Malvin's curse is lifted only by Reuben's return to the site from whence it was incurred; the narrator of "A Virtuoso's Collection" forsakes the illusive museum for the "real" world from whence he entered; the Gray Champion disappears as suddenly as he appeared; the revellers at the may-pole disperse once again to the gloomy world forced upon them when driven from their classic groves of fable; cast aside by his mother, the gentle boy is again reunited only to lose her in the end; Ethan Brand returns to the place from whence his quest for the

Unpardonable Sin began; Wakefield comes home twenty years later to discover that the final joke is on him; David Swan interrupts his journey with a nap, only to return to the highway of life refreshed but unaware; Dr. Heidegger's guests become the shriveled victims of their age prior to the experiment; Robin returns from his labyrinthian sweep of the town to the ferryman who brought him hence; Nurse Toothaker returns to the bedside of the dying man who had originally disclaimed her; the wanderer of the "Night Sketches" returns to the fireside; the wives of the dead return to their beds; the haunted mind returns to its sleep. The list goes on. This obsession with circularity in Hawthorne, to come round again to the beginning, at once attests to both the roundness of his oeuvre, and the inevitable end which it implies, for roundness ends wherever it begins. The circle is endless only to a geometrician grounded in the "viciousness" of his infinity. Life knows better.

Being is round. Hawthorne's oeuvre was his life; and as his oeuvre, Hawthorne's life was round. Hawthorne's life came full circle, and by a most uncanny, symmetrical route. "My journey, as thou callest it, forth and back again, must needs be done 'twixt now and sunrise."²⁶³ It is a curious fact, then, that Hawthorne's European travels were thus circular, and nearly perfectly so. For from the States (Wayside), Hawthorne proceeded to England, France, and Italy; he returned from Italy, to France, then to England, and finally back to the States (Wayside). It is a more curious fact that the very same ship captain, a Captain Leitch, who took him over to England brought him back again. It is a most curious fact that Hawthorne's absence from home reflected the same amount of time that

²⁶³"Young Goodman Brown," X, p. 74.

Dimmesdale avoided the pillory: seven years. Similarly, there is a corresponding relation between Hawthorne's life and the emphasis on time in his oeuvre; we discover thus: the early works emphasize the past; the middle period, the present; and his final period, especially the unfinished manuscripts, the future. Suffice it to say in general that throughout his life, until those final desparate years, Hawthorne's most pressing issue had been expressed most poignantly in his preface to the Twice-Told Tales: "They are not the talk of a secluded man with his own mind and heart, (had it been so, they could hardly have failed to be more deeply and permanently valuable,) but his attempts, and very imperfectly successful ones, to open an intercourse with the world."²⁶⁴ To open an intercourse with the world: Hawthorne's work was the very way out of his own personal tendencies toward introspection, what Melville called his "indoor cast of mind."

Where openness, expansion, and a hankering after infinitude are characteristic of his contemporaries, Hawthorne sticks to his secretiveness, and to the atmosphere of enclosure, the awareness of things closing in. The journey ends in a house and within a locked room, with the rediscovery of another self for whom it has all been a dream; he has never left home. But this does not mean that he has never adventured; for there can be cosmic adventure in introspection, as much as in exploration.²⁶⁵

Torn between the androgynous poles of Being, between the "self" and "other," Hawthorne's life affirms the deep-seated duality of his nature: he was at once both proud and humble, cold and sensuous, sluggish and active, conservative and liberal, realistic and romantic.²⁶⁶ Correspondingly, his life, like his work, reflects the struggle with the single-minded injunction: to thine own self be true. Hawthorne's struggle with himself articulates his resolutely anxious endeavor to come

²⁶⁴IX, p. 6. ²⁶⁵Levin, p. 100. ²⁶⁶Cowley, p. 551.

up to this imperative, an imperative he had imposed upon himself at a very tender age--since the time he emerged from the accidental injury to his foot--at the age of twelve.

How difficult it must have been, for example, for Hawthorne to underplay his gravitation toward Melville and the exotic world this nomad offered his profound sensibilities, at the expense of himself and in the interest of his wife, Sophia. Since he often confided to his journals those experiences which affected him most, the very absence of any detailed commentary on Melville speaks for itself. Hawthorne's silence, on this point alone, bespeaks a world of critical supposition. Yet, Sophia's insistence upon reading everything he committed to paper undoubtedly accounts, at least in part, for Hawthorne's reticence, and simultaneously points to his solicitous regard for her. He was forced to keep many such secrets. And so the journey ended for Hawthorne as it had begun, within his indoor cast of mind. His life-long struggle with time, and the journey and its return, came home to haunt him. As he expressed it at the Wayside, 1863, less than a year before his death: "The Present, the Immediate, the Actual, has proved too potent for me."²⁶⁷ In his final years, he could no longer sustain the immediacy of that resolutely forward recollection which grounded not only the world of his work, but his very life--the recollection of the single-minded injunction. As his final fragmentary pieces confirm, the issue most at stake had become the future. The fragmented consciousness of Dr. Grimshawe's Secret and the obsession with immortality, in both Septimius Felton and The Dolliver Romance, testify to the dream-like consciousness with which Hawthorne

²⁶⁷"To a Friend," the dedication piece to Franklin Pierce, Our Old Home, V, p. 4.

quitted the earth. The concerns of the haunted mind had become his only ones; he grew especially weary of the feeling that he had been "here" before--the deja vu of going through the same emotions meaninglessly: as writers repeat their plots, thus man's life repeats itself, and at length grows stale.²⁶⁸ Like the dream-scape of Dr. Grimshawe's Secret, in the end everything was comparable to a dream for Hawthorne, an unforgotten reality.²⁶⁹ The "flight of time" in Fanshawe which characterizes Dr. Melmouth's study, that flight of time so "swift as the wind, and noiseless as the snow-flake . . . a sure proof of real happiness,"²⁷⁰ now weighed heavy on Hawthorne's troubled mind. Death was close to him, and he knew it. Yet, it was no surprise; nor could he suddenly fear what had informed the most persistent theme of his entire oeuvre. Believing, or pretending to believe, that a change of air was his only hope for recovery, he determined upon a journey to the region of lakes and hills that had been his true native land all his life.²⁷¹ Having succumbed in those final barren years to the expectations and demands he had set upon himself throughout life, half-way between waking and dream, and unable to write, he summoned one last spurt of courage and set off, on 12 May 1864, with his dearest friend in life, to die alone--far from the domestic complications of Sophia and his children to whom he had unselfishly devoted his ownmost being.

Making their way up into the White Mountains, perhaps with the expectation of reaching Crawford Notch, the two friends stopped off at the little town of Plymouth. Hawthorne seemed to be having more and more difficulty in walking and using his hands. Was it paralysis or a heart attack? However, on the evening of May 18 he

²⁶⁸Levin, pp. 97-98. ²⁶⁹Ibid., p. 98.

²⁷⁰III, p. 337. ²⁷¹Normand, p. 77.

went off to sleep peacefully enough. Between three and four o'clock in the morning of the nineteenth, Pierce went into his friend's room, and upon touching him discovered that he was already cold. That was how Hawthorne died, at the age of sixty, in the completest solitude, his last thoughts, his torments, his doubts, and the mystery of his genius locked up forever in his heart.²⁷²

He returned home only in death. At the gravesite, The Dolliver Romance was most fittingly placed upon his breast. His heart embraced in death what he could not complete in life.

Being is round. The world is round around the round Being.²⁷³

Being is around the world. We come from nothing and go to nothing; from the darkness of the womb, to the darkness of the grave. In between, there is only the void which waits to be filled. The conversion of consciousness, at the interior of the heart's inner space, takes the void as its own and embraces this void with its fullness, the fullness of temporality, the ripeness of its own time. The ontological movement in Hawthorne's oeuvre, both in and toward the heart's interior, creates a safety for Being itself, a security without care, a care-free center which turns toward the open draught of Being and into it. In Hawthorne, dioramic consciousness begins this movement, wherein man creates a safety at the interior of himself, a secure re-pose outside the daguerrean objectification of Being, and wherein man reposes in the logic of the heart. This unguardedness, outside the protective defenses of the head, intimately secures the wholeness of Being around man himself. Dimmesdale secures a safety in the daring venture to be himself; his gesture lights up the presence of Being and makes it present in its widest orbit, wider

²⁷²Ibid., pp. 77-78.

²⁷³Cf. Bachelard, The Poetics of Space, pp. 234 and 240, respectively.

by far than that of the comet, which illumines the night sky and yet conceals him. And yet, to Chillingworth, Dimmesdale is now hidden more than ever, for under rational analysis the gesture of the heart has already taken flight. It is gone. ("Thou hast escaped me!" he repeated more than once. "Thou hast escaped me!")²⁷⁴ Being thus shatters every attempt to penetrate it; it turns the calculating im-position back toward its destruction. Even in his dying, Chillingworth turns his back to Being; his death becomes the altogether inconstant and null.²⁷⁵ Reciprocally, Dimmesdale acknowledges where Being touches him most; his death becomes the constant and full. His death sets Being on the way of its orbit once again; the Letter goes abroad. It too will die—even Being. And yet, while Being is, it can be only in so far as man enowns it at the center of himself, the interior of his own heart.

The inner and invisible domain of the heart is not only more inward than the interior that belongs to calculating representation, and therefore more invisible; it also extends further than does the realm of merely producible objects. Only in the invisible innermost of the heart is man inclined toward what there is for him to love the interior of uncustomary consciousness remains the inner space in which everything is for us beyond the arithmetic of calculation, and free of such boundaries, can overflow into the unbounded whole of the Open. This overflow beyond number arises, in its presence, in the inner and invisible region of the heart. . . . The widest orbit of beings becomes present in the heart's inner space.²⁷⁶

Dimmesdale's conversion recalls the objectness of objects back into the space of the heart. It rescues the thing from objectness and rescues it for Being. Dimmesdale's conversion returns the Letter to the world. It makes things once again familiar, and man familiar to himself.

²⁷⁴The Scarlet Letter, I, p. 256.

²⁷⁵Cf. Heidegger, Poetry, Language, Thought, p. 125.

²⁷⁶Ibid., pp. 127-28.

Dimmesdale's conversion gives both the thing and man back to Being, and does so in such a passionate way that the fullness of Being comes up and back to its own within the heart itself. In being returned to its own domain, Being, as "being-there" (Dasein), is secured. But how?

In the saying of the inner recall, Dimmesdale dares Being. The round presence of Being is marked off in its being present in the word: "Language is the precinct (templum), that is, the house of Being."²⁷⁷ Dimmesdale accomplishes the return from the realm of objects, and their representation, back to the innermost region of the heart's space only in this precinct, the temple of Being itself. The Letter flees from its objectness to become language--that is, part of the world--only when Dimmesdale accepts the dare to speak. In the saying, the Letter becomes its own:

People of New England! . . . I stand upon the spot where, seven years since, I should have stood Lo, the scarlet letter which Hester wears! Ye have all shuddered at it! Wherever her walk hath been . . . it hath cast a lurid gleam of awe and horrible repugnance roundabout her. But there stood one in the midst of you, at whose brand of sin and infamy ye have not shuddered! . . . But he hid it cunningly from men, and walked among you with the mien of a spirit, mournful, because so pure in a sinful world!--and sad, because he missed his heavenly kindred! Now, at the death-hour, he stands up before you! He bids you look again at Hester's scarlet letter! He tells you, that, with all its mysterious horror, it is but the shadow of what he bears on his own breast, and that even this, his own red stigma, is no more than the type of what has seared his inmost heart!²⁷⁸

Dimmesdale's saying punctuates the silence of the crowd more piercingly than even the meteor punctuates the dark fissure of the night; it rends the jagged edge of silence away from the void and back to the fullness of the world, the fullness of the existent, the fullness of Being. Language

²⁷⁷Ibid., p. 132.

²⁷⁸The Scarlet Letter, I, pp. 254-55.

makes Being full. "The multitude, silent till then, broke out in a strange, deep voice of awe and wonder, which could not as yet find utterance, save in this murmur that rolled so heavily after the departed spirit."²⁷⁹ In daring language, Dimmesdale restores Being to its fullness; he makes its presence present; and he does so in a saying which accomplishes the oneness of the two realms, both head and heart, because it has already been turned toward the interior of the heart's inner space. "That oneness, as the integral globe of Being, encircles all pure forces of what is, by circling through all beings, in-finitely unbounding them."²⁸⁰ Because the saying in-finitely unbounds all beings, it thus finitely binds them to themselves, and to themselves alone. Secure within themselves, the Being of all beings has thereby been won over. Dimmesdale's saying is a saying that recalls the temple of Being to itself. Language thence encircles in and through the crowd, bringing every being immediately before its own facticity, and at the threshold of the temple as well, but only at the threshold; at best, it can but murmur. And yet, it is a beginning; it begins to form the work of language on its own, the final saying that goes over from the vision of the head to the saying of the heart. Dimmesdale's articulate utterance, on the other hand, has come round to the temple full circle, and back into it. It has already pronounced the round sound itself, and brought it to repose. Being is round.²⁸¹ Dimmesdale's pronunciation brings the Letter into its

²⁷⁹Ibid., p. 257.

²⁸⁰Heidegger, Poetry, Language, Thought, p. 136.

²⁸¹"What calm there is in the word round. How peacefully it makes one's mouth, lips and the being of breath become round."(Bachelard, The Poetics of Space, p. 239.)

own, into the fullness of words, into the saying of its discourse. Out of the silence comes the sound. The silence and the saying come together; together they articulate the spoken. For what is spoken is never, and in no language, what is said.²⁸² The "A" becomes Art, becomes alphabet, becomes alpha, becomes beginning; and yet it is itself the end as well. It is beginning and end. It has already come round the full circle to itself. Dimmesdale's conversion occurs in the poetry of language. It is therefore uncommon; it is exceptional. In turning toward the freedom and openness of its finitude, it denies the customary im-position of the "self" in its everyday, eternal imposture of the "they." Dimmesdale's saying makes Being safe, secure; it makes it sound. It is a saying that follows something to be said, a saying which is said solely in order to say it.²⁸³ And in its very saying, it turns away from itself; it turns itself toward man: "The more venturesome are those who say in a greater degree, in the manner of the singer. Their singing is turned away from all purposeful self-assertion. It is not a willing in the sense of desire. Their song does not solicit anything to be produced. In the song, the world's inner space concedes space within itself."²⁸⁴ As Rilke has expressed it in the third of his sonnets to Orpheus (1922): "Gesang ist Dasein." Song is existence.²⁸⁵ The more venturesome is thus the singer; the singer makes space. He makes the round space for Being. The

²⁸²Heidegger, Poetry, Language, Thought, p. 11.

²⁸³Cf. Ibid., p. 137. ²⁸⁴Ibid., p. 138.

²⁸⁵Rainer Maria Rilke, Sonnets to Orpheus, trans. M. D. Herter Norton (New York: W. W. Norton and Co., Inc., The Norton Library, 1962), p. 20:

Gesang, wie du ihn lehrst, ist nicht Begehr,
Nicht Werbung um ein endlich noch Erreichtes;
Gesang ist Dasein.

singer takes the first breath that makes the round space of Being there, so that when Being is there, it is the singer (Da-sein). Being and the singer are one in the breath which dares to say; and "those who are more daring by a breath dare the venture with language."²⁸⁶ And who is this singer who ventures more than any other?

He is the poet, but only the poet "whose song turns our unprotected being into the Open."²⁸⁷ In the saying of the inner recall, Dimmesdale takes up the song of the singer and dares to venture forth from the everyday nature of man into the round realm of Being. "The converting inner recalling is the daring that dares to venture forth from the nature of man, because man has language and is he who says."²⁸⁸ Dimmesdale is thus the poet whose song sings the round Being itself. And yet, this round Being is in no sense thereby handed over to the geometrician, whose thinking is exterior to thinking.²⁸⁹ For Being always comes into its completion within the finitude of its own time, and so can never enter onto the single, infinite horizon of the geometrician's eternally vacant stare. Rather, the simple song which Dimmesdale sings teaches a profound lesson in both finitude and solitude, but only to those who listen. It is outside the noisy chatter of the "they," and therefore "to the point." Dimmesdale's song is near and to the point because it echoes, amidst the interval of silence, the authentic interrogation,

Song, as you teach it, is not desire,
Not suing for something yet in the end attained,
Song is existence.

²⁸⁶Heidegger, Poetry, Language, Thought, p. 140.

²⁸⁷Ibid. ²⁸⁸Ibid.

²⁸⁹Cf. Bachelard, The Poetics of Space, p. 233.

"What does it mean to be!" It echoes, however, only with another question, for the answer is itself already contained in the question. Dimmesdale's saying sings the song: "What does it mean to die!" It sings the saying with such an immediate frankness that those who are talking cannot hear. The saying is therefore like the singer himself: "tout rond."²⁹⁰ The roundness of the poet is the roundness of his question. The poet Dimmesdale thus sings the saying of the inner recall long forgotten since Parmenides: What is the meaning of Being! The question, like its meaning, comes round full circle in the solitude of the poet who sings it. And the roundness of the question comes back to us in his death. Death makes poets of us all.

Being is round. The time of Hawthorne's oeuvre is now; it is present to us in its future. Those with ears may hearken to the intimate silence of its void. The silent void of Hawthorne's world unnerves us with its strange and alien listening. It is the silence of the dark, the silence that echoes a saying, a saying out of a silence which is, as night is to darkness, the disembodied shade of silence itself. As with Montaigne's essays, Hawthorne's work informs a single question; it answers none. It is silent. The question is the saying which has long since been forgotten: what does it mean to be! This saying of the question has been forgotten because it is too near. For this reason, it has been forgotten on purpose. Hawthorne's work disrupts the talkative chit-chat of forgetfulness with a silence that remembers

²⁹⁰In English, the expression betrays to what extent the hypocritical tendencies of the scientific-technological world-view reflect its manipulatively pre-dominant and psychotically insecure (careless) mode of consciousness; for such an earnest openness is never "round," but "square." (Cf. Ibid.)

what has become remote, and which is near to us now because there is nothing in the way. Hawthorne's work takes in a single breath the saying of the question what does it mean to be and, in an aspiration singly full of sound, creates a world. The world of Hawthorne's work is in the poetic saying of its language. The poetic saying of Hawthorne's work speaks to us today, and does so within the silence of its listening, a listening which echoes the saying of the inner recall to be. The poetic saying of Hawthorne's oeuvre "gathers the brightness and sound of the heavenly appearances into one with the darkness and silence of what is alien. By such sights the god surprises us. In this strangeness he proclaims his unfaltering nearness."²⁹¹ The poetic saying of Hawthorne's work brings man back to earth and into the fullness of Being. Hawthorne's world is his work; it brings man into the fullness of dwelling. Poetically, Hawthorne's oeuvre abides.

²⁹¹Heidegger, Poetry, Language, Thought, p. 226.

SUMMARY

THE GROUND. The middle ages had conceived of a picture as an impenetrable surface on which figures and things were depicted. It was not until about 1420 that Brunelleschi defined the painting as a plane cross section through the pencil of rays connecting the eye of the spectator with the objects seen, so that by around 1435 Alberti was able to formulate the picture as an imaginary windowpane through which we look out into a section of space. Because the Renaissance predicated its radically new approach to the visible world upon this neoteric definition of artistic construction and representation, the world itself became uniformly spatial in so far as it could be geometrically articulated. Indeed, this revolutionary technique for graphic representation created the very possibility of an objective science; and it is fair to say that the subsequent development of all the sciences during the Renaissance was directly contingent upon it. To the degree that the world had become geometrically spatial, man became an observer--the dis-interested spectator of his "view." Similarly, to the extent that the new representational technique of perspective delineated the space of an "objective" world and created the basis for an "objective" science during the Renaissance, it subsequently fostered the metaphysical world-picture whereby the subjectum negotiates the world from an un-situated and theoretically ubiquitous point of view--that is, outside of it. Once the world became transparent, it ceased to be that space where man comes up "against" things, and became instead the luminous reflection of consciousness. Cartesian metaphysics solidified this position when it

defined the existent as objectivity of representation, and truth as certainty of representation; as such, the existent is only so long as it is set before us as an object, as something calculable and manipulable. Similarly, the world became determinate only in so far as man had it in his view. This anthropological analysis of the world attained exclusive prominence at the end of the eighteenth century and is essentially characterized by having a world-view (Weltanschauung). For Newton the existent became known as correct or true to the extent that it was represented as a refractive condition of the eye; for Kant the existent became known as correct or true in so far as it was represented either as a determinate concept through the instrumentality of the a priori forms of the categories of the understanding, or as an indeterminate concept of an "aesthetic" object. Thus, both the "scientific" and "intellectual" attitudes came to be predicated on the analogous operation of re-presentation.

Blake's disgust with the tradition of Newton and Cartesian dualism constitutes a radical break with the eighteenth-century aesthetic and metaphysical world-view. He continuously inveighed against the scientific-technological objectification of Being. Yet, for the most part, his age ignored him. Similarly, the romanticism and transcendentalism of the nineteenth century merely transferred the transparency of an isolated "cogito" onto the external world itself. Thus, the subject-object dichotomy remained inherent in any investigation of "reality." Although romantic poets rhetorically rejected "rationalism" in favor of "feeling," they continued to employ its perceptual bias in so far as they appropriated perspective in order to isolate single, emotional states. In looking back toward an historical subjectivity, romanticism

synchronically framed a whole life in terms of sequential, emotional pictures placed in a theoretical perspective. In the same way, Emerson's "transparent eyeball" ignored the opaque carnality of existence. In his essay "Nature," he invariably relied upon the traditional epistemological metaphor of picture-thinking, and its correlative ground in perspective. Like the scientific consciousness, Emerson's "reason" defines its scope in terms of the infinite and eternal; because it fails to recognize the very situatedness of Being, it dis-locates itself from the world it seeks to perceive and, henceforth, ascribes to mind what was once the task of the body. Truth remains objective in the sense that it is there for all to see, it is the object of the mind; and man can know the truth only as a completed view already set before him. This attitude represents a logical extension of Cartesian metaphysics, wherein the existent as a whole forfeits its opacity and becomes visibly transparent--that is, invisible. Thus, man gets a view on it, a picture of the whole thing. In effect, Emerson no more wished to transact the truth of vision than did Descartes, for Emerson's vision, like Descartes' Dioptric, merely constructs the visible according to a model-in-thought. Indeed, that Emerson uses the word "picture" in his essay to such an excess suggests that he recognizes the moment of vision as a fixed, organized image, anticipating the daguerreotype by three years.

If in the history of modern science the advent of perspective marked the beginning of a first period, the discovery of the photograph culminated the attitude of an age. More than any other invention of the nineteenth century, the daguerreotype became the metaphor for technology in the public consciousness. In general, the daguerrean view supported the publicly biased attachment to technology and its concomitant

perceptual prejudice to the extent that it helped "locate" man in the universe; it encouraged the fictive time and space which accompanies having a world-view. Once man had captured the existent scientifically, and done so in a purely "objective" fashion divorced from the partial subjectivity inherent in microscopic and telescopic instrumentation, the existent was assumed to be "there-before-him" once and for all--that is, in the sense we have defined as "rational." In 1849, when Samuel Dwight Humphrey sent one of his plates of a multiple exposure of the moon to Jared Sparks, Sparks remarked that it revealed the actual motion of the earth on its axis, distinctly measured for half a minute's time within the space of one-tenth of an inch. Once time and space have been set before us as an entirely measurable function, as the kind of thing on which we can formulate a perspective, both time and space are demonstrated to be calculable and manipulable; they are, in fact, proven to be exclusively objective, and to be so "really." The daguerreotype's ability to record a direct image of man's "location" with respect to the moon and stars asserted man's presence in the universe, and pushed him further into the forefront of that frame of reference by which the existent as a whole would henceforth be envisioned, manipulated, and constituted. The daguerreotype terminated the emphasis which the age placed on visual representation and its correlative ability to arrive at the truth of nature, and reality in general. Moreover, the daguerreotype not only objectified the thing, but the subjectum as well; the daguerrean portrait transformed people into things in so far as it extended and multiplied the human image to the proportions of mass-produced merchandise. Nevertheless, whatever "object" it captures, the photograph, like the world-view, sets its image before us as a view; the

spectator simultaneously sets himself apart from the view to the extent that it represents a privileged consciousness anterior to perception itself. In the sense that the photograph objectified the world, it further evidenced the "correctness" of Cartesian metaphysics whereby the subjectum knows the object as extended and separate from him in a continuous and uniform space according to an a priori rationality or fixed perspective. Scientifically, of course, the photograph culminated the age of mechanical industrialism. Thus, perspective created the very possibility of an objective science. Telescope and microscope had further magnified the scientific objectification of the world. But with the photograph, the scientific mission had entered a new era which would extend the ubiquitous deceit of the camera-eye far into the twentieth century itself. Since it was able to capture the interior gestures of both matter and mind, the photograph constituted the foundation not only for sub-atomic physics, but for the new worlds of endocrinology and psychopathology as well.

When Gertrude Stein said of Picasso that with his pictures commenced to want to leave their frames, she prefigured the most elementary posture of twentieth-century art in general. Although the twentieth century divinizes the image of life framed by the world-view because it remakes technology into the new godhead, its artists have relentlessly declared that god is, once and for all, dead. Very simply, this means that we can no longer unquestioningly accept the all-embracing grace of the ubiquitous vision of science. Rather than envision the world as god would see it, twentieth-century art liberates the world for man and man for the world; it situates man within the limited point of view, the freedom of his own "perspective," and rids him of the

cystostic vision of a technology which would control him with the same disrespect by which it controls its entire object-world. And this is what cubism explicitly proclaimed. Because cubism appreciated the spectacle of the world as a certain kinaesthetic situation, it redefined the significance of correlative perspective in perception. It thus renounced the transparently ubiquitous point of view which always "sees" the thing from an ideal perspective, as a mental construct or idea--Leibniz's perspectiveless posture. Cubism reformulated the phenomenal space of the world, the non-geometrical space in which my relation to the thing is constituted by the situation. In so far as the "realism" of the photograph is derivative, it tells us nothing of our primordial appropriation of a world. If art were to escape its utter subjection to the world-view, it had to rediscover that primary "reality," being-in-the-world. Cubism pictorially articulated the primordial situatedness of Being prior to its intussusception by a malignant theoretical optics. It reversed the traditional perspective of Euclidean space. Even before cubism, modern painting had definitively disclaimed Euclidean space as an a priori. The images of Seurat and Rousseau transact the "interior" space of the world; as formal or phenomenal spaces they are naive only to the extent that there is no "room" for an impersonal object. By manipulating its foreground as the emblematic function of an expressive depth, modern painting apprehended the object in its phenomenal space, one which incorporates the spectator, takes him in, envelops him. Because it does not set the perceiver apart, as a viewer, its expressive space emancipates it from the frame. Yet, in their insubordination to the emmetropic delineation of reality, modern painters were not alone.

Just as in painting the composition commenced to leave its frame, so it was with the musical composition as well; for with "atonality" or "antitonicity," as Stravinsky preferred to call it, the tonal function of chords escaped the frame of the diatonic system. Similarly, with Apollinaire, Proust, and Ibsen, the poem, novel, and play abandoned the narrative and temporal continuity which had informed the basic structure of literary art since the Renaissance "rediscovered" Aristotle. Thus, by rejecting the lineality of a continuous and uniform perspective-space, modern art exploded that most elemental bias which had plagued Western civilization for more than four centuries. In returning to the expressive composition of the work, modern art abrogated the subject-object dichotomy constituted and sustained by the principles of resemblance, imitation, and representation. By virtue of a transposition, either juxtaposition or superimposition, modern art escaped the continuous and uniform perspective of "transition." We no longer observe the art work from a pre-determined distance, as a view, but touch it by entering onto its space. To the extent that modern art brings all of its "elements" equally into the foreground so that something is "in front" or "in back" of something else only in so far as the gaze of the "perceiver" distinguishes it as such, the art work enters onto the world as an incomplete "gestalt" which demands to be completed in order to be experienced at all. In its demand to be completed, modern art asserts an ontological priority in time, not space, and appropriates this significance in so far as the motion becomes identical with its completion. The transposition of modern art thus constitutes what today, in effect, we call "montage." For the twentieth century, as for the Renaissance, it was art which once again preceded science and technology,

and their most significant product since the daguerreotype--the "motion" picture. The motion in modern art prefigured cinematic montage and its purely transitional nature--temporal juxtaposition. Modern art not only opened onto the revolutionary form of the film and its subsequent technological development, but once again laid the ground for all of the seminal advances in the science and technology of the twentieth century. It created, in fact, the very possibility of a "post-modern" physics some fifty years ahead of its time. For what, after all, is the space of the electron, wherein it concurrently travels through two or more different routes without traversing the space between them at all, if not the pre-objective, "behavioral," situated space of being-in-the-world? It is nothing less than the expressive space of modern art. The post-modern physicist is subsequently encouraged to talk about a theory in terms of its "elegance," rather than its "truth." And in so doing, he has at last returned to a world of beauty, the very world of art from whence he originally emerged during the Renaissance. As it did when Einstein introduced his theory of relativity and Heisenberg his principle of indeterminacy, the world henceforth runs the risk of continually being upset--indeed, reappropriates the very principle of chaos as part of its ground. The perceptually biased "defense mechanisms" of optical perspective are, at last, de trop.

THE FIGURE. For the nineteenth century, the daguerreotype appreciably offset the temporal and spatial displacement caused by the latest technology; for it securely located man within the perspective co-ordinates of his world-view. Yet, violent technical innovation engenders alienation and the pain of isolation in any age. Hawthorne's

fiction definitively expresses the alienation and pain of isolation which his own age experienced. Hawthorne's fiction condemns the unconscious bias of perception of his own culture, and thus opens the possibility of new perceptions with respect to the counter-environment or "world" of the fiction itself. Hawthorne's fiction speaks against the age. What he most generally disliked about his age was its attitude toward the visual sense, an attitude which overwhelmingly reflected the major concern of his day as it appeared vis-à-vis technology--specifically, the "daguerrean" or world-view. Grounded in finite temporality, Hawthorne's descriptive gaze never gives us the whole picture any more than the mind is able to grasp the meaning and value of Being within a single and systematic mental equivalent. Hawthorne's emphasis on feeling, sensibility, and interiority reflects his reaction to the prevalent "rationalism" of his day, and appropriates, in its place, the changing appearance of each object with respect to the temporality of perception itself. The scientific frame of reference provided Hawthorne with images which enabled him to interiorize the world afresh in order to communicate with it, to rediscover its primordial texture and consistency rather than describe its popularly accepted fixation in physical, chemical, and biological laws. Hawthorne's external objects consistently defy their abstracted theoretical frame: the Letter, the House, the Faun, the serpent, the ribbon, the maypole, the veil, the lime-kiln--all these objects signify, in fact, the interior enownment of a world, partial elements of a spatial configuration, the personal completion of a structural "gestalt" within a subject. For Hawthorne, an object is "objective" only to the extent that it perceptually informs the partial aspect of a "field." Indeed, in the most basic sense of the

term, all of Hawthorne's symbols are, in fact, emblems. They exist within a spatial configuration, and appear as "figures" against an ambiguously indeterminate "ground." Thus it is with Hawthorne's greatest symbol, the scarlet letter. Hawthorne's fiction abrades the traditional descriptive distance; we find ourselves in a revolutionarily unique landscape where the immediate encroaches so entirely upon our perceptual field that we can scarcely obtain a perspective at all. Like the cubists, Hawthorne's descriptive gaze transforms the object into a set of synecdochic oscillations whose visual orientation strives toward maximum determinateness. It obtains only in so far as the perceiver "completes" it himself. This technique is clearly cinematic, and prefigures the changing angle, variable perspective, and repertoire of variously focused "shots" indicative of the highly sophisticated "motion" picture of the twentieth century.

Hawthorne's changing light manifests this perceptual "distance" as an expressive function of the gaze itself. Our proximity to any given figure in the field is solely predicated upon the descriptive intention to "take it up." Because description discloses the affective aspect of an object, its perceptual appropriation primordially reflects an intentional "motion" in the subject, and not the representational determination of an object as such. Thus, in Hawthorne, distance invariably constitutes the expressive completion of a figure against a background, and not the static and fixed pictorialism of photographic perspective. Hawthorne's variable lighting alters the discovery of its objects according to the changing situatedness of the perceiver. Unlike daguerrean representation, which seeks to bring into sharp focus the entire content of its frame, Hawthorne's emblematic field, grounded in

darkness itself, merely suggests the incomplete outlines of its figures as they are intermittently elucidated by the perceptual intention to take them up. For every object the gaze investigates, it simultaneously forfeits its hold upon the other objects in its field; they, in turn, slip away or fade back toward the obscure periphery from whence they originated. Like the modern art work, Hawthorne's descriptive gaze brings the object out of its predetermined location and to the surface. It explodes the predetermined objectification of a reality transparently and uniformly illuminated by the scientific vision, which would impose its own inflexibly rigid structure in order to manipulatively dominate the delimited content of its fixed and sterile view. The world of Hawthorne's fiction passionately defrays the inordinate cost of an objectively neutered universe and its bankrupt vision, in favor of a polar and metamorphic reality situated in the personal glance of a perceiver. Amidst this sexually ambiguous world, Hawthorne's gaze enowns the interiority of its objects as they in turn reconstruct the subjective consciousness perceiving them. Perceptually grounded in the mutability of time, the object refuses the absolute determination assigned to it by the formal and spatial priority of the world-view. The inter-play of light and shade, of reflected and refracted light against an obscure backdrop of black, allowed Hawthorne to populate his universe with objects interiorized by the opacity of human consciousness itself. Hawthorne's Faustian gaze dared to see reality differently than his age would have him view it; rather than intellectually codify the images of experience, he ventured into its primordial chaos in order to resurrect the very body of the world itself, a body whose physical and opaque carnality had long since been discarded by the disembodied image of

daguerrean perspective, the flat projection of the scientific and technological world-view.

Yet, if Hawthorne's indirect lighting were to articulate the objects of an emblematic gaze so that they virtually protrude to touch us, he would have to project a personal and concrete field which interpenetrates every experience of his world, and concomitantly allows for the inter-sensory unity of every "thing" in that world. In other words, Hawthorne's emblematic gaze required a means at his disposal by which he could capture the reality of the world of his vision, and his appropriation of the emblem itself partially accomplished that task, for in the emblematic technique he discerned that indeterminate field which insinuates the object and perceptually enables it to come to life. The depth of Hawthorne's vision, however, demanded something more; and he unearthed that key in the diorama. For Hawthorne, the diorama represented the most expressively intense perceptual model of how we primordially articulate the world. What best characterizes the dioramic experience is its ability to absorb a reflective identity via the circumambient darkness constitutive of the precondition for involvement. Just as silence constitutes the ground of all communication, darkness makes it possible. Darkness is immanence; it recreates the interior of Being, the way in which the world makes its first appearance. Dioramic darkness engages the spectator-reader by surrounding him, and thus establishes the specific situatedness by which a percipient makes the birth of Being possible in the first place. Reciprocally, because it encloses the spectator within the immediacy of its own perceptual re-enactment, this dioramic darkness concurrently generates the creation of a self-sufficient world. In fact, the spectator-reader has already

been put into the situation by virtue of the presencing temporality of those images which spontaneously appear amidst the ground of chaotic darkness, and are already on the way toward a determinate order. Thus, Hawthorne's images are essentially cinematic. Against the enclosing dark, the cinematic image "takes shape," and prematurely stands out against this indeterminate field. This perceptual, physical blackness which pervades Hawthorne thus yields the key that unlocks not only the perceptual habit of Hawthorne the man, but also discloses the interior, self-sufficient world of his oeuvre. If the reflective attitude sustains its space by thinking the illuminated relation of its parts, the pre-reflective interior of dioramic darkness, on the other hand, unites me to an affective space precisely because it intimately merges with the surface of my body, and threatens to absorb the very reflective identity which can always disperse it by "turning on the lights." Because it constitutes a dimension in which I am entirely enveloped, darkness thus recreates the depth of an interior space wherein I am perceptually situated at all times. Without anchor in externally objective co-ordinates, Hawthorne's dioramic darkness grounds the world of his work in the ambiguous affectivity of a subject, that zone of not-being-in-front-of whereby things are primordially able to come to light, and, on the descriptive level, provides the very darkness necessary in the cinema in order to show up the performance.

However, if dioramic space can be distinguished from the daguerrean view in so far as it essentially envelops us rather than spreading its content out before us, and therefore outside of us, it also distinguishes itself on another equiprimordially meaningful level. If Hawthorne discovered, in the diorama, the cirumspective black in which the shape of

his images could make their first appearance, he also detected an interior "motion" by which they unfold before us and come to life. In the juxtaposition or, more properly speaking, the "transposition" of his images, we find Hawthorne's brilliant cinematic vision most pronounced. While the internal composition shapes the significant content of Hawthorne's image, it simultaneously determines those images which precede and succeed it, for the sequence of his imagery is predicated on the pre-reflective motion of perception, that motion in the visual field which "makes sense" of the objects it discovers. Hawthorne's cinematic "shots" constantly alter in proportion to the extent of their discovery, for they continuously suit or accommodate the transfigurative motion of perception, the discernment of variously changing figures against an indeterminate ground. In the diorama, Hawthorne had already discovered montage. Because it transcends or trans-forms the individually framed images which produce it, montage creates the illusion of motion. Hawthorne employed the literary equivalent of montage in order to create a similar kind of motion in the mind's eye. His images continually manipulate the affective distance between spectator and scene not only as a function of space, but also in time. Hawthorne's editorial technique of "cutting" and "splicing" directly regulates and modifies the tempo in which his images appear. Most often, his visual effects do not demand fast cutting. Indeed, in many instances, fast cutting would ruin the desired effect, for the movement is frequently located within the image and virtually demands a fixed, consistent camera-viewpoint. Thus, Hawthorne's strong, eloquent arrangements between successive images and within the single image (mise-en-scène), invites stylistic comparison with Eisenstein, especially his later style in Ivan the Terrible, where

he had already evolved away from a rapid cutting style to a slow, elaborate pictorialism. Like the later Eisenstein, Hawthorne's predominant tempo is slow; slow motion, delayed and deliberate cutting, these most suitably accommodate his preferred themes, especially that of the processional. If point of view determines the correlation between foreground and background, it is more readily understandable why Hawthorne prefers a slower movement between successive images, rather than a rapid cutting style, for it gives him more time to create an ambience, to animate the scene, to linger, to suggest--the speed, in short, which allows the most extensive interchange between foreground figures and background objects. Hawthorne's imagery is thus clearly cinematic; its interior motion reflects an intentional subjectivity beneath perception which not only accounts for the birth of a world, but also sustains the reality of that world. He anticipated the modern cinema by more than half a century, and in that process he prefigured the articulation of an affective spatial depth wherein perception primordially transpires.

Moreover, if Hawthorne's dioramic gaze enabled him to reveal an indeterminate world no longer constituted by the daguerrean frame or world-view, it simultaneously structured a consciousness which was itself ambiguously circumvolved. Because cinematic consciousness projects a space which comes and goes, it subsequently creates an iconology whose jagged edges split and tear the image rather than seal it off. At the interior of this disconnected, unenclosed consciousness, Hawthorne heuristically interrogates the meaning or significance of those apparitions which inhabit the world of his work. The world of Hawthorne's work previews the purely apparitional space of cinema and its irreverent

disregard for objectivity by re-incorporating appearance and reality. The cinematic vision expresses the immediacy of its apparitions. Grounded in facticity, Hawthorne's world is thus formal only in so far as it is phenomenal; because it has no framework fixed in a physical or pictorial space, but merely structures the mobile reticulation of intention, it thus asserts, as its primary formal characteristic, a virtual present. It is in the mode of dream. Hawthorne's fiction characteristically evokes a dream mode, a mode which like all of modern art brings its elements equally into the foreground. The dream provided Hawthorne with a diastolic counterbalance to the ponderous systole of rationalism and its synchronic historical perspective. Hawthorne explicitly reconstructed the logic of dream consciousness in order to undermine the arrogant and manipulative certitude of the daguerrean view, thus undercutting the subject-object dichotomy itself. Against the transparency of scientific certitude, Hawthorne's fiction asserts the ambiguous concealedness of truth and its corresponding epistemological appropriation by a factual subjectivity which must call it into Being. By re-establishing the primacy of the phenomenon, Hawthorne's dream-like vision returns to the immediate order of apparitions as they make their first appearance in consciousness, and by which the world in turn originally announces itself. The dream enabled Hawthorne to structure a vision of the world primordially grounded in appearance, a vision indistinguishable from the "reality" it is presumed to re-present. Reality becomes the oblique transformation of appearances, a lived-through structure whereby man's facticity announces itself anew. For Hawthorne, the dream mode thus cancelled out the abstracted and theoretical logic of second-order consciousness; the truth of the world no longer obtains from its non-

contradictory agreement within a fixed and sterile mental perspective of correct and true ideas. Indeed, dream even distorts the "probable," that quantitative security-blanket by which the masses live their lives mathematically.

Hawthorne's interior world of dream translates the dioramic gaze into the subjective realm of metaphysics as an analogous model of logic. In contrast to the mediate, reflective consciousness of the rational attitude, this new interior consciousness reveals a logic immediately in touch with Being. Only outside Being does man objectify the object; within the concernfully solicitous sphere of his existence, the object is objective only in so far as it "objects." Hawthorne's ontological turn toward the interior of Being discloses a logic which converts the immanent objectness of consciousness into the heart's innermost region. Within this intimate space, the heart takes up the things of the world as they proximally express the nearness of Being. That the remoteness of Being, which the perspective of the scientific-technological world-view takes for granted, represents the most pressing dilemma of a visual culture is already indicated in the growing sense of division between appearance and reality; thus, in conjunction with its aforementioned evils, the perspective of a world-view also introduced an obsession with the problem of hypocrisy. Hawthorne's oeuvre, on the other hand, seeks to direct or turn consciousness away from itself, and back to a single-minded injunction long forgotten since Socrates. And it is now remembered in the same way that we recall a friend who was once dear to us. At the same time, this injunction evokes a general image which initially hovers before the world of Hawthorne's work, and which completes the work itself. And though Hawthorne's metonymic iconology

manipulates its "space" so that it freely moves about, his interior consciousness and its corresponding logic of the heart's inner space nevertheless creates an intimate and unified bearing toward the world of his work, a bearing spiritedly at odds with the continuous and fixed attitude of the world-view. It is this intimate and unified bearing which recalls the single-minded injunction long since forgotten: "to thine own self be true!" This imperative so immediately undercuts the hypocritical duality of the world-view that its recognition at once illuminates the deceitful disposition of the technological attitude and its attendant evils. By being true to himself, man can at last learn to accept the reciprocal "reality" of appearance and its formal relation to the structure of the world. Hawthorne's oeuvre attests this fact, and solicits the truth of Being within the ambiguous openness at the interior of the heart's inner space. Hawthorne's work accomplishes this venture by transforming the technological dominion of purposeful self-assertion in the objective into the saying of an inner recall; and it inaugurates this transformation with the single-minded injunction. Once Being has been dared this way, it now lies in the balance. The world of Hawthorne's work safely negotiates this balance once it executes the saying of the inner recall. In going over from the calculating will to the interior of the heart, the world's inner space, the conversion of consciousness is therein complete, whereby consciousness secures itself for Being. Thus, the conversion of consciousness at the interior of Hawthorne's world appropriates a "physics of the exception" rather than the rule; it care-fully takes man beyond the protective rule of uniformity toward that interior space which bears the personal and unique stamp of Being. Ultimately, Hawthorne's work accomplishes this conversion within the

precinct or temple of Being itself, within the solicitous sphere of language. In the saying of the inner recall, Being is at last liberated for man and for itself. Grounded in the single-minded injunction, Hawthorne's oeuvre speaks against the age. It was only the destitution of his own age which, unaware of what it was doing, prevented Hawthorne's work from becoming timely. Yet, Hawthorne's oeuvre arrives out of the future; the future is present in it. The world of Hawthorne's work is present to us now. It returns man to the solicitous sphere of Being in which he most primordially dwells, the temple of language. The world of Hawthorne's work reposes in the poetry of its saying. Poetically, Hawthorne's oeuvre abides.

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The dissertation submitted by John J. Dolis, Jr. has been read and approved by the following committee:

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The final copies have been examined by the director of the dissertation and the signature which appears below verifies the fact that any necessary changes have been incorporated and that the dissertation is now given final approval by the Committee with reference to content and form.

The dissertation is therefore accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

12/1/77
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