THE MODERN NOVEL: A SEARCH FOR THE REALITY OF ORDER

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by

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"True art is not mimesis," imitation; it is, and has to be an act of conquest, the discovery of a new sphere of human consciousness, and thereby of a new reality.

_____ Kahler

PREFACE

After selecting and reading the novels for the purpose of this study, I found it very difficult to perceive why they were written in the first place. That is not to say that they were deficient artistically. I discovered, however, that an evaluation based solely on aesthetic grounds left something to be desired in regard to a unifying motif. I was at a loss as how to proceed until I decided that the investigation must, necessarily, hinge upon several assumption: that the novel as a work of art constitutes a reality, and that it is primarily concerned with discerning the human reality.

Erich Kahler in the work, The Inward Turn of Narrative, argues that reality has always been the primary object of art even in the chaotic modern times and that the modern reality has its roots in cultural history. Furthermore, he contends that art has somehow perceived or reflected the shift in man's consciousness from an external to an internal mode of expression; he views this shift as having been necessary to compensate for the individual's inability to adjust, capably, to the external world. Although Kahler terminates his argument with novels of the eighteenth century, it is conceiveable that the modern novel is in keeping with the pattern discovered by Kahler and seeks to further expand man's grasp of reality in the direction of a more secularized form of existence, one

dependent not upon God's volition, but upon man's.

In this thesis I will investigate the nature and scope of the artist's confrontation with reality in the novel. I have chosen for my purpose seven novels from the 1950's which best exemplify old, new and prevailing movements of thought. Also, because of the massive volume of literature written during this period, my choice of works has been determined to a degree by personal reading and preference. The novels investigated are: William Faulkner's The Mansion, John Steinbeck's East of Eden, William Styron's Lie Down in Darkness, Flannery O'Connor's Wise Blood, James Baldwin's Go Tell It on the Mountain, Benard Malamud's The Assistant, and Saul Bellow's Henderson the Rain King.

Since the most significant problem encountered in these works is one of reality, it would seem logical to begin this inquiry with a definition of reality. This is, however the most illogical way to begin because reality as a concept cannot be explained or defined except in the realm of philosophy. Because the focus here is not upon the philosophical but upon the artistic, I will assume that reality is a state as of yet unknown, as of yet incomprehensible. It is a state pertaining to the human condition and perceiveable, in part, because of the innumerable acts of creation down through the ages which have sought to expose

the underlying order and relevancy of existence.

I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to Professor Gerrit W. Bleeker who endured, and when he could no longer endure, counseled my writing and study. I wish also to thank Professor Charles E. Walton because he was kind enough to endure me, and because of what he has helped me to learn about the necessity of order in art and life.

Emporia, Kansas W. M. R.

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CHAPTER I

THE NEW REALITY

If, as artists contend, art is an attempt to discern a semblance of order and meaning from that which outwardly defies all human understanding, all constraint, then what is the form of this order and from whence does it originate? There is a rather obvious paradox set forth by the first half of this question, for to ascribe to an enlaid structuring of appearances is to discount Hemingway's and other twentieth-century novelists' support for the realm of nothingness shrouding and permeating existence. To reduce all or at least part of the work of an artist to the state of absolute nothingness, a feat which Robert Penn Warren does convincingly in his argument over A Farewell to Arms, is seemingly to depict Hemingway as the master feigner of reality, one who creates a void and then sets in motion a masque of death above the blackness.[1]

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[1] Ernest Hemingway, Three Novels: The Sun Also Rises, A Farewell to Arms, The Old Man and the Sea, with introduction to AFA by Robert Penn Warren. Subsequent references to this edition are given in parenthesis within text.

Hemingway in no way intends such a disparagement. In fact, he intends just the opposite by juxtaposing the relics of what he sees as a dead reality with the immediate presence of the "real" and concrete world. He affects to discredit powerfully a vision of life and order unresponsive to the reality of his fiction and mankind's in general. In A Farewell to Arms, Frederic Henry tells the reader:

> . . . I was always embarrassed by the words sacred, glorious, and sacrifice and the expression in vain. We had heard them, had read them, on proclamations that were slapped up by billposters over other proclamations, now for a long time, and I had seen nothing sacred, and the things that were glorious had no glory and the sacrifices were like the stockyards at Chicago if nothing was done with the meat except to bury it. . . . Abstract words such as glory, honor, courage, or hallow were obscene beside the concrete names of villages, the numbers of roads, the names of rivers, the numbers of regiments and the dates . . . . (AFA, 185)

Frederic Henry's moral dilemma expressed here is not so much created by the adverse nature of war as he has experienced it, but by the obviously false tenets of "a social morality" intertwined with his own perception. He has recognized a reality in the landscape of war which seeks to manifest and interpret itself only in terms of time and space. It is a reality inherent in and accountable to Frederic Henry's earthly dimension. The reality, at first a metaphor, then finally a symbol, grows until it destroys the concept of a universal and righteous plane--a realm of divinity--and in turn asserts itself as the dominant order of the universe.

Frederic Henry's vision of cosmic disorder is, actually, Hemingway's vision of an order that has destroyed and supplanted the old order of existence which was dependent upon an all reliable and moral absolute. The above quote seeks to rekindle the imminent presence of a human reality at the expense of a divine reality. Although Hemingway's art gathers impetus from the disparity existing between the two planes of thought, the tension depicts somewhat accurately the flawed sensibility of the modern mind and the schism separating the inner and outer world of the artist's perception.

The problem, to be sure, existed on a historical basis in one form or another. Existence, disciplined by a faith in the "unseen," was disrupted with the rise of a scientific perspective in the seventeenth-century, which, in turn, caused a mental fragmentation termed by Thomas Stearns Eliot as "a dissociation of sensibility." This condition was the result of knowing or realizing that the objective and subjective portions of the mind each demanded a different sensibility. In his prose work, The Governor, Eliot, a seventeenth-century prose writer, discusses the problematical function of order in maintaining a semblance of reality. The medieval concept of divine order by Eliot's time was questioned to such a degree that the veil of faith necessary for its perpetuation was undermined by rationalism, and the system of belief collapsed:

> Take away order from all things, what should then remain? Certes nothing finally, except some man would imagine eftsoons chaos. Also where there is any lack of order needs must be perpetual conflict. And in things subject to nature nothing of himself only may be nourished; but, when he hath destroyed that where with he doth participate by the order of his creation, he himself of necessity must perish; whereof ensueth universal dissolution.[2]

The quote itself reflects an increasingly objective attitude in regard to man's existence.

The cleavage of the inner and outer reality manifested itself in different forms. In Miguel De Cervantes' Don Quixote (1615?), this duality created a hoard of opposites in the artistic illusion: appearance versus reality, idealism versus realism, the imagination versus the understanding, and on until the very architecture of the work "seemed" based upon anthithesis. Subsequent geniuses of the novel genre, Defoe, Fielding, Flaubert, Dostoyevsky, Joyce, and Faulkner, each with a more complex vision, serve to broaden the schism between the inner and outer worlds. They are, plausibly, groping for a substance by which an understanding or synthesis may unite the disparate elements of their vision and art.

In another art form entirely, Albert Einstein with his mathematical intuiting of relativity, proved that no two single entitles in the universe may be successfully measured or plotted in terms of one another. As a result, "quantity," an

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[2] E. M. W. Tillyard, The Elizabethan World Picture, p. 11.

evaluative concept functional only in the objective universe, because irrelevant and irreverent in regard to the whole human being. Cervantes proved as much nearly three centuries before. James Joyce, with his inexplicable creation, Finnegan's Wake, accomplished with words what Einstein had with numbers. The importance of these men's creative efforts is compared, by Erich Kahler, to the old order:

> In that early world, reality is so monumental, so unfragmented, so comprehensive, or rather so unfathomably simple, that it contains an almost inexhaustible abundance of meaning for us. Therein lies its magnificence. The old divine or mythic entities are not primarily singularities that imply something universal. Rather--despite all their particularity--they are in origin universal entities, projections of utterly real tribal units and ancestors.
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> . . . . . .
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> The new ascending symbolism begins magnificently with Don Quixote, which in this sense we call the first modern novel. The new symbolism is ascending because it proceeds not from a supernatural, extrahuman, or prehuman event whose reality is assumed, but from individual characters and events which from the outset possess only a representative, not an actual, reality.[3]

The process which capitulates these men's achievement seeks to elucidate not the essence of existence, or its preexistant form, but the actual form of reality itself.

Hemingway, to use again the example from A Farewell to Arms, finds his base for absolutism in the real world.

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[3]Erich Kahler, The Inward Turn of Narrative, pp. 54 and 57.

The transformation of realities contains an "earth-bound" vision of despair because the spiritual dimension of the artistic work wastes itself while attempting to reconcile a meaning between the external world of chaos and war and the internal world of Frederic Henry. The latter finally is enveloped by a wasteland vision of the external world. The vision which emerges from the chaos of the work is reflected poignantly by Frederic Henry's attitude after Katherine has died:

> But after I had got them out and shut the door and turned off the light it wasn't any good. It was like saying good-by to a statue. After a while I went out and left the hospital and walked back to the hotel in the rain. (AFA, 332)

Frederic Henry's inability to comprehend the irony of Katherine's death is off-set, in degree, by an aesthetic projection of the landscape at the beginning of the novel. The projection incurs, somewhat, from an absolute adherence to the earthly reality and the artist's effort to render a vision of beauty from which to establish a basis for contrast and irony:

> The plain was rich with crops; there were many orchards of fruit trees and beyond the plain the mountains were brown and bare. There was fighting in the mountains and at night we could see the flashes from the artillery. In the dark it was like summer lightning, but the nights were cool and there was not the feeling of a storm coming.

> . . . There were big guns too that passed in the day drawn by tractors, the long barrels of the guns covered with green leafy branches and vines laid over the tractors. To the north we could look across a valley and see a forest of chestnut trees and behind it another mountain on this side of the river. (AFA, 3-4)

The obvious duality captured, here, will enlarge in scope and eventually encompass, on a more personal level, the human predicament and the problem of an inner and outer reality in the sensibility of Frederic Henry.

Whether Hemingway and, for that matter, other modern novelists set out to consciously delineate patterns of human action and thought after the more historical patterns derived from myth, allegory, and ritual have lost their respective meaning for the modern audience remains to be seen. For a closer scrutiny of the reader's sensibility, one must look into history with hopes that the form of the novel may somewhat crystallize.

John of Patmos' vision of apocalypse in the final book of the New Testament, although on the cosmic scale is very similar to Hemingway's. David Ketterer defines the word "apocalypse" as John used it when he wrote the book of Revelation while exiled upon the island of Patmos:

> There is a necessary correlation between the destruction of the world and the establishment of a New Jerusalem. . . . The visionary aspect of [Apocalypse] is radically undercut by an indirect satirical bitterness and possibly a sense of paranoia. . . . The scope and grandeur of the Apocalypse

> necessitates a diminution of the human element.[4]

After having established the word in its past religious context, Ketterer modernizes the term for the benefit of his argument:

> Apocalyptic literature is concerned with the creation of other worlds which exist, on the literal level, in a credible relationship (whether on the basis of rational extrapolation and analogy or of religious) with the "real" world, thereby causing a metapherical destruction of that "real" world in the reader's head.[5]

The form of literature indicated by Ketterer above does not imply a structural concept at all. Might one conclude, then, that the novel when understood in such a context is as formless as that which engenders it and, in a similar manner, representative of certain patterns and motifs perceived by the artist from his actual experiences?

If so, the reality inherent within the novel, the pattern of order, relies upon the author's exposure to and cognition of the disparate elements within his own universe. An assimilation of these disparate elements necessarily precludes a formation analgous to a structural casting of the artist's vision. The form, while negating a functional or structural classification, assumes a quality which contains,

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[4] David Ketterer, New Worlds For Old, p. 7.

[5] Ibid., p. 13.

while, in the same manner, reveals a pattern of reality woven within.

Although, theoretically, it is necessary to discuss the form of the novel in terms of concept, the problem of effect must not be overlooked as a major aspect of the form. Ketterer distinguishes apocalyptic literature as being somewhat destructive in its form, a form beset by paranoia, bitterness, and degradation. He establishes that such literature renders the reader's vision of reality unacceptable and forces its own reality upon the reader's sensibility. While reading A Farewell to Arms, for example, one would inescapably assume, with some variance of course, Frederic Henry's wasteland vision.

CHAPTER II

CREATED REALITY: THE ARTISTIC PROCESS

A critic has remarked that in one way or another all modern literature has become a metaphorical wasteland, which if traced to its origin, would be discovered in the heart of twentieth-century man. This assertion rings like an epitaph. Whether or not the critic is genuine is unimportant. What is important is that many critics and readers cannot separate old concepts and metaphors from the actual reality of the fiction itself. They have become lost in the wake of Eliot's on-going "conpendium" of human embalmment; they forget, too, that art does not react to appearances, to wasteland. Instead, it draws its energy from the inner world, from the region which the artists themselves do not understand. Consequently, a literary analysis must, in part, deal with the form of that which "creates" anew human perception and meaning.

A. SYNCHRONICITY: A RUDIMENTARY STAGE OF CREATIVITY

The phenomenon known as "cause and effect," implanted by empiricism in Western thought, affects our thinking by not allowing for the emotions. This priciple--for every action

there is an equal and opposite reaction--is derived from the law of physics and proves itself to be true according to the rational and natural laws of the objective universe. Einstein's discovery, however, discounts the validity of such a principle for the human or subjective entity:

> . . . space and time are forms of intuition, which can no more be divorced from consciousness than can our concepts of color, shape, or size. Space has no objective reality except as an order or arrangement of the objects we perceive in it, and time has no independent existence apart from the order of events by which we measure it.[6]

The inextricability of the subjective and objective clearly stands out here. But more importantly, the subjective is seen to preceed the objective, with the intuitive faculty providing the divining link.

If, from the above quotation, one assumes that the modern consciousness or that form of consciousness which became apparent after the "dissociation of sensibility" in approximately the seventeenth century depends entirely upon the subjective, then he must also assume that all modes of expression must likewise depend upon the subjective for actual substance. This acknowledgement has been "gelded" somewhat by the modern sensibility's reliance upon a form of

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[6]Lincoln Barnett, The Universe and Dr. Einstein, p. 19.

understanding not organically proceeding from itself, that is, the rational, the objective. Creativity, then, as an aftermath to this disillusioned form of thinking, takes on menial and pejorative connotations for the individual.

Regardless of the misunderstanding, the individual does experience periodically a primitive and uncontrolled burst of creativity known as synchronicity. Antiela Jaffe, Carl Jung's personal secretary for a number of years, defines synchronicity as Jung himself defined it originally. It is:

> the simultaneous occurrence of a certain psychic state with one or more external events which appear as meaningful parallels to the momentary subjective state, and in certain cases, vice versa.[7]

In order to establish more firmly the anomaly of synchronicity in the reader's mind, I will use a personal and hypothetical example which essentially paraphrases the actual occurrence that may manifest itself at any time during the waking hours.

If, during the process of writing a logical paper on creativity, my frame of mind gradually shifts and refuses to co-operate with the task at hand, my frustration may increase. Finally, my concentration terminates altogether, and the image of a tiger leaps into my consciousness. What has happened to logic? Possibly the feeling of suppression experienced while confined to a logical and rational point of view succumbed to a less rational desire, exemplified by the

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[7]Antiela Jaffe, The Myth of Meaning, p. 178.

appearance of the tiger. Should I repress this invasion? Or simply recognize the oddity, in passing, and retreat to the original frame of mind? Yet, if I dispense with the notion of the wild beast, do I, in turn, dispense with a fragment of my psyche needful of expression? The problem, to quote St. John, may be the voice of one crying in the wilderness.

Three possible explanations for the appearance of the tiger come to mind. First, the beast may in no way have any bearing upon the paper or myself. He may have been the associative product of a mental process that was experienced immediately before its appearance. The image, originally from a television show, a movie, or a conversation with a friend, was jostled loose by a thought similar to the synapse of thought which ordered the image originally. I might discount, then, the appearance as slightly irrational or undisciplined. Yet the beast's presence may have a much more important place in the process of creativity. While I was thinking about the term "creativity," the tiger manifested itself as a product of my creative faculties. In that line of reasoning, the tiger was the result of a point I was thinking about and ready to express. Or, finally, the tiger's appearance may not have been due to mental association, slightly irrational for all practical purposes. Nor was it a point in the argument simply expressing itself prematurely. It was, in fact, a symbolical expression which stemmed from my attempts to emphasize a rational perspective, at the expense of a curr-

end set of emotions. The tiger's appearance indicated that the paper could be completed only after I had forcibly subjugated myself to a mentality not viable in itself.

Carl Jung posits that the individual is often hesitant about accepting these moments of synchronicity because they have the habit of occuring at the most inconvenient and illogical times.[8] Then too, the manifestation is usually an enigmatical expression of the psyche and often lacks meaning at the moment of appearance. Usually, however, assuming that the image was not blatantly repressed, the subject experiences meaning after he realizes its significance and relationship to one or more momentary events. The problem of origin withstanding, the conflict of synchronicity with the intellect usually forces the individual to discount the former because he has been trained to think logically and to disregard anything not adhering to objectification.[9]

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[8]For a thorough discussion of Jung's ideas on this subject see The Interpretation of Nature and the Psyche.

[9]These events happen not infrequently. Recently, a friend of mine told me about an experience she was unable to explain rationally. The event took place when she was twelve years old. It was in the winter. She was alone, at night, asleep in the basement of her parent's home. Suddenly for some reason, she awoke with a certain amount of apprehension. She sat up in bed and saw an apparition at the top of the landing. When she saw it, it began to move down the stairs until, finally, it stood several feet from the bed. The apparition soon disappeared and appeared only one subsequently.

Jung himself was a psychic. An instance of sychronicity in his life aptly demonstrates the definitiveness and importance of the event:

> A young woman I was treating had, at a critical moment, a dream in which she was given a golden scarab. While she was telling me this dream I sat with my back to the closed window. Suddenly I heard a noise behind me, like a gentle tapping. I turned round and saw a flying insect knocking against the window pane from outside. I opened the window and caught the creature in the air as it flew in. It was the nearest analogy to a golden scarab that one finds in our latitudes, a scarabaeid beetle . . . which contrary to its usual habits had evidently felt an urge to get into a dark room at this particular moment.[10]

These experiences were of monumental importance in Jung's life:

> The years when I was pursuing my inner images were the most important in my life--in them everything essential was decided. It all began then; the later details are only supplements and clarifications of the material that burst forth from the unconscious, and at first swamped me. It was the "prima materia" for a lifetime's work.[11]

Recognized and understood, synchronicity aids the individual in his coming to terms with his unconscious and ultimately with himself; since it does occur infrequently, its value remains limited. The problem of charlatarism--quacks, false prophets, imposters, pseudo-mystics--adds to its lack of

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[10] Carl Jung, Memories, Dreams, Reflections, p. 31.

[11] Ibid., p. 199.

acceptance among rational human beings, and rightly so. Moreover, the rise in occultism, and the prevalent use of hallucinogenic drugs only widens the gap, forcing the rational segment to blind itself, adamantly, against anything but the most ordinary mental processes, and thereby, increasing the possibilities of hindering one's mental development and regard for dogmas. Apart from the large corpus of prejudices extant and in favor of dogmas, synchronicity seems to represent a pure and genuine expression of the subjective self.

B. INTUITION

Another mental process, equally opposed to causal relationships and objectification as synchronicity, but on a more sustained and accepted plain, is intuition. Joyce Cary argues that intuition is the recognition of truth on the part of the individual.[12] She terms it as real and immediate. These two words are important because of their implications and inseparability. "Real," denies falsity, or that which is not real. Thus, a state of "unrealness" is also a state of "untruth." Since we have already seen that Absolutism is outmoded and objectivity somewhat degrading, the realization, as she states, must take place strictly within the individual, as there is no other place for the intuitive process to take place.

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[12]Joyce Cary, Art and Reality, p. 88.

It may seem contradictory to recognize from within an aspect of the external world; yet, more appropriately, it is a matter rather of contradistinction whereby a pattern of representation of the "real" is corroborated by a previously intuited and similar feature present within the internal world. On this basis, the term "real" interprets the world outside of the mind by and through the sensual--concretions as opposed to abstractions, "Immediacy," as Cary uses the term, negates "time" on a conscious perspective, that is, past, present, and future, to the extent that any fixture or conceptual and immobile form disintegrates into that which is amorphous. Therefore, the mental process must achieve a sense of awareness independent of time and, likewise, independent of space. This condition also transcends personal awareness, involvement, and recognition.[13] The subsequent mental awareness, coupled with the "real" world, produces the truth or realization.

In literature, this point of recognition is often termed the moment of "epiphany." In using the word, James Joyce

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[13]Since the conscious state is capable of perceiving in one degree or another many different objects, it stands to reason that it could in itself become object. However, such a pre-occupation would destroy the real and immediate involvement between subject and object. The subsequent "inward" involvement would be subjective and less reliable.

circumvents the Christian meaning, that is, the revelation of Jesus as God to men, a spiritual polemicism. Instead, he draws his meaning from the Greek cognate, to make known or to reveal in the spiritual sense, for example, the realm of essence where all earthly things have a perfect, spiritual counterpart.[14] James Joyce's Stephen Hero explains:

> First we recognise that the object is one integral thing, then we recognise that it is an organised composite structure, a thing in fact; finally, when the relation of the parts is exquisite, when the parts are adjusted to the special point we recognise that thing which it is. Its soul. Its whatness leaps to us from the vestment of its appearance.[15]

Whether the above definition of epiphany schematically parallels conscious evolution on the part of an individual or on an historical scale is problematic. Yet it does represent three stages of mental development.

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[14]For a comparison of the Greek and Christian epiphany see Alan W. Watts, Myth and Ritual in Christianity, pp. 115-136. The form of the idea in both instances is almost identical in that man, under certain rites, is released from his temporal bond and obtains a more pure mode of being: a mythical eternity. In Christian myth, of course, smearing the blood of the Pascal Lamb upon the door-posts of the Israelite homes to protect them from the avenging angel initiates the Jewish exodus from Egypt. But the sacrifice of the Egyptian babies itself represents the epiphany. God's presence was made known to the Egyptians through the youthful slaughter.

[15]James Joyce, Stephen Hero, p. 213.

In the first stage, the mind sees a reality apart from itself in the form of a distinct phenomenon. Joyce Cary gives the example of a young child's first confrontation with a swan on a grass lawn. The color imagery of the white swan and the green grass converge into a form of perception known as myth. The meaning is at that time infinite. Because of the child's natural curiosity, he will see other swans, other birds, and gradually assimilate a pattern of understanding that will allow him to selectively frame what he has seen. This represents the second stage of thinking: conceptual thinking or a "thing in fact." In the third stage (conceiveably the point at which Western Civilization now finds itself), the facts, data, empirical knowledge are intuitively transcended, and an epiphany independent of time and of space will occur, allowing the individual to see the spiritual essence of existence, as a result of perceiving how the diverse elements of existence form a whole. The third stage, in all outward appearances, is usually confined to individuals of a highly creative nature. It seems likely that this stage might be enacted on a mass basis after the artists, for instance, have discovered and conveyed this means of spiritual release through art. An event of this nature might effectively unify the subjective and objective sensibilities in the masses.

One of the most vivid examples of an epiphany in art takes place in James Joyce's "The Dead," the final

story in The Dubliners, when the protagonist, Gabriel Conroy, recognizes the antithetical nature of living. He lies in bed with his wife at a hotel and is staring through the window at the falling snow. The couple has lately come from a party with friends. His lusty intentions toward her are thwarted, however, when he discovers that she has become very sad remembering a young man who loved her a long time before when they were growing up. But now he is dead and she has fallen asleep. In light of these incidents Gabriel Conroy ponders:

> sleepily the flakes, silver and dark, falling obliquely against the lamplight. The time has come for him to set on his journey westward. . . . Snow was . . . falling on every part of the dark central plain, on the treeless hills, falling softly upon the Bog of Allen and, farther westward, softly falling into the dark mutinous Shannon waves. It was falling, too upon every part of the lonely churchyard on the hill where Michael Furey lay buried. It lay thickly drifted on the crooked crosses and headstones, on the apears of the little gate, on the barren thorns. His soul swooned slowly as he heard the snow falling faintly through the universe and faintly falling, like the descent of their last end, upon all the living and the dead.[16]

The two words, "soul," and "universe," enlarge Gabriel Conroy's vision to one of cosmic magnitude, or if you will, in the Platonic sense, the spiritual essence. His vision, then, retracts appropriately to the human concern at hand as epitomized by the lving Mrs. Conroy, and the dead Michael

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[16]James Joyce, The Portable James Joyce, p. 242.

Furey, and the inseparable presence of both.

Everyone has, moreover, experienced the feeling of intuition, although probably on a lesser scale. This realm of intuition strangely resembles the mental state Carl Jung finds in the world of dreams:

> I am doubtful whether we can assume that a dream is something else than it appears to be. I am rather inclined to quote another Jewish authority, the Talmud, which says: "The dream is its own interpretation." In other words I take the dream for granted. . . . The dream is a natural event and there is no reason under the sun why we should assume that it is a crafty device to lead us astray. The dream occurs when consciousness and will are to a great extent extinguished. . . . Moreover, we know so little about psychology of the dream process that we must be more than careful when we introduce elements foreign to the dream itself into its explanation. . . . Since the dream is elaborate and consistent it suggests a certain logic and a certain intention, that is it is preceded by a motivation in the unconscious which finds direct expression in the dream content.[17]

Jung's comments on the dream clarify and enlarge upon the "process" of intuition, by likening the dream state with the intuitive state and distinguishing both from another problem, that is, of separating appearance and reality in the conscious state. The dream is what it appears to be. Although this is a highly conjectural point, Jung has

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[17]Carl G. Jung, Psychology and Religion, pp. 30-31.

verified it rather cogently through a life-time study of the mind. He postulates that the unconscious manifests itself in conscious forms through the intuitive process. If this is the case, then, might one conclude that undisrupted intuition assimilates appearance and reality, as does the dream, and embodies truth?

The most logical question now is: to what degree does the artistic process emanate from intuition? Artists as diverse as Mozart, Lawrence, Jung, and Steinbeck have commented upon the creative process as they have observed it within themselves,[18] Their different comments express in simple and

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[18]Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, "A Letter," The Creative Process, compiled and edited by Brewster Chiselin, p. 44. "When I am, as it were, completely myself, entirely alone, and of good cheer--say, travelling in a carriage, or walking after a good meal, or during the night when I cannot sleep: it is on such occasions that my ideas flow best and most abundantly. Whence and how they come, I know not: nor can I force them."

D. H. Lawrence, "Notes on Sculpture," from Chiselin, p. 70. "It needs a certain purity of spirit to be an artist, of any sort. . . . But if he can paint a nude woman, or a couple of apples, so that they are a living image, then he was pure in spirit . . . This is the beginning of all art, visual or literary or musical: be pure in spirit."

Carl Gustav Jung, from Psychology and Literature, p. 223. "A great work of art is like a dream for all its apparent obviousness it does not explain itself and is never unequivocal. . . . The secret of artistic creation . . . is to be found in a return to the state of participation mystique--to that level of experience at which it is man who lives, and not the individual, at which the weal or woe of the single human being does not count, but only human existence."

John Steinbeck, Journal of a Novel: The East of Eden Letters, p. 11. "I feel that sometimes when I am writing I am

clear language what the intuitive process is like, but not what it is. The question of its being a product of associative thinking or, simply, automatic expression from an undisciplined mind is, however, out of the question.

In a study, Dr. K. Wehrlin investigated the associative and cognitive powers of imbeciles, and found them, as a rule only capable of the most trivial and elementary thinking processes. The study revealed that they are aware of sensations but are seldom able to perceive anything resulting from these sensations. The subjects performance was dependent upon a conscious mental performance which consisted mainly of recognizing words with obvious similarities. They would be at such a level completely unable to grasp the more sophisticated concepts of plot, character, structure, style, and tone which even the most feeble-minded art requires.[19]

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very near to a kind of unconscious. Then time does change its manner and minutes disappear into a cloud of time which is one thing, having only one duration. I have thought that if we could put off our duration--preoccupied minds, it might be that time has no duration at all. Then all history and all pre-history might indeed be one durationless flash like an exploding star, eternal and without duration."

[19]K. Wehrlin, "The Associations of Imbeciles and Idiots," in Studies in Word Association, edited by Carl Jung and first published in 1918, p. 185.

In a similar investigation which attempted to link intuition with automatic expression, Professor E. Bleuler found that undisciplined and unsustained expression often proves of great value to the subject. However, this mode of expression lacks consistency, artistry, and validity for any other figure other than the individual personally involved.[20] Intuition, on the other hand, seems to be a result of will-power.

Artists conclude, then, that creating is spontaneous, inexplicable at times, and thus not subject to total recall; it is an act of disciplined mental purity, a complete cohesion of thought and emotion, and a process of sensing, continually, new synaspes of thought. The impossibility of defining intuition in terms of a concept, system, or law arises from its natural opposition to these mental structures.

> In all its uses the term seems to carry only one constant implication: a marked tendency to set becoming above being and to disparage the traditional existing order.[21]

Inspite of its opaque qualities, intuition seems to be antithetical to time, causality, a priori knowledge, and

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[20] Ibid., p. 277.

[21] Karl Schmid, "Aspects of Evil in the Creative," Evil, edited by Curatorium of the C. G. Jung Institute, pp. 229-230.

to a certain extent, pure reason and pure emotion. Can one assume, then, that creativity which is couched completely in the intuitive process bears a close resemblance to that which it seems to emulate most closely, the dream, and issues from the same region, the unconscious?

Linking the intuitive process with the dream process does not reduce the creator's state of consciousness to a plane of sonambulism. Almost nothing is known about sleep, and according to Jung subjecting a dream to interpretation is dangerous. Nor is it known for sure whether sleep actually sedates consciousness. One might propose that just the opposite takes place, that the "actual" process of creating is itself akin in degree to the dream process and that it, like the dream, subjects the mind to a realm of consciousness, a perception of reality, differing both in kind and degree from normal consciousness. Such a proposition does not, of course, cancel out the rational and disciplined element. The artist is aware of time and space to the extent that he must force himself to work with pencil and paper. He understands his confinement and must control it in respect to his intuitive process.

The ordinary individual, on the other hand, who does not consciously anticipate his intuitive ability, cannot expect any more than the most undirected and random results. It seems probable, also, to assume that the artist, having objectively considered art, its forms,

ranges, and limitations, will emboss the spontaneous flow with preconceived notions. T. S. Eliot's theory of the "objective correlative" is an example of conscious imposition. Eliot felt that art should contain an unescapable clarity as object--apart and distinct from the reader's subjective aspersions toward the form. Whether Eliot's "conscious intent" has merit in theory or practice is conjectural; Eliot himself admitted that "the poet does many things upon instinct, for which he can give no better account than anybody else."[22]

The acausal relationship of intuition to the external world has been historically misunderstood. The problem goes back to Plato and his condemnation of the artist for apparently the wrong reasons. Plato believed that behind worldly existence lies the world of essence--the ideal realm. It was here, he believed, that "God-prints" for all earthly counterparts dwelled. Plato reasoned that the artist imitated the temporal world in his art and was twice removed from the essence of existence. Art then, was at best a poor imitator and "ruinous to the understanding of the hearers."[23] Much later Jung discerned

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[22]T. S. Eliot, "The Modern Mind," from Cricitism: The Major Texts, edited by W. J. Bate, p. 541.

[23]Plato, from Book X of The Republic, taken from Criticism: The Major Texts, p. 43.

Plato's reality, but found that it existed in patterns of human action and thought:

> They are discovered inasmuch as one did not know about their unconscious autonomous existence, and invented inasmuch as their presence was inferred from analogous conceptual structures.[24]

Jung asserts that these underlying and continous patterns are manifested consciously through the creative process, a process, in fact, which Plato himself condemned. Plato's distrust of art issues apparently from a misunderstanding of the artistic process or from the conspicuous presence of art which was not created but "imitated." Jung agrees that:

> the conception of archetype is found above all in the philosophy of Plato, which takes for granted the existence of transcendental images or models of empirical things . . . whose reflections . . . we see in the phenomenal world.[25]

Synchronicity, the primitive forerunner of intuition, was not considered in anyway unusual before the acceptance of rationalism. It was simply considered a magical intervention by some supernatural force which allowed man

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[24]Jung, The Interpretation of Nature and the Psyche, p. 59.

[25]Ibid., p. 118.

to perceive of an idea that, in some way, inspired meaning between the psychic and empirical worlds. In reality, the influence of synchronicity and the gradual attainment of these ideas resulted from "the sum of countless individual acts of creation occurring in time."[26] This evolutionary process, specifically in the novel, can be viewed as a somewhat destructive force leading toward a more pure existence, one termed by Ihab Hassan as the "universal consciousness." It is, graphically, a movement across time from ignorance to enlightenment where previously intuited concepts or theories are eventually depleted of meaning and destroyed. These are replaced by more fixed and universal perceptions, which are, in turn, conceptualized and, in turn, destroyed. Mircea Eliade explains:

> In modern art the nihilism and pessimism of the first revolutionaries and demolishers represent attitudes that are already outmoded. Today no great artist believes in the degeneration and imminent disappearance of his art. From this point of view the modern artists' attitude is like that of the "primitives;" they have contributed to the destruction of the world--that is, to the destruction of their world, their artistic universe--in order to create another. But this cultural phenomenon is of the utmost importance, for it is primarily the artists who represent the genuine creative forces of a civilization or a society. Through their creation the artists anticipate what is to come--sometimes one or two generations later--in other sectors of social and cultural life.[27]

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[26] Ibid., p. 143.

[27] Mircea Eliade, Myth and Reality, P. 73.

The evolution of thought, mentioned above, eventually acts in three major categories: the destruction of a priori knowledge, the destruction of time, and finally the destruction of destruction as an existing concept.

"Knowledge" in Destoyevsky's novel, Crime and Punishment, is to a degree reflected in the social laws which maintain order, or a semblance of order, in St. Petersburg. It is a knowledge for the masses and distributed not to individuals like Raskolnikov, but to the masses. The other form of knowledge exists within the human entity: the young student, Raskolnikov, his mother and sister, his friend Marmelodov, his evil counterpart Svidrigailov, and the prostitute Sonia. Raskolnikov's knowledge is flexible, groping, vague, ideal, expanding and contracting with almost unlimited creativity. His distrust of other forms of knowledge is somewhat self-extinguishing, however, and culminates in his irrational murder of a woman money-lender.

Raskolnikov voices his philosophy concerning the right of the individual to act in fulfillment of his ideal:

> In short, I maintain that all great men or even men a little out of the common, that is to say capable of giving some new word, must from their very nature be criminals--more or less, of course.[28]

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[28]Fyodor Dostoyevsky, Crime and Punishment, p. 255.

He is aware that his knowledge is an ideal. However, because he does not know for sure where reality lies, he believes that action, regardless of its probable random outcome and conflict with social knowledge, must be executed without hesitation from the force of the ideal itself. At a point, action, disciplined by the ideal becomes all. Raskolnikov's action, in process, is devoid of the personal knowledge which fostered it. The conscious execution of the woman money-lender, the symbol for social knowledge, is perpetuated by the force which initially inspired the action. In Crime and Punishment, then, action becomes emblematic of a creative knowledge destroying the old order. When viewed as synonomous with action, art seeks to destroy laws or any form of thought not subject to immediate and spontaneous change.

The question and treatment of time, too, has received a great deal of attention in twentieth-century art. In the "Benjy" section of Faulkner's The Sound and the Fury, time is perceived not in chronological terms but in a random, associational fashion. Time, a discovered concept for measuring change, deviates away, in fiction, from the standard and mechanical illusion to a subjective illusion of change. The narrator in Eliot's poem, Burnt Norton, vacillates between an immediate perception of time, which in essence negates the illusion of objective time, and a

reflective meditation which rekindles the romantic conception of time the destroyer and produces the conflict: the paradox of time and timelessness. Karl Schmid concludes that time occurs as "destroyer" in literature when:

> the idea of the primordial fullness takes possession of men's minds. . . . it can be conceived in the form of the divine creator . . . or as the maternal fullness of the source . . . time is always experienced as profoundly evil, whereas the origin is good."[29]

Objectified time, then, is not the real evil, but only a mirror for the human conditon after the death of myth.[30] Time becomes a metaphorical equivalent for human impoverishment, neglect, and dejection down through the ages. An artistic obsession with time reveals an apocalyptic consciousness concerned with destroying the abuse of human experience and reveals a desire to return to that "primordial fullness" of myth.

Carl Jung argues that this desire has expressed

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[29]Schmid, p. 231.

[30]"Myth" in this paper refers to a primitive form of ordering unknown elements of existence. However, mythical perception also represents mental development in the individual and is best summed up by Walter D. Wetzels in the following: "myth must be taken seriously as a cultural force but it must be taken seriously in order that it may be gradually superseded in the interests of the advancement of truth and the growth of human intelligence." For further reading on the topic of reason's interaction with myth see: Myth and Reason, A Symposium, edited and introduced by Walter D. Wetzels. The introduction from which is drawn the above comment (p. v) is especially helpful.

itself through dreams as immersion in deep water--not literally death by water--instead, rebirth of the unconscious through a somewhat different form of consciousness than we know of or understand. In The Day of the Dolphin, a movie starring George C. Scott, the communion of man with water echoes strangely of the archetypal pattern which permeates much of modern literature.[31] At the beginning before the viewer actually finds himself confronted with water, Scott explains that the dolphin in its mammalian development evolved into a land creature and, then, for some reason found it necessary to return to the sea. The imagery of the upcoming water scenes with the dolphin and man heighten and attempt to bring into conscious form the archetypal pattern for the unconscious. Mircea Eliade explains that this longing for a reunion with the unconscious is not a deathwish:

> The initiation myths and rites of "regressus ad uterum" reveal the following fact: the "return to the origin" prepares a new birth, but the new birth is not a repetition of the first, physical birth. There is properly speaking a mystical rebirth, spiritual in nature--in

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[31]This comment has been included merely because of the profuse allusions to "death by water" in modern literature. In this film the symbol of water is confronted on a conscious level by the human element. Although the interaction remains indecisive, water is not a death-symbol, but a source for potential knowledge.

> other words, access to a new mode of existence (involving sexual maturity, participation in the sacred and in culture; in short, becoming "open" to Spirit). The basic idea is that, to attain to a higher mode of existence, gestation and birth must be repeated; but they are repeated ritually, symbolically. In other words, we here have acts oriented toward the values of Spirit, not behavior from the realm of psycho-psysiological activity.[32]

Paradoxically, part of the consternation evoked by the illusion of time has been generated by the language itself, the addition of the past and future tense verbs, which may, hypothetically, have been an attempt to escape the "ever-presence" of time initially. We may have not fully experienced the end result of time's conceptual development. However, the romantic illusion of time, partially the product of the "timely" range of our language, does not extend into all cultures. The Chinese language, for instance, has no past or future tense. It contains only the present tense which evokes a timeless and universal appeal for the masses.[33]

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[32]Eliade, p. 81.

[33]Mao Tse-Tung, Poems of Mao Tse-Tung, translated with introduction and notes by Hua-Ling Hieh Engle and Paul Engle, p. 25 of introduction.

John R. Frey disagrees with most critics on the importance of tense in the novel.[34] He feels that the prevailing consciousness in a work continually draws all action, experience, and dialogue into the immediate. Even if the narrator juxtaposes a past and present tense scene, the past is not past at all, but visible in a present context and related similarly. He compares fictive narration to drama, with imagination being the receptacle of one and seeing and hearing being the receptacle of the other. Anachronism, he argues, is an invalid concept to impose upon fiction. Time, not existing within the immediacy of the novel, cannot get out of whack; it remains eternally present. Oddly enough, Frey argues that artists are already devaluating the importance of narrative tense in the language. They are, he contends, phasing out its conceptual form and compensating with a timeless narrative.

William Faulkner conjures up just such a "time." His characters often move slowly in a dream-like landscape where time is almost nonexistent. By placing the "Benjy" section in The Sound and the Fury before the Quentin, Jason, and Dilsey section, he transposed a moment of "timelessness"

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[34]John R. Frey, "Past or Present Tense? A Note on the Technique of Narrative," Journal of English and German Philology, XLVI (April, 1947), 205-208.

before three "timed" points of view. This technique allowed Faulkner to emphasize or de-emphasize time subsequently as he saw fit and to unveil time in its true and deceptive form, illusion.

Destruction of destruction, the final stage of the developing process of thought, is in appearance the most absurd and pretentious, but in reality, it is the most meaningful for the novel form. The force at work in this stage contracts to a rather definitive perspective and purports to destroy a particular aspect of the thinking process: the concept of destruction or evolution in human thought and ultimately the vehicle for destruction, the "concept" as a form of thought.[35] If this destructive element, man's conceptualization of his temporality, inhibits perceptivity, then the art form necessarily becomes conceptual so that it may eradicate that which it attempts to emulate objectively. Art has, in the past, been an antidote against the destructive tendencies in man by constantly evolving and immunizing itself against these destructive tendencies in man's nature. However, in so doing, art has acquired the illusion of destroyer by

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[35]In Albert Camus's The Fall, Jean-Baptiste Clamence's mode of "seeing" is introspective and conceptual. His vision, based on the truths of his past experience, fails to renew itself by an immediate perception of the external world. Consequently, he endeavors to implicate the "listener" into his closed and "fallen" world.

objectively countering the appearance of destruction in the world, that is, in man. Therefore, the destructive visions in Hemingway, Faulkner, Camus, Nathaniel West, Stanley Elkins, and Flannery O'Connor, represent archetypal patterns of a reality indigenous to the modern sensibility, a reality previously undiscovered on the conscious level and discerned in our age through the artistic and sensitive processes of intuition.

C. THE NOVEL: A PART IN FACT

The preceding discussion has dealt with the inveterate mental process behind creativity. It was understood, selectively speaking, that the most fundamental reality of the novel lay beneath the facade, the appearance of its form and content. Yet, to delve into the novel on a theoretical or practical basis and to ignore the aura of illusion which surrounds it, an illusion meticulously wrought according to certain principles and laws, is to negate the importance of the appearance. Such a negation might cause a misunderstanding of the novel itself.

Although the novel as illusion has become very complex through the course of its development, its primitive counterpart in prehistoric times was much more dependent upon the effect of rendering in appearance nature's outward form. If one suspends his sense of disbelief for a moment, he can

imagine, in an unorthodox fashion, an artist of forty thousand years ago at work. He is a CroMagnon "magician" in the depths of a cave in central France. It is night and a mystical chanting can be heard emanating from another point in the cave. The Shaman ignores the chanting and works intensely with a coloring device. The only light comes from a burning torch. Finally, after a considerable length of time, the Shaman steps back and critically studies the image he has just sketched on the wall. It seems in appearance to be the form of a bison pierced with small spears. Around the bison are stick figures, emblematic of the warrior element. More men come into the cave and study the Shaman's creation. They recognize the form and feel a spirit of excitement growing within themselves. The feeling will grow until the hunt. Then, it will subside, and in its place will lie a makeshift sense of wisdom. The outcome of the hunt is history. Yet, there is a singular importance in the Shaman's ordering of an existential element which was previously unobtainable.

Out of another art form and time entirely, the primitive novel was somehow conceived, specifically from epistolary writing in the sixteenth century. It developed presumably because of a more thorough and human need for language, a need created by a rise in literacy among European bourgeoisie. The novel was at first highly moralistic and purported to enlighten the ignorant concerning the external

truths deemed socially acceptable in that day. However, great artistic novels, such as Cervantes' Don Quixote, were written partly to satirize these commercialized hybrids floating around in the form of pretentious moralistic works and romances. Writers like Cervantes, Fielding, Defoe, and later, Flaubert, graphically demonstrated the unpredictability and tenuousness of an inner and human reality, thereby discrediting the more superfluous works, and laying the ground-work for the future novel and insuring its acceptance. Ironically, the tradition which they established and preserved has continued to perpetuate the paradoxical and amorphous qualities visible, at glance, within James Joyce's Finnegan's Wake:

> Then, pious Eneas, conformant to the fulminant firman which enjoins on the tremylose terrian that, when the call comes, he shall produce nichthemerically from his unheavenly body a no uncertain quantity of obscene matter not protected by copriright in the United Stars of Ourania or bedeed and bedood and bedang and bedung to him, with this double dye, brought to blood heat, gallic acid on iron ore, through the bowels of his misery, flashly, faithly, nastily, appropriately, this Esuan Menschavik and the first till last alshemist wrote over every square inch of the only foolscap available, his own body, till by its corrosive sublimation one continuous present tense integument slowly unfoled all marryvoising moodmoulded cyclewheeling history (thereby, he said, reflecting from his own individual person life unlivable, transaccidentated through the slow fires of consciousness into a dividual chaos, perilous, potent, common to allflesh, human only, mortal) but with each

> word that would not pass away the squidself which he had squirtscreened from the crystalline world waned chagreenold and doriangrayer in its dudhud.[36]

Joyce, in this kaleidoscopic vision of human existence, accentuates the creative element of a man limited and suppressed by his own human entity; yet, beneath the fragments and illusions of history, time, absurdity, and his own misery, the man articulates a sense of consciousness simply more fundamental and truthful in its scope than the overlying chaos.

Any novel must, as does Finnegan's Wake, operate within certain visible and extraneous laws, such as the limitations imposed by time and space. John Henry Raleigh in his work, Time, Place, and Idea, recognizes three different modes of time within the novel. The first time is cosmic or circular and refers to the endless repetitions of the natural cycles. The second form of time symbolizes the historical presence of man throughout civilization--a deemphasis of the personal in respect to the mass. The third concept of time is existential or an extreme form of "personalism. Raleigh, like Kahler, visualizes a shift from the cyclical vision time in the Victorian novel to a personal awareness of time in the Modern novel.

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[36]James Joyce, Finnegan's Wake, taken from The Theory of the Novel, p. 406

Faulkner depicts the latter sense of time in The Mansion. Time becomes implicit within the characterizations. Mink Snopes, who journeys up the road to Jack Houston's farm every night to earn back his grain-fed cow, personifies the incredibly slow vision of time. His movements and thoughts are in a comically slow motion, yet a feeling of tragedy is infused by the rapidity with which Jack Houston on his fast stallion thunders down the road running everyone into the ditch. The reader discerns the disparities in time and space between Mink Snopes and Jack Houston and perceives the enormous difference in these two worlds, one filled with ludicrous poverty, the other with incommensurate wealth. The differences in their ability to manipulate time and space is a technique with thematic ramifications. Yet, when Mink ambushes Houston from behind a bush with a ten-gauge shotgun, Jack Houston's world concurs with Mink's slow motion world, and he falls back slowly over the horse to his death. The mediating agent, violence, fostered by the disparity in worlds, causes the external reconciliation in Mink's world.

Steinbeck's East of Eden places an equal emphasis upon time and space, both depicted as being somewhat impotent. The work spans a great amount of time. For this reason, it is clear that Steinbeck's concern is not with the immobility or ineffectuality of an almost non-existent time, but with the dramatic and reckless abandon with which time manhandles

people's lives. The distortion of time, here, is no more severe than it is in The Mansion. It merely proceeds in an opposite direction by transposing personal with historical time and fails convincingly because characterizations are in themselves subordinated to Steinbeck's concept of time. He stretches the illusion of time too far and destroys the fictive illusion.

Time in both of these works fails, almost entirely, to escape from its personal restrictions and remains symbolic of a change that does not and cannot find meaning on a one-to-one correspondence between the internal and external world. Moreover, the individual perception within the work remains limited to momentary bursts of synchronicity. The internal knowledge of a limited state-of-being fused with tragical overtones produces a pattern of reality unmoving, morbid, and impotent. Lambert Strether's advice to little Bilham in James' The Ambassadors reveals the tragic pattern:

> It's not too late for you, on any side, and you don't strike me as in danger of missing the train. . . . All the same don't forget that you're young--blessedly young; be glad of it on the contrary and live up to it. Live all you can; it's a mistake not to. . . . I see it now. I haven't done so enough before--and now I'm old; too old at any rate for what I see. . . . It's too late. And it's as if the train had fairly waited at the station for me without my having had the gumption to know it was there. Now I hear its faint receding whistle miles and miles down the line. . . . The affair--I mean the affair of life--couldn't, no doubt, have been different for me; for it's at the best a tin mould, either fluted and embossed, with ornamental excrescences, or else smooth and dreadfully plain, into which, a helpless jelly, one's consciousness is poured--

> so that one 'takes' the form . . . Still, one has the illusion of freedom; therefore don't be, like me, without the memory of that illusion. I was either, at the right time, too stupid or too intelligent to have it. . . . Of course at present I'm a case of reaction against the mistake. . . . Do what you like so long as you don't make any mistake. For it was a mistake. Live![37]

Strether's advice in light of his self-recognition remains somewhat ironic. He sees that he should have lived more fully, yet in his perception, as usual, fails to distinguish the importance of the moment in singularity. His recognition does not bring with it the will to live, to live without the "inner" Jamesian torture flooding from a remembrance of past experiences. Strether is never actually able to see himself, since he remains unable to perceive the outer world. His mind retains itself in an orb separate from the world of his body. The distinction of subject-object never evolves out of the gloomy shade which Woollet, Massachusetts, casts over the landscape. Strether sees only the shadow of himself in the mirror of Paris.

Unlike the atavistic form of primitive art, the modern novel gravitates toward an evolved form of consciousness that is steeped in complex if not ambiguous concepts of time, order, reality, space, and meaning. Yet, despite the displacement of a great amount of time and exhausted meaning,

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[37]Henry James, The Ambassadors, pp. 131-132.

one wonders if the truth of Einstein's discovery might reduce art, in the end, to that realm from which it first began, a haunting and mysterious representation of life. Like the shadows which James creates with his Marchers, Strethers, and Monarchs, the Alpines, Snopes, and Trasks of the following novels at one moment seem to elicit the most immaculate form of beauty and at the next moment, the most primitive.

CHAPTER III

SEVEN REALITIES AND SEVEN NOVELS: THE EXISTENTIAL LOSS

Two of the most important ideas examined so far, order and change, are implemented according to the artist's capacity to perceive of one or the other or both in his fictive vision. The pattern evolves, interestingly, through these seven novels as Malamud fixes "all" in necessary changelessness and Bellow "all" in change.

A. THE ASSISTANT: TIME'S ENTOMBMENT

Bernard Malamud's The Assistant embodies the most repressed and deterministic vision in this group of novels. The characters do, at times, rise above the concrete surroundings and exercise free will, but only at times. The physical position and fortune of Morris Bober's small store among the other dingy buildings and impoverished people on the block is rigidly fixed. It is a setting which very basically parallels the characters' immobility and lack of insight. Malamud's reality, couched in paradox, irony, and ambuguity, depicts a vision of man without free-will, responsible and immediate perception, or a conception of actual change through time. The characters are unable to render into full consciousness,

their subjection to misery and suffering. Their endurance resembles a form of "self-victimization," or as Sidney Richman expresses it, "masochism."[38]

Morris Bober, the father and store-owner, ascribes to the hedonistic doctrine of "suffering for suffering's sake" because he believes that he has no choice, that it is the "Jewish" law. Morris sees himself as a respectable "law-abiding" Jewish man not always true to his religion in its outward form, but true to its immutable qualities. However, his store provides an increasingly futile living for his family as time goes on, and ironically, he turns cynical toward himself and his way of life. He experiences no joy in living and seeks to escape: "Sleep was his one refreshment; it excited him to go to sleep."[39] The inequity of life reveals itself to Morris through the success of the liquor store owner, Julius Karp, who becomes wealthy from his sales to social degenerates spawned by local conditions.

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[38]Sidney Richman, Bernard Malamud, p. 51. Richman argues that the characters' masochistic tendencies are a result of their not being able to establish consciously any pattern of existence. Because of this, they are subject to their own inward frustration and anger.

[39]Bernard Malamud, The Assistant, p. 10. Subsequent references to this edition are given in parenthesis within the text.

Although the store cannot support the Bober family, Morris hires Frank Alpine on a part time basis. Frank, a young Italian, and equally indecisive as Morris Bober, talks freely with Morris about his problems and desires:

> He gazed at the grocer then at the floor. "All my life I wanted to accomplish something worthwhile--a thing people will say took a little doing, but I don't. I am too restless--six months in any one place is too much for me. Also I grab at everything too quick--too impatient. I don't do what I have to--that's what I mean. The result is I move into a place with nothing, and I move out with nothing. You understand me. (TA, 37)

Frank Alpine, as an element of contrast, intensifies the irony already rampant within the work. Later in the story, the reader learns that Frank was one of the two masked men who held up Morris early in the work and knocked him unconscious. His speech to Morris depicts his early shortcoming and to a degree Morris Bober's, but unlike Morris, Frank attempts to change, to make something out of himself. Frank's goal to become someone, apart from Morris, who will only endure within sight of "the law," renders problematic the actual reality. Appearance is reality with Morris, but with Frank Alpine the dream, the desire, is reality.

Frank, who has no long-standing conscience, feels no guilt about working for Morris Bober, even though he stole milk from him, and later steals money from the cash register. Frank is anxious to succeed within Morris' world and finds

the experience enjoyable:

> In the store he was quits with, the outside world, safe, from cold, hunger, and a damp bed. He had all his life been on the move. . . . Here he could stand at the window and watch the world go by, content to be here. (TA, 58)

But like so many other dualities present in the work, Frank discovers that the reality of business does not fully satisfy his human need. Therefore, he looks to Morris' daughter, Helen, for the reality which he desires. This concrete desire for something that he does not have and his reluctance to engage Helen in conversation produce within his newly established morality a sense of ambivalence. He sees himself vacillating between two concepts of existence: that of a tramp, and that of a man with a successful social standing like Morris Bober. Helen's predicament resembles Frank's initially. For her, the concept of the store is morbidly undesirable. She experiences a gnawing hunger to improve herself either by marrying a man of higher standing or by education at the university. Frank, of course, symbolizes a man who will never live up to her aspiration. Consequently, he is a threat to be avoided. Somewhat ironically, she meets Frank at the library, where they both escape into reading in an effort to realize their respective dreams. Ironically, too, their relationship on this basis resembles Frank's relationship with Morris, and like Frank who confided in Morris, Helen, in turn, confides in Frank:

> I'd like to be doing something that feels

> useful--some kind of social work or maybe teaching. I have no sense of accomplishment in what I'm doing now. Five o'clock comes and at last I go home. That's about all I live for, I guess. (TA, 99)

The fact that they both long to improve themselves establishes a basis from which to converse, and they begin a semblance of friendship. Helen, strictly with this in mind, attempts to teach Frank the importance of self-discipline. She does this partially by encouraging him to read and talk about the human situations depicted in Madame Bovary and Crime and Punishment. She hopes that this will improve both him and herself and possibly lessen the future's dismal prospects.

Morris Bober, in contrast to Helen and Frank Alpine, does not confide in the future. Their concepts of change and improvement have no place in his world. Morris sees existence as taking only one form, existence, and this will end at death. Life, then, must be confronted in a serious and dogmatic fashion because it is tragic and unavoidable. His belief in the code of acceptance is dependent, not upon reason, but upon a faith that man must endure subjection for a lifetime, fenced in by his bones. He explains his morality which bears an affinity to Old Testament Law: "If you live, you suffer. Some people suffer more, but not because they want. But I think if a jew don't suffer for the Law, he will suffer for nothing." (TA, 125). For Morris, the law paradoxically represents a tangible ideal--a discipline for

allowing himself to inhabit the "unreal" world until the final escape is realized at death. His creed for living is, in fact, a creed for dying and centers around the ideals of doing "right, honest, and good acts" for people. Because these primal laws are ideals and the extent of man's possible "goodness," he seldom acts up to them but contents himself in existing with these ideals in mind so that the Jewish Law remains constantly tangible. Strangely enough, Morris sees his own existence as essence--a shadowy reflection of the real world to be gained after death. Consequently, his actions are perversely death-oriented and his thoughts a greater shadow of his actions.

On a more composite scale, the vision of "mind and matter" within the same realm, "unreality," creates a remarkably futile pattern of reality in the work. It is a vision of Morris Bober's "all-encompassing" sensibility. This vision, moreover, reflects unequivocally the mentality of the effaced narrator on one hand, and the setting on the other. Eliot termed this technique the "objective-correlative," a conscious attempt on the artist's part to utilize a landscape which "slanted" or reinforced the desired effect. The reader, then, relies upon images which are carefully selected by the artist to elicit an emotion. This technique does not allow the reader a corresponding sense of discovery with the divining consciousness in the

work, but it subjects the reader to a predetermined response. An example of this technique occurs in the latter section of the book when a sense of doom, momentarily overcome by Frank Alpine's youthful presence in the Bober's store, rolls back into the vision of the book: "A cold rain washed the yellow slush out of the gutters. It rained drearily for two days" (TA, 137). The action, itself an effect of rain, far exceeds its kinetic potential. Rain becomes a vehicle for transporting, to the reader, the dismal feeling of alienation, misery, and determinism, the character of Morris Bober.

Unwilling to accept a vision of "endurance," Frank Alpine persists in his efforts to improve. His relationship with Helen develops despite Mr. and Mrs. Bober's reluctance to allow someone who is not a "Jew" become too familiar with their daughter. The impact of Frank's former self also persists, ironically, when his former comrade, Ward Minogue, returns and urges Frank to continue with his old ways. Frank stubbornly refuses, and Ward Minogue decides to expend his frustration upon Helen at night in the park. Ward's attempted rape is thwarted by Frank, who, in turn, makes love with Helen for the first and last time of their engagement. The sexual act paradoxically re-establishes the barren order of Morris Bober and completes

the moral fragmentation of Helen and Frank.[40] This act nearly destroys their belief in self-improvement and is reflected by Helen's fierce admonishment: "dog--uncircumcised dog!" (TA, 168).

At this stage, Malamud unleashes a vision of chaos. Events and their outcomes are determined solely by chance. Frank Alpine becomes the target of blame. Each member of the Bober family condemns him for disparate reasons. Helen despises him because he violated their vow of friendship and discipline. Morris, having found out that Frank occasionally "lifted" from the cash register, chastises him because he is a thief. Eda wants him gone for her "Jewish" reasons. The differences in condemnation result from the chaos, or lack of a reasonable ordering of events by the human element. Fortune and fate are resurrected, somewhat overtly, and dominate reality by determining the course of events void of a human accountability. When the store's business falls to an intolerable level, Frank takes another job part-time and discovers a painful reality while at Carl the Painter's trying to collect a debt:

She let him into a large room which was a

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[40]Morris Bober's conception of life resembles the literary category of naturalism in that the surroundings are not seen as separate, but as a subjective extension of his own "limited" character. He believes that man has no will and must exist subjected to external forces.

> kitchen and living room combined, the two halves separated by an undrawn curtain. In the middle of the living room part stood a kerosene heater that stank. This smell mixed with the sour smell of cabbage cooking. The four kids, a boy about twelve and three younger girls, were in the room, drawing on paper, cutting and pasting. They stared at Frank but silently went on with what they were doing. The clerk didn't feel comfortable. He stood at the window, looking down on the dreary lamplit street. He now figured he would cut the bill in half if the painter would pay up the rest. (TA, 189)

With the onslaught of a new and dominant social order that echoes painfully of the Bobers' existence and his own, Frank Alpine is forced to contemplate and endure a pattern of reality equal in intensity to that reality which he perceived before he went into business with Morris. He realizes that looking in the store window is no different from looking out the window "down on the dreary lamplit street." The vision of humanity is the same--stiffling.

Misfortune turns just as suddenly into fortune when the store business picks up. The moral perception of the Bober family changes, in an ephemeral manner, with the sudden luck. Morris Bober, upon learning that Julius Karp's liquor store has burnt to the ground, experiences a feeling of glee. He loses sight of Jewish tradition, then just as suddenly, dies while shoveling snow. Now, however, the family's perception begins to change. Helen reconciles herself with Frank, and he decides to have himself circumcised, following a vision he had of St. Francis. Malamud closes shop in

what appears to be a contrived manner. Why does Frank Alpine become a Jew after Passover? He is certainly following in the footsteps of Morris. It suggests conclusively that Frank accepts Morris' Jewish morality and a pattern for enduring the suffering of the future.

Such a notion at best proves very discouraging; yet Malamud, in the end, subordinates the external misery of his characters to a form of inward mysticism. It is a form that resembles, somewhat, a conscious attempt to represent paradox and off-set, thereby, any external or future projection on the reader's part. As a result, one cannot predict an extraneous pattern to the work itself. In this work all dissolves into an undiscernable quality. In the end Frank Alpine endures in the Jewish tradition and waits--through time for what at the end of Malamud's paradox?

B. THE MANSION: FAULKNER'S COMPLETE AND INWARD TIME

William Faulkner reconciles the problem of disparity between time and existence in art. In this manner, he orders irreconcilable elements: the demeaning capacity of human misery, inequity, and indignation with the immutable and enduring effect of the family, of genealogy, and the unity of all in "private" myth. These myths, the most fundamental principle for life in Faulkner's art, provide the necessary cohesion in The Mansion. Faulkner explains the novel's

inception and refers to the Snopes' Trilogy:

> When I first thought of these people and the idea of a tribe of people which would come into an otherwise peaceful . . . Southern town like ants or like mold on cheese then--I discovered then to tell the story properly would be too many words . . . [I knew] that I would have to keep on writing about these people until I got it told . . .[41]

Faulkner apparently saw the destructive presence of the Snopes as an enigma. His concern for delineating their history is revealed beforehand by a foreward which defined life so that certain "principles" would be distinctly clear within the work:

> This book is the final chapter of, and the summation of a work conceived and begun in 1925. Since the author likes to believe, hopes that his entire life's work is a part of a living literature, and since "living" is motion, and "motion" is change and alteration and therefore the only alternative to motion is un-motion, stasis, death, there will be found discrepancies and contradictions in the thirty-four year progress of this particular chronicle.[42]

Faulkner's fascination with motion, that is, the ant-like motion of the Snopes, as the basic myth of the external world becomes particularly apparent in The Mansion. Here, he creates meaning by juxtaposing character and motion in a subtle technique which, in turn, reveals an eagerness to discern by artistic

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[41]Faulkner In the University, p. 19.

[42]William Faulkner, The Mansion, p. xi, in preface to work. Subsequent references are given in parenthesis within text.

dislocation the inward pattern or "hidden" meaning of his universe.

When Mink Snopes walks to Jack Houston's for the purpose of reclaiming his cow which had been "grain-fed" in Houston's cattle pen all winter, Faulkner's outward fascination with, paradoxically, discerning these disparate forces of movement by stopping them, is stringently revealed:

> Well well," Mink said, one leg over the top rail, the coil of rope dangling from one raw-red hand, "don't tell me you bring a pistol along ever time you try to buy a cow. Maybe you even tote it to put a cotton-seed or a grain of corn in the ground too?" It was tableau: Mink with one leg over the top rail, Houston standing inside the fence, the pistol hanging in one hand against his leg, the Negro not moving either, not looking at anything, the whites of his eyes just showing a little. "If you had sent me word, maybe I could a brought a pistol too." (TM, 15)

The clashing of external appearances of characters moving from dissimilar to similar dimensions usually is accompanied with potential violence, which is the pretext for a violent situation or story evolving up to and away from the momentary and representative scene. In this particular instance, the conflict of motion stands out explosively between the raw-red handed Mink, whose "own bad luck had all life continually harassed and harried him into the constant and unflagging necessity of defending his own simple rights," and Jack Houston who "was born already shaped for arrogance

and intolerance and pride" (TM, 7). Meaning, though, as an outgrowth of action is marked with ambiguity, because the narrator says in no uncertain terms prior to this linear convergence that "a sparrow's falling" is revered by God, though not necessarily by Mink, who had not been to church since he was fifteen years old, "and never aimed to go again" (TM, 5).

All action in the novel directly or indirectly proceeds from the potentially violent exchange between Mink Snopes and Jack Houston. It relates directly to Mink's "ambuscade" of Houston with the ten-gauge shotgun and the subsequent action evolving around Mink's trial, prison sentence, and vendetta against Flem Snopes because Flem "would not and did not" come to Mink's aid during Mink's lifetime. The movement of the action, whether negative or positive, definitely proceeds in a cyclical direction. It is not cyclical in respect to a constant and tedious repetition of human experiences. Instead, the concept of motion refers to a spiraling repetition over previously experienced conditions--traversements, which because of their pastness provide a pattern of order for the character and a means for finally arriving at an individual level of truth.

The geometrical metaphor for human attainment is exemplified in the last section of the novel when the narrator focuses temporarily upon Gavin Stevens grown old:

> And Central would know where to find him at any time on Sunday too and in fact until almost half past two that afternoon he still believed he was going to spend the whole day at Rose Hill. . . . he had had something to escape into: nepenthe, surcease: the project he had decreed for himself while at Harvard of translating the Old Testament back into the classic Greek of its first translating; after which he would teach himself Hebrew and really attain to purity; he had thought last night why yes, I have that for tomorrow; I had forgotten about that. Then this morning he knew that that would not suffice any more, not ever again now. He meant of course the effort: not just the capacity to concentrate but to believe in it: he was too old now and the real tragedy of age is that no anguish is any longer grievous enough to demand, justify, any sacrifice. (TM, 391-392)

The tragedy voiced by Stevens is rooted not in his final antipathy to meaning, a search for order, but in his loss of life--a loss of motion after the germ for action has dissipated. To paraphrase Faulkner, it is a time when the "spirit" can no longer rally in support of an external event. Steven's attitude represents the encroachment of death and significantly parallels Mink's return from prison and the murder of his cousin, Flem Snopes.

The juxtapositioning of Mink with a "faster" human environment, which ultimately and paradoxically unites the fictive elements into a whole, initially splits the novel into different forces, at the bottom of which Mink struggles to defend his own simple rights. Mink's inability to co-exist without friction between himself and others

arises from his ineffectual mentality which perceives somehow differently than everyone. This indisposition confronts his own family. Mink reveals a certain degree of viciousness by driving his wife and two girls "out to the patch to chop out his early cotton, while he lay on the floor in the cool draft of the dogtrot hall, sleeping away the afternoon" (TM, 38).

Mink's primitive mental process rarely perceives time abstractly; yet, ironically, he does during the moment after he pulls the trigger and before Jack Houston falls from the blast. At that time, Mink longs for "time and space" in order that he may tell Houston very patiently and clearly just why he had to kill him. Mink, then, does experience regret and empathy, if only on a marginal level. He voices his innermost need after having reached the age of sixty-three: "Not Justice: I never asked that: jest fairness, that's all: not to have anything for [me]: just not to have anything against [me]."[43] He cannot understand the external world. Even when the Judge pronounces his sentence for murdering Jack Houston, Mink expressly replies, "Don't bother me now. Cant you see I'm busy?" Mink, at first, is a strong symbol for Faulkner's idea of

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[43] "Me" has been inserted in place of "him" in this brief monologue so that its meaning would not be confusing.

change, that is, the passing away of things with every element in existence fluid and ever evolving into a different form. Mink recognizes the inexplicable force of change and his "constant and unflagging necessity" to resist it so that he might live. Mink sees change as affecting everything in life, except for his cousin, Flem Snopes.

Flem represents that which is immutable, permanent to Mink. As a result, he has an unflagging faith that somehow, sometime, Flem will cut him loose from the murder rape of Jack Houston. Even after years of back breaking work on the prison's cotton farm, Mink does not lose confidence. The motion of the work is clear and natural and sustains his inner sense of life. However, when Flem ups his prison sentence by convincing him to try an escape in a woman's outfit and he is caught, Mink begins to die. His last permanent faith has betrayed him. Yet he does gain another hold on life by latching onto an idea: to kill Flem when he finally does get out of prison. Everyone, including Mink's defense attorney at the time of the trial, sees that Mink cannot be trusted--that his motives are his own, constant and unchanging, but for that very reason, capable of preserving his own life, capable of enduring.

Mink's release from Parchman constitutes his last form of action--his return to Jefferson. After Mink gets

out, he makes his way first to Memphis, where he buys a secondhand pistol. Then he makes his way back to Jefferson, and one night kills Flem. After that he knows he's finished, and he feels the tug of the ground pulling at him:

> A little further along toward dawn, any time the notion struck him to, he could lay down. So when the notion struck him he did so, arranging himself, arms and legs and back, already feeling the first faint gentle tug like the durned old ground itself was trying to make you believe it wasn't really noticing itself doing it. . . . it seemed to him he could feel the Mink Snopes that had had to spend so much of his life just having unnecessary bother and trouble, beginning to creep, seep, flow easy as sleeping; he could almost watch it . . . the little holes the worms made . . . the beautiful, the splendid, the proud and the brave, right on up to the very top itself among the shining phantoms and dreams which are the milestones of the long human recording--Helen and the bishops, the kings and the unhomed angels, the scornful and graceless seraphim. (TM, 434-436)

The novel, beginning with the misfortunes of Mink Snopes, ends similarly, with a recording of his vision after he experiences the long ebbing away of his life. It is a moment in which he accepts as the final element of his destiny, not the enclosure of his body in an earthly tomb, but a glimpse of the truth he had known all alone, that he would simply pass away.

The Snopes survive best in this work, Flem in a fortress built of opportunism, Mink in the narrow and lasting grave of his own reality. Yet their freedom, a degenerate quality found in all of Faulkner's Snopes, is in the end self-destructive.

Flem knows somehow that Mink will come back and does not act surprised when he sees Mink pointing the gun at him. He "appears" to watch "Mink's grimed shaking child sized hands like the hands of a pet coon" (TM, 414). Flem violates Mink's sense of family kinship and knows he has to die for it. Mink, after Flem's murder, knows that he is now released from life and enters into his final legacy.

Faulkner, on the other hand, in light of his consideration for Mink's plight, reacts ambiguously toward the other characters. Their names and status reveal the lack of seriousness and artistic regard with which they are treated: Euphus Tubbs, the jailor; Montgomery Ward, a "nekkid" picture salesman; Grover Winbush, the sheriff; Hub Hampton, the lawyer; Linda, daughter of Eula Varner and Flem Snopes, a temporary expatriate who is subjected to war, suffers shell shock, loses her hearing, and comes back to Jefferson running after Gavin Stevens quacking "Gavin, Gavin," like a duck the narrator tells us.

Faulkner, at times anxious to display his ever-ranging freedom of vision, fails to ward off his own sarcasm and cynicism and destroys the illusion of an author all-powerful, transgressing time and characters at will. He cannot reconcile narration with Mink's reality and, consequently, loses perspective and artistry. His personal vision seeps too obstrusively into the work. Many of the

above characters appear to jerk within a discontinuous burlesque. They react whimsically in response to Faulkner's levity and not in accord with the serious import of the work itself. It is questionable whether Faulkner deliberately set out to flaw The Mansion. He does frame the novel with a serious depiction of Mink, ironically cast in a somewhat condescending tone. The final vision of life, however, ostensibly Mink's, is not the vision of an earthbound reality, which would be more in keeping with Mink's plane of thought. Instead, it is a metaphysical rendering of a Southern past continually dying away, leaving only a wake of its former self, cased in a surrealistic, mythical form. The final "vision" encompasses an incredibly complex and abstruse reality, not indigenous to Mink, but of the "great narrator" who tries to wrench a perspective from the work for his own vision because he is, in the end, bound to his work, and also in the end bound to lose his freedom by trying to resurrect a character incapable of resurrection into Faulkner's mode of being.

Faulkner by his artistry actually combats time, while Malamud never recognizes it consciously. Malamud's art endures a "grotesque" and black pattern of changelessness, one that becomes an obscurent vision into mystique. Malamud waits for the final revelation of Christian myth, thereby denying the actual, the present. Faulkner scorns the old

myths with his fallen angels and represents a form of paradox which finds substance in the years of thought and action and failure, at the end of which he must choose to sanctify with personal myth a glimpse of Mink Snopes, thin, broke, and dangerous, yet courageously lampooning the wealthy Jack Houston from across a barbed-wire fence outside of Jefferson.

C. LIE DOWN IN DARKNESS: TIME FOR SELF-IMPRISONMENT

Malamud's reality in The Assistant depicts a form of existence and accepts as resolution an essence of formlessness. Faulkner does not actually question but represents experience, and thereby, presents his mystery. William Styron differs from both Faulkner and Malamud by pursuing an implied reality--one which depends upon Milton Loftis' currents of thought--gathering patterns of reality through retrospect and hindsight for its substance. Styron's reality is Milton's inquiry into life, and inversely, his daughter Peyton's inquiry into death. The death of Peyton and the life of Milton Loftis crystalize in a form of consciousness (Milton's) that lags behind time, that is, the actual moment of experience between dream and reality in Milton's "inner" consciousness.

Styron's title, Lie Down in Darkness, comes from

The Urn Burial, a prose work by Sir Thomas Browne, a seventeen-century writer:

> The night of time far surpasseth the day, and who knows when was the equinox? Every hour adds unto that current arithmetic, which scarce stands one moment. And since death must be the Lucina of life, and even Pagans could doubt, whether thus to live were to die; since our longest sun sets at right descensions, and makes but winter arches, and therefore it cannot be long before we lie down in darkness, and have our light in ashes; since the brother of death daily haunts us with dying mentos, and time that grows old in itself, bids us hope no long duration;--diuturnity is a dream and folly of expectation.[44]

Browne's subject matter accentuates life by intellectualizing upon death-like illusion and its metaphorical impact on the living. Browne's vision, notably in the fifth section of the essay, bares a philosophical resemblance to Milton Loftis' sense of being. Browne writes: "When many that feared to die, shall groan that they can die but once, the dismal state is the second and living death, when life puts despair on the damned."[45] Milton Loftis' inner vision denies time and place for an inebriated conception of past experiences which allow him to cling to the memories of the deceased Peyton and to the level of beauty at which he

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[44]Sir Thomas Browne, Selected Writings, edited by Geoffrey Keynes, pp. 151-152.

[45]Ibid., p. 152.

perceived her.

At the beginning of the novel, the reader is subjected to Milton's nauseous and alcoholic point of view as he waits for his deceased daughter, Peyton, to arrive from New York on the train. The wait, her subsequent arrival and journey, presumably to the mortuary, then finally to the cemetery, are the only evidences of a chronological time in the work. The bulk of time, however, arrives as fragmented impressions through flashbacks, realizations, and visions. These fragments of time are framed by an ordered time at the beginning and end. This projects, at least, a superfluous ordering of the discontinuous moments of time and allows the reader a "touchstone" from which to appraise the chaos of Milton Loftis' inner world.

This technique of handling time in this manner, moreover, allows the narrator a basis so that he might artistically coalesce the psychic schism between Peyton, and her mother, Helen, and corroborate their inner fragmentation by antithetical representations of Christian myth, for example, the serpent in the Garden (Helen) and the unsuspecting human element in a state of innocence and beauty (her daughter, Peyton). Althought the narrator does, at times, impose a mythical interpretation upon segments of the unordered time, he does not restrict eruptions of personal myth and the subtle innuendos which evolve from

this form of myth:

> She saw trees, sea-deep, cold light, a mountain pool . . . and she looked up from the pool where tropical goldfish swam restlessly beneath green interlaced mountain ferms . . .[46]

The above glimpse of Peyton occurs within the sychronous moments of Milton Loftis' dream-like perception. It reflects enigmatically Milton's ideal regard for his daughter and his symbolic plane of reality. Milton's vision exemplifies one last point of importance within the inner structure of the work: it represents a personal separation of events into "good or evil" categories and a projection of evil on the cosmic scale that is perpetuated from Helen to Peyton, rendering the mother in demonical form and a demonical regard for that quality in the daughter.

In contrast to Milton's primitive morality, the narrator explains, more realistically, the meeting of Helen and Milton:

> They met at an officer's dance on the island. . . . Perhaps they were both too young to know better, but a few months later they were engaged to be married. She was straitlaced in many ways, rather severe; No, Milton! We'll have to wait till afterwards. And drinking. She loved a good time, but a sober good time. (LDID, 16)

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[46]William Styron, Lie Down in Darkness, p. 29. Subsequent references are given in parenthesis within text.

Later, after Peyton's marriage, the Doctor relates to Milton his impression of Helen during the wedding reception:

> It was like watching an adder . . . surely she was ready to strike. None of the other guests seemed to have noticed her, and this fact, too, increased his feeling of impending peril: of a snake which lies tranquil, cold as ice, save for its head motionless at the rim of some thicket, prepared as if by divine intuition to bite not the wary, but the unaware. Peyton hadn't seen her. Nor did she see, as the doctor did, Helen's gaze dart and move once more from the walls to the punchbowl to the windows, linger momentarily upon the last fading light, and then fasten like teeth upon Peyton's back. (LDID, 305)

Although this is supposedly a description of the reception as seen by the Doctor, one cannot be sure of its reliability since the dominant consciousness, Milton's, selects and orders much of the inner structure and thus slants the reader's concept of reality.

Therefore, to determine more properly the shape of Milton's inner reality, it is necessary to isolate his vision from the prejudicial and human factor. A dream-like awareness of the external world is evidenced when he "watches" the University football game:

> Gray light rolled over the stadium. Above, an airplane hung in the sky, hovering nearly motionless. . . . nobody watched or listened. Somewhere a siren howled and died, and on the sidelines there was a brief clot of people, a fistfight, but two fat cops brandishing sticks, and the spectators scattered . . . It was a moment of suspension, of gloom even, although the score was tied: it had nothing to do with the game. It seemed merely as if all these thousands had been seized at once by the same

> numbness: gathered here between the halves, sitting idly, mainly silent now, it was as if, imprisoned by their boredom, they had been here since the beginning of time and would go on being here forever. (LDID, 208)

Milton interprets events significantly as being "imprisoned" by changelessness. In other words, his sensibility or insensibility functions within a set of static concepts that allow for only the most general exposure to the external world. He resembles Jake Barnes in The Sun Also Rises with his redundant and subjective approach to experience.

Peyton, unlike her father, Milton, who can never get outside of himself, has had her "ego" debased to the point that experience is not filtered through a highly conscious point of view. Instead, her impressions of experiences permeate a "deeper" level of consciousness and provoke a continuous mythical pattern of reality. In the Peyton section (pp. 335-386) the reader is suddenly confronted with her highly sensitive character; her perception differs radically from her father's simplified moral breakdown of the world, in that she sees everything with equal emphasis. Her failure to subordinate or rank phenomena in any way suggests the possibility that she has achieved a mode of perception completely amoral and, therefore, endlessly symbolic.

Bird imagery helps link her "external" world with her "inner" and symbolical world. She sees, mythically,

three forms of birds: pigeons, seagulls, and ducks, each of which represents a contingent mode of imaginative transcendence from her initial and dying reality. The pigeons seem to float about in the air and alight on the ledge outside of her window "to send up a cloud of feathers and dust from the old droppings." Similarly she thinks: "We ran like birds." This rendering of her imagination remains inconclusive outside of the fact that she equates herself with the birds, that is, until "dung" or death becomes apparent when she sees a man throw a "dead sparrow" into a bucket. She also thinks of gulls, an image which had previously linked water symbolically with her perception, but is now emblematic of the water itself. The gulls, a counterpart for her imaginative spirit or the soul, draw her closer to that region which draws her literally. She dreams, too, of a duck swimming about on water, a closer and more firm intercourse with the mythical rebirth. It is, however, not the form of rebirth referred to by Mircea Eliade earlier, "participation mystique," but a rebirth literally consummated by death in the Christian sense of the word. When Peyton has sex, she experiences in essence the spiritual reality which caused her lineage according to the Old Testament. Peyton's death-like action of moving into darkness brings with it a sense of destruction in the universe and at the same time, paradoxically, order:

> Nagasaki, the man said and he spoke of mushrooms and Mr. Truman: there were atoms in the air everywhere, he said, and he explained, but I couldn't make much sense. My eyes came off clean, globed from the atoms falling slow or swift, I remembered, I see the suns, I see the systems lift their forms. Lecretius had a heart as big as all outdoors said Harry, but he, too-- empires, lands and seas--he too, like these, went soaring back to the external drift. (LDID, 344)

Peyton envisions a cosmos that is amorphous, that runs, apparently, on a concurrent level with existence. She then joins the reality which she had longed for, but not before she pleas to Jesus Christ.

Through the reality of Peyton's consciousness, Styron explores a pattern of reality that becomes increasingly complex as outer appearances dissolve and illusions dwindle until only the illusion of spiritualism is left. The patterns of order in her section are obscured by the chaos embodied in her form of perception; however, her sensibility problematically regards all that she is able to recognize through the senses. Because of this, the structure of her section of the novel emulates the formless and wandering constituents of her inner character, yet in a manner so sensitive and human that the reader follows, unquestionably, what is bizarre and surrealistic, and at the same time so real that one does not wonder why Milton Loftis could not engage the present after her death.

D. Wise Blood: THE APPEARANCE OF NOTHING

Flannery O'Connor's Wise Blood is the most mystical work examined thus far, and for that reason, its meaning is the more obscure. She says about her art:

> Much of my fiction takes its character from a reasonable use of the unreasonable, though the reasonableness of my use of it may not always be apparent. The assumptions that underlie this use of it, however, are those of the central Christian mysteries.[47]

She defines a good story as one in which:

> some action, some gesture of a character that is unlike any other in the story, one which indicates where the real heart of the story lies. . . . it would have to be one that was both in character and beyond character; it would have to suggest both the world and eternity; It would be a gesture which somehow made contact with mystery.[48]

If Flannery O'Connor has indeed recognized that component of her art which renders form and meaning to the more superfluous facets, then the reader must, likewise, search out such a moment at which point outward appearance, for example, a gesture, orders the facade of the work by tying it to the infinite, to the meaningful. But first one should look at the outward form of the work, its appearance, to see whether or not O'Connor manipulates the reader into "searching

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[47]From What Is the Short Story? edited by Walton R. Patrick, p. 134.

[48]Ibid., p. 135

out" and accepting the inner Christian mystery, if there is one in Wise Blood.

The central character, Hazel Motes, is a young ex-veteran who arrives home from the military and has decided to become a preacher in his own "personalized" church--one without Jesus Christ. Like Mink Snopes, Hazel Motes cannot exist except on such a level of irony that there is nothing congruous without or within. Therefore, what he perceives, his perception, and his appearance are ludicrous to the extent that all illusions--all concepts not indigenous to this landscape--are totally absurd. Furthermore Christian beliefs are also inoperative to such a degree that Jesus Christ, God-made-man, exists only as various forms of perversion. The world is wasted and chaotic, yet ironically, no one but the reader at this point seems to know it.

Hazel Motes' manner of perceiving concurs basically with the existential's mode in that the external world does not exist as a rational extension of the individual's sense of order. A disharmony of the two worlds resulting from the discovery of chaos in the external world forces the individual to act inductively from personal experience and truth. Hazel Motes, however, seems to exist only as appearance. As a result the reader learns practically nothing about his inner vision, and for that reason, cannot "empathize" with his existential mode of perception. The narrator views Hazel Motes in a perspective comically

degrading, yet in keeping with the nature of appearance in the work:

> He didn't look . . . much over twenty, but he had a stiff black broadbrimmed hat on his lap, a hat that an elderly country preacher would wear. His suit was a glaring blue and the price tag was still stapled on the sleeve of it. . . . His eyes were the color of pecan shells and set in deep sockets. . . . The suit had cost him $11.98. . . . He had a nose like a shrike's bill.[49]

This rather obvious and degrading depiction of Hazel Motes' echoes the shoddy and ephemeral quality of O'Connor's vision. The vision compounds itself with every page as she unleashes "grotesqueries" with almost immaculate regularity. These distorted elements disparage traditional concepts of religion, human decency, and moral perception. Her ironical representation of Hazel Motes as the last stronghold of a civilized and Christian race impels one to surmise that O'Connor, like Faulkner, expects the reader to counter this "effrontery" with his own internal sense of reality. A reading on these grounds would resemble a "bout" between artist and reader, with the reader experiencing the temporary dislocation of his moral beliefs as they are tested by the artistic distortion. The effect, then, demonstrates emphatically to the reader the mental process involved in modifying or changing his moral structure.

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[49]Flannery O'Connor, Wise Blood, pp. 9-10. Subsequent references are given in parenthesis within text.

When one examines Hazel Motes' character, it becomes rapidly evident that his life has been influenced by everything but the mystique. From an early age, he was taught to reject evil no matter at what the cost. As a result, his conscience becomes so over-burdened with the disproportionate weight of evil that finally he resolves to be "converted to nothing instead of evil." His denial of evil necessitates, similarly, the denial of good and the acceptance of an amoral perspective. In regard to this development, he says: "I'm going to preach a new church--the church of truth without Jesus Christ Crucified" (WB, 34). His church fails to establish a following because, in its secular form, it lacks a doctrine of salvation:

> I'm member and preacher to that church where the blind don't see and the lame don't walk and what's dead stays that way. Ask me about that church and I'll tell you it's the church that the blood of Jesus don't foul with redemption. (WB, 60)

Hazel Motes' church ascribes only to the outward appearances of the world. As a result, the meaning in his "outward religion" stems from things existing as he sees them: two idots clapping in church, the mummified body of the savior from the museum, and most poignantly of all, "the head of a string of pigs [appearing] snout-up over the ditch" (WB, 44). Hazel Motes' trek, resembling somewhat the comical version of Dante's excursion through hell, culminates "indecisively" in a grotesque metaphor for the human landscape:

> TWO DEADLY ENEMIES. HAVE A LOOK FREE.
> There was a black bear about four feet long and very thin, resting on the floor of the cage; his back was spotted with bird lime that had been shot down on him by a small chicken hawk that was sitting on a perch in the upper part of the same apartment. Most of the hawk's tail was gone; the bear had only one eye. (WB, 70)

Hazel Motes, a prophet for his own religion from his own point of view, seems to accept fully and without reprehension these aspects of his "earthly" kingdom.

His religion of seeing without hypocrisy is abruptly confronted when he learns that a man, Hoover Shoats, wants to team up with him so that they may fleece the public by pretending that Hazel is the "new" Jesus. Insulted by this indignation to his morality, Hazel responds by smashing Hoover Shoat's thumb in the door of his Essex. Later, he is inspired to preach a new religious philosophy:

> I preach there are all kinds of truth, your truth and somebody else's, but behind all of them, there's only one truth and that is that there's no truth," he called. "No truth behind all truths is what I and this church preach! Where you come from is gone, where you thought you were going to never was there, and where you are is no good unless you can get away from it. Where is there a place for you to be? No place. (WB, 90)

Although Hazel Motes nihilistically denounces what was his kingdom, he, ironically, gains a sense of order through the realization that there is, in essence, no truth to reality, to appearances. He sees it as a matter of principle (his

belief in untruth now a truth to him) that he destroy Hoover Shoats' co-worker, Solace Layfield, by chasing him out on the highway at night with his Essex and running over him until he did not even resemble a false prophet with a lot of blood "coming out of him."

At this stage in his moral development, Hazel comes to believe, as he had originally, that the earth is not the final resting place. Because of this belief, he concedes to the doctrine of suffering by blinding himself with lime (we would assume so that he might see in the Christian sense) and wraps several strands of barbed-wire around his chest (so that he might live) in hopes that he will be spiritually edified. Hazel Motes' masochism results in his getting lost during the winter in a drainage ditch. But, more importantly, his denial of the external world for the internal world indicates a shift in sensibility that is caused, in part, by his recognition of time and space as forms of illusion. After the policeman pushes his car over the cliff because he did not have a license, Hazel Motes ponders:

> His face seemed to reflect the entire distance across the clearing and on beyond, the entire distance that extended from his eyes to the blank gray sky that went on, depth after depth, into space. His knees bent under him and he sat down on the edge of the embankment with his feet hanging over. . . .
> . . . [the policeman] leaned on down with his hands on his knees and said in an anxious

> voice, "Was you going anywheres?"
> "No," Hazel said. (WB, 114)

After Hazel's vehicle for travel has been destroyed, his reaction bears no resemblance to the preceding or succeeding events. For a moment, aesthetic distance falters, and the reader empathizes with the human predicament of Hazel Motes.

The mystery--the affinity between Hazel and the reader at this point--delineates an entirely new perspective within the work. It reveals a concurrent treatment of subject matter by O'Connor. On the outer and more apparent level, events are subjected to O'Connor's levity and black humor. Yet on an inward level, suddenly, another reality is exposed--the actual reality of Hazel Motes.

In O'Connor's art, reality is achieved only after anguish and suffering. Her characters do not participate with any past or objective reality. For them, only the most subjective truth of the past wears into their consciousness. As a result, their perception is unusual in that it often reaches an extremly perverted visionary status. Hazel Motes' vision of Christ exemplifies this:

> Later he saw Jesus move from tree to tree in the back of his mind, a wild ragged figure motioning him to turn around and come off into the dark where he was not sure of his footing, where he might be walking on the water and not know it and then suddenly know it and drown. (WB, 17)

This is not the traditional Christ of the New Testament who

retains the untattered dignity of God incarnate, or at worst, a man with a prodigious purity of motive. This figure is Hazel's corrupted version; a Jesus in a wilderness wasteland, a ghoul-like creature, but not necessarily one who has triumphed over death. Yet, with these brief descriptions a serious and tragic reality is enacted, one that renders the more superficial commedy black and limited. O'Connor's art does successfully dissassociate myth and fiction, the fiction being the fall of man from paradise, the myth a struggle from some far place and time, a struggle so harsh and blind that in O'Connor's world Hazel Motes represents the true Christ.

E. GO TELL IT ON THE MOUNTAIN: THE TIMELESS ESSENCE

In his collection of essays, Notes of a Native Son, James Baldwin writes of reality:

> We take our shape, it is true, within and against that cage of reality bequeathed us at our birth; and yet it is precisely through our dependence on this reality that we are most endlessly betrayed. Society is held together by our need: we bind it together with legend, myth, coercion, fearing that without it we will be hurled into that void, within which, like the earth before the Word was spoken, the foundations of society are hidden. From this void--ourselves--it is the function of society to protect us; but it is only this void, our unknown selves, demanding, forever, a new act of creation, which can save us . . . With the same motion, at the same time, it is this toward which endlessly, we struggle to escape.[50]

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[50]James Baldwin, Notes of a Native Son, p. 15.

Baldwin, like Erich Kahler, sees reality as an ever-transforming process moving away from that which was toward the unknown, but an unknown sought after because of the horror in the old way of life. In Go Tell It on the Mountain, the pattern is, at first, seated in the ambiguities of perception. Then, after an inner or spiritual order is discerned, the individual determines his external reality from the inner pattern--the subjective truth.

In this work, Baldwin depicts a family of blacks who live in Harlem and struggle to obtain a reconciliation of their inner and outer worlds. The different characters as they are represented in their respective sections are in diverse stages of religious development, stages shaped and influenced by previous experiences in different times and regions: the old deep south for the Father, Gabriel Grimms, the slums of Harlem for John, his son. Baldwin's vision often presents an assorted and dirty glimpse into the Grimm's family as evidenced through John's eyes when he sees, with momentary clearness, their house:

> The pale end-of-winter sunlight filled the room and yellowed all their faces; and John, drugged and morbid and wondering how it was . . . The room was narrow and dirty; nothing could alter its dimensions, no labor could ever make it clean. . . . Dirt was in the baseboard that John scrubbed every saturday, and roughened the cupboard shelves that held the cracked and gleaming dishes. . . . The windows gleamed like beaten gold or silver, but now John saw, in the yellow light, how fine dust veiled their doubtful glory. John thought with shame and

horror, yet in angry hardness of the heart: "He who is filthy let him be filthy still."[51]

This quotation demonstrates the self-deprecation of the subject matter wrought pure by a beautiful artistic style. It also reflects one of the major conflicts expounded in this work: the anguish and hiatus between a character's feelings and thoughts. Since the above quotation exemplifies the perceptual pattern in the primary stage of the novel, it would be beneficial to examine thoroughly the thought process involved.

The different characters, like John, are subjected to a reality beyond their control, whether it be the fact that they are black, the time of the year, the hatred of the white man, or their own hypocrisy and lust. This "slavery" to the external world manifests itself as an inimical conflict, not on the cosmic scale--Baldwin seldom allows his characters to achieve cosmic proportions--but on a scale which is black, torpid, and floundering in a vague state of anguish. John's rather acute perception of the conflict objectified, "dirt," rapidly dissolves itself into his feelings, sparing him neither pain nor a sense of helplessness. The result is equally painful: that no labor could make the room seem clean.

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[51]James Baldwin, Go Tell It on the Mountain, p. 49. Subsequent references are given in parenthesis within text.

John's perception of "dirt" however, cannot degenerate into a completely futile experience because of the structure of his thought process, because of the antithetical reasoning which provides a basis from which to "think" about the despotism. The cracked and gleaming dishes are of a contrary nature and are, thus, bearable as symbols of human beauty. Although the windows are not perceived actually but metaphorically as a metal substance of great value and religious significance, their worth is downgraded by the dust, not at first visible. The ambivalent qualities of the physical conditions, then, cause John to extend this fundamental and moralistic appraisal to include the realm of man--for which he is the immediate symbol. The moral ambiguity of the above section is enhanced by the quality of light which comes through the window, that is, yellowed or impure light that has been soiled by man's reality. But most importantly, it is only after the physical setting has impressed upon John its "realness" and, subsequently, forced him to regard it as an indeterminant force that John assumes a moral principle arising from what he thinks he sees. Because of this, John's and the other characters' predicament tend to be one primarily concerned with discerning an implicit reality--a human reality, in the wake of an unacceptable and malign empirical world.

This work, like Henderson the Rain King, seems to

reveal a pronounced schism that separates one's thoughts and feelings. John's impression of the room and his family becomes stark only after he has pondered it to the degree that there is a morbidity in his vision. Yet he does perceive an essence of beauty. When he walks through Central Park in the winter he longs for amenities of the physical world: a closet full of whiskey and wine, animals, a beautiful wife and cars. John realizes that appearances conflict with the teachings in the Bible. People deck themselves out in furcoats, silk clothes, and jewelry:

> . . . their thoughts were not of God, and their way was not God's way. They were in the world, and of the world, and their feet laid hold on hell.
>
> Yet some of them had been nice to him, and it was hard to think of them burning in hell forever, they who were so gracious and beautiful now. (GTM, 36-37)

The ambivalence in John's appraisal of reality solidifies in a moral chastisement of himself because he cannot morally coalesce his inner and outer reality.

Gabriel Grimms, John's father, experiences but will not accept a stronger form of hypocrisy. This hypocrisy stems from his past life as a preacher in the deep south and his marriage to Deborah, his first wife. Deborah's sexual sterility will not allow her and Gabriel to have children. As a result, Gabriel condemns her as being something less than human:

> Deborah looked at him with a watchful silence in her look; he felt the hand

> that held his Bible begin to sweat
> and tremble; he thought of the joy-
> less groaning of their marriage bed;
> and he hated her (GTM, 118).

Gabriel does not equate human kindness with Biblical intent. Instead, Deborah's spirit and flesh is evil since it cannot perform according to his and "God's" holy plan: the procreation of children. He seeks to expend his vision of holiness on more fertile grounds, but only expends his own feeling of righteousness:

> So he had fallen: for the first time since
> his conversion, for the last time in his
> life. Fallen: he and Esther in the white
> folk's kitchen, the light burning beside
> the sink. . . . time was no more, and sin,
> death . . . Time, snarling so swiftly past,
> had caused him to forget the clumsiness,
> and sweat and dirt of their first coupling.
> . . . Had Royal, his son, been conceived that
> night? Or the next night? . . . It had lasted
> only nine days. Then he had come to his senses--
> after nine days God gave him the power to tell
> her it could not be. (GTM, 126-127)

Gabriel perceives the evil he hates as being within himself. He later discovers that Esther, unlike his wife, is fertile. The son, Royal, is not a product of his "holiness," but a perversion of it. He renounces evil even more bitterly but does not expiate the feeling within himself. When Esther tells Gabriel of her pregnancy, he does not accept its reality. "He did not answer her. He could find no words. There was only silence in him, like the grave" (GTM, 133).

Gabriel conforms to his own outward form of hypocrisy by pretending to be a minister of God, not his bastard son's

father. This event, ironically, sparks in Gabriel a more subtle though secretive respect for that which is "real." One day, much later, after the castration and murder of a black soldier, Gabriel sees Royal on the street and earnestly questions his safety: "Boy," he cried, "ain't you got no good sense? Don't you know you ain't got no business to be out here, walking around like this?" (GTM, 143). Gabriel's concern for Royal, emanating from a position of security (Royal does not know him) displays Gabriel's "awakening" to an actual concern for the human element--a concern not dependent upon a moral consideration but upon love.

The effect of love does not manifest itself totally to Gabriel. He is, like his son, John, plagued with John of Patmos' words from the Book of Revelations: "He which is filthy, let him be filthy still." John, in contrast to his father, experiences a deeping insight during his spiritual rebirth which clarifies the nature and purpose of love. "Love is as strong as death, as deep as the grave" (GTM, 200). John's previous conception of good negated by evil is brought to test, here. Before, the dust on the silver and gold-like windows destroyed all hope of action, all question of choice. The resulting stalemate was life without a firm hope of rebirth through love. However, the suggestion of an inward determiner or force for shaping one's reality, love as a virile force contingent upon the individual's discovery of

it, gives to the problem of slavery, of subjection, new overtones. Death, the necessary end in Baldwin's world, does not "necessarily" over-ride the possibilities for "living."

John, after his spiritual rebirth in the novel, perceives a new frame-work of thought from which to regard empirical reality and the human problem. He reflects this new understanding as he walks back to the family house after church services with his father who does not see love as the ultimate human reality:

> And he felt his father behind him. And he felt the March wind rise, striking through his damp clothes, against his salty body. He turned to face his father--he found himself smiling, but his father did not smile.
>
> They looked at each other a moment. His mother stood in the doorway, in the long shadows of the hall.
>
> "I'm ready," John said. "I'm coming. I'm on my way." (GTM, 221)

John does not retreat into negativism as before, neither from his father's unsmiling face nor from the shadows in the hall. He knows within himself the most human way for overcoming these darknesses of the human spirit.

F. EAST OF EDEN: TIME AS THE BIRTH MARK

The belief that America was, at first, a mythical projection of Renaissance England is argued by Elemire Zolla in her work, The Writer and the Shaman. She contends that these myths were created, then enlarged upon by the hundreds of

fantastical allusions extant in English writings from the sixteenth century onward. Accounts such as John Smith's "The General History of Virginia" and his Pocahontas "mythologizing" of the Indian Maiden resulted in the subsequent snow-balling of Indian cultural distortions. Various myths depicting America as an arcadia, a mysterious land still living in a mythical golden age, a new Jerusalem, a land for plush exploitation, were essential in providing the incentive for colonization.[52]

Zolla attempts to represent objectively in critical form the historical distortion of the American Indian and the pervasion of this distortion in contemporary American thought. From that standpoint she is actually re-framing--altering history--or the personal and subjective misconception of it. For his own sake as artist and for the reader's sake John Steinbeck in a similar manner attempts to render fictively the American Past. Unlike Zolla whose intent was depicting a misconstrued history, Steinbeck utilizes history as framework (both American and Christian as will become evident) by which to represent an element of human action apart from the actual. His role as "artist," then, is very important for digesting forces in the American consciousness not readily evident or understandable. That

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[52]Elemire Zolla, The Writer and the Shaman, see introduction.

is not to say that East of Eden is Steinbeck's effort to write the great American novel. His concern is, in fact, more reasonable and down to earth. But he does stress his role as artist during a brief interlude in the work itself:

> There are monstrous changes taking place in the world, forces shaping a future whose face we do not know. Some of these forces seem evil to us, perhaps not in themselves but because their tendency is to eliminate other things we hold true. . . . What do I believe in? What must I fight for and what must I fight against? Our species is the only creative species, and it has only one creative instrument, the individual mind and spirit of a man. . . . And this I believe: that the free, exploring mind of the individual human is the most valuable thing in the world. And this I would fight for: the freedom of the mind to take any direction it wishes, undirected. And this I must fight against: any idea, religion, or government which limits or destroys the individual. This is what I am and what I am about. I can understand why a system built on a pattern must try to destroy the free mind. For this is one thing which can by inspection destroy such a system. Surely I can understand this, and I hate it and I will fight against it to preserve the one thing that separates us from the uncreative beasts. If the glory can be killed, we are lost.[53]

The tension posed by the two poles of thought in the above excerpt and in the novel itself--the Prometheus-motif of respective freedom and human accountability versus the unwarranted recurrence of "fictionalized" or untrue patterns of human action and thought--epitomize the ambivalent structure of East of Eden. The problem, to paraphrase

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[53]John Steinbeck, East of Eden, pp. 150-151. Subsequent references are given in parenthesis within test.

Elemire Zolla, is that of the "writer and the shaman," the creative insight and the mass blindness.

The fictive illusion of this work vacillates accordingly between periods of creative genius on Steinbeck's part and uncontrolled "lunacy." At times Steinbeck allows his fiction to create and sustain itself, but too often he "tells" the reader and falls into the same trap that many critics claim Hemingway fell into in his Old Man and the Sea and Faulkner fell into in A Parable.[54] Nevertheless, one of Steinbeck's foremost objectives in East of Eden was to diminish the grandiose conception of time in the American past:

> Another hundred years were ground up and churned, and what had happened was all muddled by the way folks wanted it to be--more rich and meaningful the farther back it was. In the books of some memories it was the best time that ever sloshed over the world--the old time, the gay time, sweet and simple, as though time were young and fearless. . . . to hell with that rotten century!
>
> Let's get it over and the door closed shut on it! Let's close it like a book and go on reading! New Chapter, new life. A man will have clean hands once we get the lid slammed shut. . . . (EE, 147-149)

In East of Eden, time is treated on two levels: the personal and historical. From Steinbeck's letters and the structure

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[54]For Steinbeck's thoughts while he was composing the novel, see Journal of a Novel: The East of Eden Letters.

of the work, it is obvious that he consciously juxtaposed the two modes of perceiving. On one perspective, he creates a hypothetical scale that extends backward in time to document briefly the origin of Samuel Hamilton's family in Ireland. The account is brief, intentionally narrated on a subjective level and low-keyed:

> Young Samuel Hamilton came from the north of Ireland and so did his wife. He was the son of small farmers, neither rich nor poor . . . The Hamiltons managed to be remarkably well educated and well read; and, as is so often true in that green country, they were connected and related to very great people and very small people, so that one cousin might be a baronet and another cousin a beggar. (EE, 9)

Partially in keeping with the dual structure of the work, another family is depicted:

> Adam Trask was born on a farm on the outskirts of a little town which was not far from a big town in Connecticut. He was an only son, and he was born six months after his father was mustered into a Connecticut regiment in 1862. (EE, 15)

The history of these two families provides the organizing principle for the work and reflects the "externalizing" by the narrator of representative events and characters' roles in those events.

Although the bulk of the novel is related by means of human events that are contained within an "over-lying historical illusion of time, the narrator fails to sustain his point of view consistently and lapses into a perception of personal

time through "inward" narration:

> It was a dirty gusty evening. Castroville Street was deep in sticky mud, and Chinatown was so flooded that its inhabitants had laid planks across the narrow street that separated their hutches. The clouds against the evening sky were the gray of rats, and the air was not damp but dank. I guess the difference is that dampness comes down but dankness rises up out of the rot and fermentation. The afternoon wind had dropped away and left the air raw and wounded. (EE, 362)

The technique of manipulating time on an historical and personal basis corresponds respectively with the external and the internal modes of narration. This incongruity serves as a basis for contrasting the two methods of perception and, eventually, discredits the outward--the historical. It also reveals a co-existing structure within the creative element: a pre-ordination by a narrator who is concerned with an extraneous and humanistic intent in conflict with artistic spontaneity evidenced in the above description of Castroville.

Steinbeck in The Grapes of Wrath resolved the dual treatment of subject matter by separating the documentation of historical time and the personal response to that time by limiting each to "interlocking" chapters. However, the problem in East of Eden is integrated without an apparent order within the various chapters, and for that reason, becomes inseparable and confusing. The problem does unravel itself, to a degree, by incorporating in dialogue form among

the characters numerous philosophical discussions pertaining to the Cain and Abel section of Genesis in the Old Testament. The problem, as they examine it, takes into consideration Cain's moral destiny after he has slain Abel and is turned out a wanderer over the earth. They conclude that the wording "thou shalt" and "do thou", the first promising man's triumph over sin, the other demanding it, is not properly derived from the original Hebrew word "Timshel," which means "Thou mayest" triumph over sin, placing the moral responsibility solely on an individual level.

Despite Steinbeck's attempt to resolve the confusion in the work by reducing all to a matter of free will, the solution to the paradoxical structure of the work is more of an imposition than an outgrowth; consequently, its emergence presupposes a philosophical rather than an artistic concern. Moreover, the narrator cannot consistently "adhere" to this philosophy:

> Samuel may have thought and played and philosophized about death, but he did not really believe in it. His world did not have death as a member. He, and all around him, was immortal. When real death came it was an outrage, a denial of the immortality he deeply felt, and the one crack in his wall caused the whole structure to crash. I think he had always thought he could argue himself out of death. It was a personal opponent and one he could lick. (EE, 336)

Ironically, the narrator who seemed to expound a philosophy

of Christian pervasiveness by using Samuel and Lee as mouthpieces finds that he cannot, in the end, believe in his own doctrine.

The reality of East of Eden is couched in paradox and ambiguity. The duality within the work which causes this is both indigenous to the work itself and superfluous to it. What is interesting is that Steinbeck seemed consciously to recognize the "heavy-handedness" involved in dislocating the artistic pattern of the work in favor of a "humanistic" pattern. Steinbeck, like Faulkner, despite the "undertow" of serious artistry, seemed in favor of emphasizing that he is in command--that he is his own maker of fiction. However, the older artists' inclination to become moralists could possibly reflect a facet of their art seldomly explored, that of becoming aware through the creative process that the communicative possibilities can be exhausted after a certain point. Steinbeck does not achieve the level of cynicism that Faulkner, and especially Hemingway, achieve. But he does in this work stress Christian philosophy over artistry as a means of endurance within the human entity. Art in East of Eden is reduced to shambles, partially because the paradoxical structure of the novel ultimately fails to order patterns of human existence which defy representation. Steinbeck turned, as a result, to the Old Testament for order and became a philosopher and mystique

instead of an artist.

G. HENDERSON THE RAIN KING: MYTH AND IMAGINATION, THE INWARD ORDER

Saul Bellow's Henderson the Rain King embodies the most advanced consciousness in this group of novels. It is also probably the most complex in that there is a clean break with tradition. For this reason, a critical evaluation of the work is more problematic because the old tenets of criticism do not necessarily apply. The fact that Henderson the Rain King was written after the other novels may be purely coincidental. Perhaps this work was the natural and sensitive outgrowth of an evolving human consciousness which must gradually exhaust creative avenues until it has fully discovered its own capacity. The creative fulfillment of Bellow in this novel is analogous to a moment of consciousness that has absorbed the literature which came before.

Although Henderson the Rain King is stocked with picaresque elements, it does not follow in the tradition of Don Quixote. Instead, time is linear and serves as the vehicle for conveying history, myth, ritual, and experience into the present with a definite and meaningful correspondence to the past. The outward illusion of the work is comic, but it does not approach the illusion of morbidity in Wise Blood, the senseless levity of the inner chapters of The Mansion, or the

pretentiousness of East of Eden. Bellow captures in Henderson's character the more superficial realities of contemporary America and the equally mundane need to escape the chaos of parents, wives, girls, children, habits, money, music lessons, drunkeness, prejudices, brutality, teeth, and soul.[55] Appearances no longer sustain Henderson. He yearns for a self-transformation that will render a new life:

> This was what made me behave as I did. By three o'clock I was in despair. Only toward sunset the voice would let up. And sometimes I thought maybe this was my occupation because it would knock off at five o'clock of itself. America is so big, and everybody is working, making, digging, bulldozing, trucking, loading, and so on, and I guess the sufferers suffer at the same rate. . . . . .
>
> I tried every cure you can think of. Of course, in an age of madness, to expect to be untouched by madness is a form of madness. But the pursuit of sanity can be a form of madness too. (HRK, 25)

Henderson's rejection of the insanity of America prompts him to journey to Africa in an effort to destroy his old and chaotic vision of life.

For Henderson, the world holds no order and, consequently, no meaning. As a result, he imaginatively embraces myth in hopes that the mind will respond by regenerating itself to the extent that the "old myths" and truths are discovered. He consciously discards any objective or rational

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[55]Saul Bellow, Henderson The Rain King, p. 30. Subsequent references are given in parenthesis within text.

conception of Africa for a mythical and subjective interpretation of the experience: "Africa reached my feelings right away even in the air, from which it looked like the ancient bed of mankind" (HRK, 42). He admonishes, similarly, the modern sense of time. "I felt I was entering the past--the real past, no history or junk like that" (HRK, 46). Henderson's transformation, at first consciously sought after, refurbishes the African landscape with myths still glistening from the cosmogony. Then, when he begins to experience on an actual level the mythical patterns suggested by his imagination, a different world unfolds, and he journeys after his inner-most need: the reality of meaning.

The first test comes after Henderson and his guide travel into the interior and find a village. By talking with the prince of the tribe, Henderson learns that the people are confronted with a problem of archetypal proportions. Their sacred watering hole is fouled by mysterious creatures. Henderson interprets the problem as an element of his quest. "Through the webbing of the light I saw first polliwogs with huge heads, at all stages of development, with full tails like giant sperm, and with budding feet" (HRK, 58). He has found what he believes is the "primordial pool of life," His perception at this point is still insincere as evidenced by the manner in which he relates the metaphorical qualities of the light and its resemblence to the polliwogs within the pool.

The mock-seriousness of the incident is kept from inflating into absurdity by the serious undertow in the narrative structure. Henderson cannot yet "fully" believe in what he is doing. As a result, he is flippant about his experiences but not completely lacking in seriousness.

His desire to find meaning in the external world is destroyed after he blasts the frogs with an explosion but at the same time blasts the water out of existence. In lieu of this failure, Henderson remembers hunters who sought outward gratification:

> Myself, I used to have a certain interest in hunting, but as I grew older it seemed a strange way to relate to nature. What I mean is, a man goes into the external world, and all he can do with it is to shoot it? It doesn't make sense. So in October when the season starts and the gunsmoke pours out of the bushes and the animals panic and run back and forth, I go out and pinch the hunters for shooting on my posted property. (HRK, 94)

Henderson's mode of perception finds its roots in a sensibility that questions the necessity of appearance. Moreover, he carries this philosophy to its furthest extreme by questioning the reality of appearance. His attitude of "self-estrangement:" from the here and now stems from a vision that holds the end in sight:

> I have never been at home in life. . . . The world may be strange to a child, but he does not fear it the way a man fears. He marvels at it. But the grown man mainly dreads it. And why? Because of death. (HRK, 94)

Henderson wants to marvel at his universe. He wants a vision that will obscure all ends in mystery.

Outward appearance has lost its capacity to regenerate Henderson's static conceptualizations of experience. He is consciously aware of the problem and feels remorse at not being able to perceive, significantly, that which he sees. His state of morbid self-awareness is tragic because, he tells us, there were moments of synchronicity "when the dumb begins to speak, when I hear the voices of objects and colors; then the physical universe starts to wrinkle and change and heave . . ." (HRK, 100). Regardless, however, of what he wants, Henderson realizes that he has exhausted the rational possibilities for a self-transformation. The journey has become an insane quest.

Ironically, after he has given up the idea of questing for anything, Henderson comes across another tribe; he regards the entire experience quite irrationally and for the first time perceives creatively. The King of the tribe is large and handsome and somewhat of an enigma for Henderson's new point of view:

> How was I ever to guess the aims and purpose hidden in his heart? God has not given me half as much intuition as I constantly require. As I couldn't trust him, I had to understand him. Understand him? How was I going to understand him? Hell! . . . This planet has billions of passengers on it, and those were preceded by infinite billions and there are vaster billions to come, and none of these, no,

> not one, can I hope ever to understand. Never! And when I think how much confidence I used to have in understanding--you know?--it's enough to make a man weep. (HRK, 161)

Henderson becomes very interested in the King. He recognizes him as a man who knows no restrictions, who does not question anything because he feels that answers are a form of delusion, of human vanity. Henderson's perception suddenly begins to assume meaningful patterns as he glimpses the subjective and truthful nature of his own human entity:

> I put my fist to my face and looked at the sky, giving a short laugh and thinking, Christ! What a person to meet at this distance from home. . . . And believe me, the world is a mind. Travel is mental travel. . . . What we call reality is nothing but pedantry. The world of facts is real alright. The physical is all there and it belongs to science. But then there is the noumenal department, and there we create and create and create. As we tread our overanxious ways, we think we know what is real. . . . Oh, what a revelation! Truth spoke to me. To me, Henderson. (HRK, 167)

The King teaches Henderson the benefit of acting as a result of inspiration, that is, intuition, as opposed to a moral decision, since the latter form of choice necessarily entails a conflict--a mild form of dilemma, which the King believes will eventually cause the down-fall and subjugation of man's feeling. In his final submission to his feeling, Henderson is urged by the King to establish a kinship with the tribe lion. The King tells him:

> try, better, to appreciate the beauty of this animal . . . you will find she is unavoidable. . . . She will make consciousness to shine . . . She will force the present upon you (HRK, 260).

Henderson does overcome his obsessive disregard for the "moment" with a perception based not upon a conceptual moral discipline, but upon a sensibility that evaluates the reality of the moment and its affinity to his human need for meaning. His liberation from the old and degrading mode of thinking manifests itself in his actions while on the plane home from Africa; they stop for refueling at a landing strip, and Henderson, with a small boy in his arms, jumps and runs about on the field.

Henderson is the only character in these novels who discovers an inner reality compatible with the external world. Unlike many artists who must prostitute their art to render a "happy" ending, Saul Bellow copes with Henderson's "inner-adjustment" in a vein that is indigenous to the work itself. The ending is not happy but it is definitely positive in that a process of living, a process of meaningful perception, is represented. Henderson becomes an integral part of himself, of a meaningful pattern of reality, and of other human beings. Bellow dissolves the last concept of illusion in Henderson's achievement. The dust of Africa is the dust of Africa and nothing more. Apart from this, the human consciousness lives without the superstitions and

myths that were created to sustain man in another period of consciousness when he was, as a species, sublimated by forces beyond his reckoning. Although Henderson's new-found mystery of living within the moment may appear similar to the mysteries that have always accompanied man's efforts, it is much different. Henderson's mystery is consciously fabricated in the wake of dogmas and truths that have lost their regenerative powers. He adapts a mode of consciousness that seeks to create in the external world a pattern of reality amenable to his inward vision of beauty.

CHAPTER IV

THE FRAGMENTED REALITY SUMMARIZED

Without Bellow's Henderson the Rain King as a terminating point from which to contrast the other novels, a definite conclusion would have been contrived and meaningless. Instead, with the artistic perspective set forth by Bellow, that is, the rendering of time as personal experience and meaning, there is a definite element with which to evaluate the "relative" achievements of the other novels. The various protagonists in these works perceive of time, or change, differently. The variegated reactions to the reality of time, whether on an internal or external basis, are represented best in "Faulknerian" language as motion--life in confrontation with stasis, death.[56] Specifically, it is the human entity in conflict with the unreasonable, or that which bears no affinity to meaning.

Similarly, the historical critics--Erich Kahler, Erich Auerbach and T. S. Eliot disagree as to the form of

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[56]Time here is interchangeable with reality since the literal meaning of the two words is fixed in the concept of change, as evidenced in the novel as a formed expression of change via consciousness, wherein lies the actual ingredient of change.

consciousness necessary for elucidating Western Civilization's long-term literary involvement. Their disagreement mirrors, dramatically, the artist's disparate visions of human perception and understanding. Eliot, like Bellow, reshapes the present in lieu of the past literary achievements, yet Eliot reformulates, intellectually, the past in terms of the present.[57] Kahler, on the other hand, does not see the past as an intellectual manifestation. In The Tower and the Abyss, it is an ever-evolving consciousness that stems from the "deep," from the unconscious, and finds its way into literature not as a result of the supreme intellectual moment, but from an unaccountable acausal desire within the human entity to circumvent its isolation and achieve universality in time. Even though Auerbach conceives, too, of an evolving literary expression, he concedes in essence that only the form changes and not the reality which engenders the form. Therefore, he differs from both Eliot and Kahler in believing that man's predicament is constant and unchanging, that only through technical evolution will man finally see what he had felt and experienced all along.[58]

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[57]See Eliot's essay: "Tradition and the Individual Talent," in Criticism: The Major Texts, pp. 525-529.

[58]Auerbach's Mimesis should be read with Kahler's The Tower and the Abyss. Kahler's slant is psychological while Auerbach's is literary. Together they illuminate a very interesting perspective--one that reveals the rapidity with which civilization's consciousness evolves.

The Assistant emulates the pattern which Auerbach conceives as Frank Alpine seems to rise to a new level of existence, that is, until he realizes that the change is relative only to himself and not to the external world which one must endure despite inward volition. Frank learns that external chaos persists in spite of himself. He reacts passively to this subjection and preserves an inner disposition by accepting mystery as the actual order of things. His affinity to mystery demands unquestioning acceptance and prohibits a human effort to render into full consciousness the eternal mystery of existence.

Milton Loftis, like Frank Alpine, can never comprehend fully the nature of his subjection. He attributes it to an external cause, to Helen, his wife, but fails decisively to tame this "demonical" flaw in his perception. Milton is the victim of his own thought process and lingers between his "fallen" vision of Helen and his "incarnate" vision of Peyton. Truth in Lie Down in Darkness comes to Milton in the form of death, in his memories of Peyton. His world dies symbolically with Peyton. His efforts in his own inward time proceed meaninglessly until Peyton is actually buried; then, he experiences the change and Helen's rejection. Reality is too apparent, too inhuman, and Milton remains the victim.

Where Frank Alpine endures external chaos and Milton Loftis finally understands that the chaos in his own, Hazel

Motes in Wise Blood neither endures nor understands. He merely persists in the grotesque and earthly appearance of chaos. His existence is meaningless because the world is meaningless. He is, like the above characters, subjected to a reality beyond his control or understanding. The unaccommodating "divine force" in the work is a museum exhibition of a shrunken man, and the prophets are no less earth bound. O'Connor's world resists meaningful change. Time is of no essence except that it allows the reader to see for a brief moment through time and space that Hazel Motes represents, however distorted, a semblance of humanity. When Hazel Motes stands at the top of the cliff on the highway, O'Connor dispenses with illusion and allows the reader to see him for what he really is, a man searching for his Christ.

Meaning in these three novels is severely limited as man is severely limited. The reality is brutal, and the character has little choice in the way of a remedying action. The vision, however, depicted in Go Tell It on the Mountain assumes a different form. Meaning is inherent in inward recognition and change. John Grimms experiences the hypocrisy of "outward" truth as does Hazel Motes; yet the truth is activated spiritually when John ritualistically lives Biblical truths during his period of rebirth. Even though John changes and the external world does not, he is

able to cope humanly with the chaos by exerting his own vision of meaning upon the chaos. For John, the mystery of beauty does not entail submission; instead, it provides the basis for coping with the reality that John and his family perceive. Change then, is not a matter of chance in Baldwin's creation; it is the actual source of life itself, of a mystery that erupts from the unconscious after the individual has consciously willed its existence in an outward form.

Even though reality in East of Eden encompasses many decades of change, time is rendered as meaningless and ironic. The radical difference between this work and the former works (Baldwin's novel to a lesser degree) is that perception before was heightened by a longing to discover meaning in chaos; in Steinbeck's novel, representation, not discovery, is the singular and most important facet. East of Eden's chaos lies in the past, in human history. Steinbeck attempts to objectify, on a social plane, the distortion which the present has wrought upon the past. Time is profane and deceptive, yet capable of elucidating the reality of the American past, John Steinbeck would argue. Therefore his overt purpose is aimed didactically at achieving this end. For this reason, the narrator comments profusely on the subject matter less some mistake of interpretation be made by the reader. Meaning in East of Eden exists within a brief moment of time, or changelessness.

It is at this point that perception glows most clearly, that the human reality stands forth, and that meaning or synchronicity occurs. Yet this seldom if ever happens except on an imposed scale.

The illusion of change is controlled externally in The Mansion as it is in East of Eden. However, the illusion does not proceed from time, but from age--growing old, numb, becoming cynical. Meaning is not spontaneous; it is the truth wrought from similar patterns of experiences woven through a lifetime of existence. Faulkner, above all, utilizes the past as a source for fictive experience, but this source is so prodigious, so tenuous, that the illusion of an insignificant time veils experience. His characters, living representations of this time, are seldom able to synchronize themselves with one another. Because of this, Faulkner stops the motion with his "tableau" vision, comments on the "mysterious" separation and disparity of the characters, then creates the inevitable change while his graceless Seraphims watch.

Bellow's Henderson rejects the inanity of structural or preconceived thought and the accompanying body of illusion for a mode of perception that accepts as man-made and determined all human existence. His vision accentuates the need within himself to synchronize his rational and intuitive faculties with the here and now, and to render

in "full" consciousness a genuine concern for human meaning. His perceptual awareness is inductive inasmuch as it proceeds from the amorphous beauty within, to the equally amorphous beauty in the external world and, in the process, discovers in the two worlds an infinitude of meaning.

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