PERSPECTIVE, POINT OF VIEW, AND PERCEPTION:
JAMES JOYCE AND FREDRIC JAMESON

by

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ABSTRACT

The works Dubliners, A Portrait of the Artist as Young Man, and Ulysses by James Joyce can be seen as an effort to overcome the fixity of consciousness, and specifically the limited perception, resulting from life in a colonial culture. His work reflects a rejection of absolute categorical thought and fixed forms in favor of fluidity--liberated consciousness and perception.

In Dubliners Joyce diagnoses the mental paralysis of Irish society. Characters are locked into fixed modes of perception. In their colonial situation they are temporally contained, cut off from historical process and perception--caught in a daily struggle for existence. Joyce's Dubliners are unable to perceive the sources of their own oppression and therefore cannot act to change their situation. The author offers no way out of this containment and the reader participates in this closure through the limiting perspective of fixed point of view.

The stories of Dubliners are traditional when compared with the more radical and modern A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man. Joyce uses the modernist juxtapositional technique in the stylistic shifts of each chapter and in the shift of point of view encountered in Stephen's diary. He identifies language as a source of oppression that imposes fixity of perception. Yet the novel's own language continually resists fixity, constantly transcending preceding forms; no portrait or fixed frame holds for the growing protagonist.

Joyce offers the reader a new perspective of Stephen in the diary. Similarly, the protagonist prepares to embark on a journey that will give him a new perspective on his life in colonial society. We, like Stephen, can only perceive the sources of our own oppression by stepping outside the tyrannizing situation--by achieving new perspective.

Joyce's Ulysses represents a far more extensive challenge to fixity of consciousness. While the book often observes the condition of reification in modern life--the reduction of people and ideas to things--it resists settling in to such a fixed commodity itself. The language of Ulysses offers liberating perception when it is fluid--when it resists the limitations of categorical thought. Ulysses also undermines the category of the subject in fiction. The latter portion of the book transcends exclusive angles of vision which are associated with the narrative subject and fixed point of view. Here, through the phenomenon of parallax and the many points of view, Joyce offers multiple perspectives; no view is absolute. As is characteristic of the contingency of modernism, no meaning is fixed.

While some Marxist thinkers dismiss Joyce's work as a retreat into the subjective, his work increasingly displays an effort to transcend the arbitrary category of the subject in fiction. This category, the Marxist critic Fredric Jameson tells us, is inscribed in the text through the strategy of containment fixed point of view. Joyce's work continually undermines such containment. In terms of technique as well as content, his writing attempts to transcend fixity and the prison of self as it celebrates fluidity, historical process and intersubjective experience.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Front Matter:

Abstract	ii
Table of Contents	v
Abbreviations	vi
Acknowledgments.	vii
Dedication	viii

Text:

Introduction	1
Chapter 1	6
Chapter 2	27
Chapter 3	46
Conclusion	69
Bibliography	74

The following abbreviations have been used for textual citations in this thesis:

WORKS BY JOYCE:

Dubliners	D
Stephen Hero	S
A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man	P
Ulysses	U

WORKS BY JAMESON

"Reflection in Conclusion"	JA
Fables of Aggression	JF
"Imaginary and Symbolic in Lacan"	JI
Marxism and Form	JM
"Metacommentary"	JME
The Political Unconscious	JP
The Prison-House of Language	JH
"Seriality in Modern Literature"	JS
"Ulysses in History"	JU

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DEDICATION

To Carla and James

Introduction

The Marxist critic Georg Lukács, in rejecting modernist writers like James Joyce, suggests that their exaggerated concern for formal considerations -- "experimental gimmicks "of style and literary technique -- reflects a "tendency towards disintegration ... [the] loss of artistic unity."[1] Fredric Jameson, a later Marxist critic, also observes fragmentation in literature of the Modernist period, which he identifies as exhibiting reification. Jameson calls reification,

> a disease of that mapping function whereby the individual subject projects and models his or her own insertion into the collectivity .... The reification of late capitalism, the transformation of relations into an appearance of relationships between things -- renders society opaque -- it is the lived source of mystification on which ideology is based and by which domination and exploitation are legitimized (JA, 212).

With the market exchange-value economy people are commodified -- they become depersonalized, reduced to mere things. We see evidence of this in Ulysses when Buck Mulligan remarks, "Redheaded women buck like goats," and when, through Father Conmee's intelligence, we learn "a tiny yawn opened the mouth of the wife of the gentleman with the glasses" (U, 19,183). In both instances people are described in terms of things. Jameson suggests that capitalism is to blame for this reification because it breaks down

1 Georg Lukács, Realism in Our Time (New York: Harper and Row, 1964), p.37.

traditional modes of production in the interest of greater efficiency. Fragmentation and the celebration of individualism are characteristic of capitalist commodity-based societies. With such fragmentation, perception of the sources of domination and oppression is prevented.

Jameson and Lukács agree that modernist works, such as those of James Joyce, exhibit reification. Lukács says that in "modernist literature" we find a "negation of history."[2] For Lukács, "modernist or symbolic art is characterized precisely by its ahistorical, metaphysical way of viewing human life in the world" (JM, 200). Jameson says that "Lukács is not wrong to associate the emergence of this modernism with reification which is its precondition" (JP,63). According to Jameson, modernism "compensate[s]" for everything "reification brings with it" (JP,63). It is a "revolt against that reification and a symbolic act which involves a whole Utopian compensation for increasing dehumanization on the level of daily life" (JP,42). In The Political Unconscious Jameson contends that as a result of the reification of capitalist commodity-based society, the new subjectivity of the bourgeois individual becomes institutionalized in society's cultural artifacts by "textual determinants" (JP 154). One such textual determinant is Jamesian point of view. Jameson states that Jamesian point of view is part of a whole ideology.

> The Jamesian operation [point of view], on the level of the construction of aesthetic discourse, may be grasped as part of the more general containment strategy of a late nineteenth-century bourgeoisie suffering from the after-effects of reification. The fiction of the individual subject--so-called bourgeois individualism--had of course, always

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2 Georg Lukács, The Meaning of Contemporary Realism, (London: Merlin Press, 1979), p.21.

> been a key functional element in the bourgeois cultural revolution, the reprogramming of individuals to the freedom and equality of sheer market equivalence (JP,221).

Point of view furnishes

> a powerful ideological instrument in the perpetuation of an increasingly subjectivized and psychologized world, a world whose social vision is one of thorough going relativity of monads in coexistence (JP,221-222).

In James Joyce's work there is a progressive disturbing or undermining of Jamesian point of view. In Ulysses Joyce removes the "afterimage" of both author and reader which is the "character," or better still, "point of view" (JH,136). One observes a pattern--of the progressive undermining or destabilizing of conventional Jamesian point of view--in works such as "The Dead" and A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man. As a Marxist, Jameson sees social implications in Joyce's radical disturbance of the rhetorical status quo:

> ultimately, the social reality which lies behind point of view--the isolation and closed subjectives--stand revealed in the very effort of the form to transcend itself (JME,12).

Modernist works, such as Joyce's, are a "response" to a "situation"; according to Jameson, Joyce's response to the prevailing literary forms reflects a reaction to the social situation which lies behind his work (JS,64).

Jameson identifies such a pattern of transcendence in "Seriality in Modern Literature." He finds in the modernist techniques Joyce employs in Ulysses a transcendence of the phenomenon of literary point of view, which is to say that they point toward a unity that transcends the reality of the

individual, of the individual life, and that is to be found in "some vaster impersonal system of relationships" (JS,69). Here we clearly see the Utopian direction of Jameson's argument. Joyce's work resists or challenges textual determinants such as fixed point of view, which reflect capitalist society's strategy of containment.

Joyce echoes this concern for change and liberation from confining fixity in the views he expresses about writing:

> In writing one must create an endlessly changing surface, dictated by the mood and current impulse in contrast to the fixed mood of the classical style. This is "Work in Progress" [Finnegans Wake] ... everything is inclined to flux and change nowadays and modern literature, to be valid, must express that flux.[3]

He relates to Frank Budgen that he had abandoned writing about Stephen Dedalus because "Stephen no longer interests me. He has a shape that can't be changed."[4] Lukács condemns such flux in modern literature as withdrawal into the subjective.

According to the critic, in the modernist works of authors like Joyce, the inner "world of the subject is transformed into a sinister inexplicable flux and acquires--paradoxically, as it may seem--a static character."[5] On the other

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3 Arthur Power, Conversations with James Joyce, Clive Hart, ed., (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1974), p.95

4 Richard Ellmann, James Joyce (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1959), p.459.

5 Lukács, The Meaning of Contemporary Realism, p.39.

hand, Jameson suggests that all change is potentially good, all that resists change is potentially evil; the mind recognizes and then acts from within upon the universal flux of history only when itself in analogous flux. Any change is resonant with the desire for the change of changes, revolution. He says in Marxism and Form, "for Marxist historiography, on the other hand, it is permanence and continuity which are the illusion, and change and struggle the reality" (JM,259).

In summary, James Joyce employs modernist "poetic" technique in the multiple points of view he presents in Ulysses; the contrast between the fluid points of view in the dream chapter "Circe" and the fixed point of view of "Eumaeus" is just one example of this. Through the modernist "poetic" technique--dialectical in its nature--we see "the social reality" which stands "behind point of view" in the "effort of the form to transcend itself." Yet this "endlessly changing surface"--the fluidity that undermines fixed point of view--can also be traced in stories of Dubliners and in A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man. This thesis will examine Jameson's essential ideas concerning Marxist criticism, modernism and particularly point of view, and apply them to relevant sections of Dubliners, A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man, and Ulysses. From such an examination, one achieves an appreciation of the pattern of increasing destabilization of Jamesian point of view in Joyce's early work, the ideological implications of fixed point of view (which Joyce's writing seeks to transcend), and insight into the Marxist debate between Lukács' blanket dismissal of modernism and Jameson's arguments against this condemnation.

Chapter 1: Dubliners

Hugh Kenner, in Dublin's Joyce, went so far as to suggest that "A Painful Case" initiates a movement in the entire Joyce canon to the theme of "self-containment."[6] This theme, according to Kenner, continues through Finnegans Wake. The idea of containment is essential to Fredric Jameson's critical approach. Jameson contends that in order to render society "opaque" and enforce ideologies of domination and exploitation, capitalist society, and its literature, reflects "strategies of containment" (JP,210). William Dowling describes "strategy of containment" as "a way of achieving coherence by shutting out the truth about History."[7] Jameson indicates that point of view "may be grasped as part of the more general containment strategy of a late nineteenth-century bourgeoisie suffering from the after-effects of reification" (JP,219). In Dubliners' stories like "Two Gallants," "A Painful Case," and "The Dead," Joyce employs the late nineteenth-century strategy of containment--fixed, identifiable point of view to reflect the self-containment of residents of colonial Dublin. Yet, in "The Dead" one notes a pattern whereby the author progressively undermines fixed point of view. By comparing the point of

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6 Hugh Kenner, Dublin's Joyce, (Bloomington: Indiana Univ. Press, 1956), p.60.

7 William C. Dowling, Jameson, Althusser, Marx: An Introduction to the Political Unconscious, (Ithaca:Cornell University Press, 1984),p.26.

view utilized in "Two Gallants" and "A Painful Case" with the more variable points of view employed in "The Dead," one may see how Joyce uses this "strategy of containment" to reflect characters' fixity or mental paralysis.

One could also include "Two Gallants" in Kenner's theme of self-containment. The reader sees evidence of containment in the form and content of the story. The characters of "Two Gallants" show deterioration and mental paralysis--an inability to perceive the sources of their oppression and an inability to act to remedy their conditions. The story is set on a "grey warm evening in August" which "descend[s] ... upon the city carrying a memory of summer" (D,49). The approach of fall, a season of deterioration, and the reflective, fixed "memory of summer" emphasize the lost vitality of the city. While there is a "living texture" of "changing shape beneath the shining streetlamp," Joyce communicates the growth-denying effect of the city through reference to the fixed or "unchanging murmur of the air" (D,49).

Deterioration, containment, fixity, and the inability to act are evident in Corley and Lenehan. Joyce underlines Lenehan's personal deterioration through ironic references to him as a hero; Lenehan wears his waterproof like a "toreador," suggesting a figure of heroic action (D,50). He also sports a "yachting cap," thereby connecting him with heroic and romantic sea adventures (D,49). Such allusions imply a world of the classical epic which, in the Marxist context, critics like Lukács celebrate for showing a society where: "man is at home in the universe, moving within a rounded, complete world of immanent meaning which is adequate to his soul's demand."[8] Lenehan is

8 Terry Eagleton, Marxism and Literary Criticism (London: Methuen, 1976), p. 27.

rather the antithesis of an active hero. He is a passive non-participant throughout the story. Joyce suggests this in the verbs describing Lenehan's activities. For example, Lenehan "listened," "waited," and "followed" (D,49,56,59). Further, Lenehan is unheroically non-committal, staying on "the border of the company" in the bar (D,50). Joyce indicates Lenehan's psychological containment through details of confinement and enclosure. Lenehan walks "along beside the railing chains," and he and Corley pass "along the railing" (D,55,56). Such details imply that the characters are imprisoned like trapped animals. The author also suggests containment through references to enclosure or circularity. Lenehan's figure "had fallen into rotundity at the waist" and his actions are futile and mechanically repetitive: "he turned around and went back the way he had come" (D,50,56). Similarly, Corley is described in terms of circularity or enclosure. Corley has "a large, globular" head and wears a hat that looks "like a bulb" (D,51). His head turns "like a big ball revolving on a pivot" (D,56).

Thus contained or enclosed, Corley and Lenehan are cut off from history, locked into a daily struggle for existence. Joyce underlines the spiritual poverty of late nineteenth-century capitalist life by contrasting the characters' materialism with higher artistic and spiritual concerns, as symbolized by the Irish harpist. The harpist's music echoes a once vital Irish past. Far from glorifying the past, Joyce uses this music to emphasize the spiritual emptiness of Dublin life at the turn of the century. Reference to the harp occurs when Lenehan re-enacts the harpist's movements "by the railing of Duke's lawn" (D,56). What happens after this event is dramatically important, for Lenehan moves close to realization. "He found trivial all that was meant to charm

him" (D,56). Contact with the art has a spiritualizing effect on Lenehan; it allows him to momentarily transcend the containment of his immediate situation and to perceive the squalor of his condition. The railings in "Two Gallants" thus become a contradictory image, suggesting confinement but also the liberating possibility of art through the railing's resemblance to the harp. However, Lenehan's realization is transitory and does not facilitate change or growth. He does not experience self-transcendent vision, but rather returns to self-containment. He returns to the passive role of a listener he held as the story opened and to his parasitic relationship with Corley. We see in "Two Gallants" characters cut off from history, experiencing temporal containment.

Joyce also emphasizes characters' inability to achieve totalizing vision through the fixity of their perception. Corley "always stared straight before him" (D,51). Similarly, Lenehan's "gaze was fixed" (D,52). Many characters in Dubliners are locked into modes of perception: Polly's "gaze was fixed" at the end of "The Boarding House" and Farrington "stood still, gazing fixedly" in "Counterparts" (D,68,87). Just prior to the theft, Lenehan "kept his gaze fixed" on Corley and the girl, which emphasizes his limited and narrowly focussed perception (D,59). We are given a limited and unchanging view through Lenehan, perception that appropriately reflects his limited social vision.

Lenehan comes the closest to being the point of view character in "Two Gallants," the character whose perspective orients the narrative. Joyce allows the reader interior scrutiny of Lenehan. The character's behavior disguises a more complex inner life and suggests the disjunction between subjective and objective that point of view emphasizes. The fact that he "wore an amused

listening face" indicates an inauthenticity to his behavior; his interest is something he puts on for expediency's sake (D,49). Further, his eyes show a "cunning enjoyment" (D,49). Initially, Joyce limits interior scrutiny of Lenehan. As the story opens, the author gives the reader only enough information to speculate on Lenehan's inner state: "his voice seemed winnowed of vigour" (D,50). We observe Lenehan from a distance; he is one of "Two men [that] came down the hill of Rutland Square" (D,49). Yet progressively, the author gives the reader greater access to Lenehan's mental life. We learn that Lenehan could "feel his own poverty of purse and spirit" (D,57). Increasingly, Lenehan filters events of the story to the reader. It is through his "swift anxious scrutiny" that Joyce describes the girl, and it is through his eyes that the reader views the exchange of the coin between the "slavey" and Corley:

> They talked for a few moments and then the young woman went down the steps into the area of a house. Corley remained standing at the edge of the path, a little distance from the front steps .... The door closed on her and Corley began to walk swiftly towards Stephen's Green.
>
> Lenehan hurried on in the same direction (D,55, 59-60).

Without pronoun references to Lenehan, for much of the passage, we see the events through Lenehan's eyes--he orients the narrative. However, the last sentence of the quotation serves to distance the reader from Lenehan by referring to the character in the third person; Joyce objectifies Lenehan. Lenehan moves from a subject doing the viewing to an object being viewed. Such a shift is appropriate to the action of the story, for, in the scene that

follows, Corley presents the coin to Lenehan--the object that epitomizes commodity exchange. With the reification of late capitalist society, Lenehan has been reduced to equivalance with the coin he celebrates. The limited access Joyce gives to Lenehan's inner life is framed by objective views of the character, thus accentuating the disjunction between inner and outer life, but also emphasizing his isolation and containment. The abrupt contrast suggests that Lenehan is distanced or cut off from other characters and that he is cut off from meaningful contact with his environment; he is "active" only in his "mind" (D,59). Joyce's use of identifiable point of view gives evidence of Jameson's claim that point of view illustrates "the increasing social fragmentation and monadization of capitalist society, the intensifying privatization and isolation of his subjects" (JH,139).

Kenner identifies "A Painful Case" as initiating the theme of self-containment that continues through Joyce's work. As in "Two Gallants," the central character reflects the spiritual emptiness of the day--an inability to transcend self to attain the totalizing perspective of vision. Joyce communicates this lack of spirituality in the references to alcoholic spirits. Duffy, in his empty life, "could look into the disused distillery" (D,107). After he reads the newspaper account of Mrs. Sinico's death, he looks out on the "empty distillery" (D,115). Only Mrs. Sinico, a character who expresses emotion and who acknowledges others, goes out "to buy spirits" (D,115). In contrast, Duffy's lack of authentic spirituality fixes his consciousness; he is self-possessed.

Duffy seems a hermetically-sealed man, contained within "lofty walls"

(D,107). He is less a man than a collection of habits. Routines pervade his life: "for many years he ... every morning he ... many times ... every evening" (D,108,111,112). His actions convey a changeless life. Similarly his thinking reflects fixity. He "judged" Mrs. Sinico, "fixing her in his memory"--he categorizes her and shares with her his categorizing "theories" (D,109,110). He espouses a mechanical and repetitive status quo and the order that upholds it. "Mr. Duffy abhorred anything which betokened physical or mental disorder" (D,108). Even his room bore witness to the "orderliness of his mind" (D,112).

Duffy attempts to impose his ordered mental world on the outside world; in this way he is indicative of the "anti-human" or "anti-natural" that Jameson finds in the historical experience of modernism (JU,130). Yet Duffy's attempts to order the external world are repeatedly undermined by the chaotic and revolutionary--incongruities that resist fixity. Duffy is the prototype of the denatured modern man, his life full of incongruities and contradictions. Duffy is "not conscious of any incongruity," but incongruity pervades his life (D,110). One sees this in the things that make up his existence--for example, "an over-ripe apple which might have been left and forgotten" (D,108). The detail presents an incongruity, since Duffy is otherwise a very orderly man. Similarly, the unemotional Duffy appears to have some emotional life as he is fond of "Mozart" (D,109). A mild-mannered man, Duffy contemplates that under "certain circumstances he would rob a bank" (D,109). His meeting with Mrs. Sinico is an "accident"--something that cannot be controlled or predicted (p.110). Incongruously, Duffy "seized" the moment to become intimate with Mrs. Sinico and "forced" her to ask him to her house (D,110). Though Duffy attempts to fix experience, life as process resists his order.

Mrs. Sinico is a figure of the outer world for Duffy. She challenges the artificial order that he tries to impose on existence. She disturbs his self-containment; her outer world begins to exert its claims and dominance over Duffy. In his self-deception, Duffy uses Mrs. Sinico much like a hand-mirror--to reflect what he wants to see, as opposed to what really is. She accentuates his mystification and the opacities of his ideology. He never acknowledges her humanity or her independent existence. She is to Duffy, as she is to Mr. Sinico, something reified, a framed thing--an article in a "gallery of pleasures" (D,110). Mrs. Sinico is then similar to the "slavey" in "Two Gallants"--something to be used and exploited. When Mrs. Sinico displays feeling, catching Duffy's hand and "passionately ... pressing it to her chest," Mr. Duffy is very surprised and ends the affair (D,111). Mrs. Sinico is no longer of use to him. She moves from audience to actor--a change that challenges the sanctity of Duffy's mental world. Mrs. Sinico is very much characteristic of life, process, and nature: "her companionship was like a warm soil" (D,111). In this association, she resists the fixity of inorganic order. Like the revolutionary, she has a "note of defiance" about her (D,109).

Similar to the characters in "Two Gallants" and the characters of other Dubliners' stories, Duffy's perception is fixed. He "gazed" out on the evening landscape and he "gazed" at the workmen in the public house, suggesting that he is transfixed--he does not take in what he sees and thus does not fully perceive (D,115,116). Marilyn French suggests that Joyce "learned to perceive and even to feel through language."[9] To him, faulty language was somehow

9 Marilyn French, "Joyce and Language," James Joyce Quarterly, Vol.19, No. 3, Spring 1982, p.240.

sinful. In "A Painful Case" we see evidence of such masking language. The language is indicative of reification, which "renders society opaque." Throughout the story, there are examples of such masking of language as cliches, euphemisms, and circumlocutions. In the newspaper story, one finds: "the injuries were not sufficient to have caused death in a normal person" and "Mrs. Sinico was rather intemperate in her habits" (D,114,115). These euphemisms, in condemning Mrs. Sinico, serve to absolve from blame those who are implicated in her death: "no blame was attached to anyone" and "the railway executive did not think the railway officials were to blame" (D,114,115). As Duffy suggests, they are "cautious words of a reporter won over to conceal" (D,115). Yet ironically, they are similar to the way Duffy linguistically structures his experience. Duffy uses such linguistic structuring to absolve himself of blame in Mrs. Sinico's "case." The language allows people to absolve themselves of blame and thus prevents the recognition of responsibility; hence action cannot be taken to change the situation. Language, like Duffy, has lost touch with the outer world and rings false. Linguistic and logical ellipses, cliches of thought and attitudes, plague and eventually paralyze the characters, who cannot act on a reality they do not even see. When Duffy confronts his mortality he suggests, but is not fully aware, that language has partially implicated him in Mrs. Sinico's death: "he had sentenced her to death"; "he had sentenced her to ignominy, a death of shame" (D,117). It is Duffy's linguistic structuring of experience, the "sentences"--the false language--he uses to evade and mask reality that prevents him from seeing, accepting responsibility, and acting to change his condition.

Through the point of view in "Two Gallants," Joyce allows the reader increasing interior scrutiny of Lenehan. Similarly, in "A Painful Case" the distance between Duffy and the reader decreases as the character moves towards realization. This occurs after he learns of Mrs. Sinico's death, questions "Was he to blame?" in her death, and confronts the inevitability of his own death--the dissolution of his identity and the futility of his chronic self-absorption (D,116). Initially, Joyce presents Duffy as a man who lives at a distance from things: he "wished to live as far as possible from the city of which he was a citizen" (D,107). Further, Duffy "had an autobiographical habit which led him to compose in his mind from time to time a short sentence containing a subject in the third person" (D,108). Joyce communicates Duffy's distance from himself and from his emotions through the use of reflexive verbs: "He [Duffy] allowed himself" and "he felt himself" (D,108,109). He is a fragmented character, to use Jameson's terminology, a reified character who separates thought from feeling.

Increasingly, we adopt Duffy's point of view in the story. After "he asked himself what else he could have done" with regard to Mrs. Sinico's death, and recognizes that he also will eventually cease "to exist," the reader's interior scrutiny of Duffy is less mediated, more direct (D,116). The reflexive verbs are abandoned as Duffy experiences emotion. We learn that "he felt that he had been an outcast from life's feast," and that "he felt he was alone" (D,117). Yet this awareness of self in no way implies self-transcendence, rather it emphasizes Duffy's isolation and containment. We see this particularly in the last paragraph of the story:

> He turned back the way he had come, the rhythm of the engine pounding in his ears. He began to doubt the reality of what memory told him. He halted under a tree and allowed the rhythm to die away. He could not feel her near him in the darkness nor her voice touch his ear. He waited for some minutes listening. He could hear nothing: the night was perfectly silent. He listened again: perfectly silent. He felt that he was alone (D,117).

The occurrence of the personal pronoun "he" becomes more frequent, focussing our attention on his egotistical self-containment.

Through content and form (here point of view), our angle of vision on the events, Joyce shows Duffy's ego-centred consciousness. Though Duffy approaches recognition, he remains fixed and unchanging in his inability to perceive the outer world. As Raymond Williams points out, "fixed content or form is a radical denial of active consciousness."[10] Joyce emphasizes Duffy's stasis by contrasting his fixity with the fluidity and incongruity--natural life processes--embodied in Mrs. Sinico and his aborted relationship with her. Joyce uses the "poetic" mode of modernism in his juxtaposition. Such an effect is also achieved through the juxtaposition of the train and the river, which are identified with Duffy and Mrs. Sinico respectively. Duffy "turns his eyes to the grey gleaming river, winding along toward Dublin. Beyond he saw the train ... " (D,117). The train, in its mechanical rhythm and slotted predetermined fixity connects with Duffy, while the river, organic and everchanging, associates with Mrs. Sinico. Through this contrast, we more clearly see the extent of Duffy's fixity and self-containment. The entire story is

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10 Raymond Williams, Marxism and Literature, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), p.39.

based on incongruity, contradiction and opposition. Similarly, through the contrast in point of view--from Duffy's self-reflexive view to a less mediated perspective--we see an effort of the form to transcend itself. Through this movement we recognize the "isolation and closed subjectivity of point of view" as well as the minute limits of Duffy's self-containment.

The final story of Dubliners, "The Dead," also portrays a condition of self-containment and reification--"the transformation of human relations into the appearance of relationships between things." Joyce initially illustrates this condition through fixed, unified point of view. However, progressively Gabriel's voice becomes synonymous with that of the narrator. It is crucial here to recognize a distinction in the examination of point of view. Gerard Genette identifies a regrettable confusion in point of view studies between mood--"who is the character whose point of view orients the narrative"--who sees, and "who is the narrator"--who speaks.[11] In this study, examining the movement from Lily's and Gabriel's perspectives (who sees) to the confusion between Gabriel's voice and that of the narrator's (who speaks), both elements--mood and voice--are considered. In "The Dead" Joyce challenges the fixity of point of view and the narrator's ideological monopoly by introducing a more modernist free floating relationship between character and narrator--it is then a questioning of the authority of the prevailing narrative conventions which continues throughout Joyce's work.

When Joyce introduces Gabriel, the character's condition reflects self-

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11 Gerard Genette, Narrative Discourse: An Essay in Method (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1972), p. 246.

containment, the separation from others inherent in reification, and an inability to perceive, as indicated by his use of false language. At the beginning of the story Gabriel is egotistical and self-conscious. He feels isolated and above the general population at the party: "their grade of culture differed from his" (D,179). As with Duffy in "A Painful Case," false language--cliches of language and thought--inhibit his perception. There is a marked differentiation between his internal expostulation and his speech: "I am afraid my powers as a speaker are all too inadequate" (D,202). He uses language to patronize--to affirm his superiority in interaction with Lily and with the cabman: "You might remove that handsome article, like a good man" (D,216).

Prior to his self-transcendence in the culminating vision, Gabriel's condition is characterized by conflict with his fellow Dubliners. Joyce accentuates this conflict through mock-heroic battle references. As Terrence Brown observes, the references act "as an ironic counterpoint to the real conflict that confronts Gabriel."[12] "Lancers" frame the meeting of Gabriel and Miss Ivors. The author generalizes this imagery of conflict to the entire party (D,187). References to war imagery proliferate during the dinner. We learn that Constantine, Gabriel's brother, wore a "man-o'-war suit" (D,186). Joyce describes the dinner referring to "rival ends" of the table, "sentries" of fruit-salad, "three squads" of bottles with "uniforms" and "transversed with green sashes" (D,196,197). There is an irregular "musketry of applause" when Mary Jane seats herself at the piano (D,192). The aunts give "orders and counter

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12 Terrence Brown, "The Dublin of Dubliners," James Joyce: An International Perspective, (Totowa, N.J.: Barnes and Noble, 1982), p.17.

orders"; Mr. Browne sings "Let Me Like a Soldier Fall"; and finally Freddy acts as an "officer with fork on high" as the party ends (D,197,199,206). Battle references pervade the stories of Dubliners. For example, in "Two Gallants" the sound of Corley's boots "had something of the conqueror in them" (D,55). In "The Dead" such references emphasize that Gabriel, as an ego-centric, is at odds with society. In the context of colonial Dublin the references also suggest a society with a fixed hierarchical structure maintained by domination. It is the mystification of this individualistic and capitalist ideology that Gabriel momentarily transcends in his vision.

In "The Dead" women demystify reality for Gabriel. This is most evident in Gabriel's relationship with his wife, but it can also be seen in his exchange with Lily. She in particular, though their exchanges are brief, devastatingly interrupts the easy flow of Gabriel's false language with her very forthright language. When he patronizingly comments "I suppose we'll be going to your wedding one of these fine days with your young man, eh," she disarms Gabriel with an observation on the exploitative nature of male/female relationships: "The men that is now is only all palaver and what they can get out of you" (D,178). Lily resists the fixity that Gabriel's categorizing perception tries to impose on her. We learn that Lily, and the life she embodies, is suppressed by those in power. Lily is competent and accurate: "she seldom makes a mistake." However, the Miss Morkans, her employers, "would not stand back answers" (D,176). They deny the accuracy of her perception--her honesty. Lily is a "growing girl," yet Aunt Kate will not recognize this growth:"I'm not sure what has come over her [Lily] lately. She's not the girl she was at all" (D,177,181). They, like Gabriel, acknowledge

Lily only as a static thing. Lily then introduces the reader to Gabriel's social myopia. When he tries to make restitution with her by giving her the coin, he commodifies their relationship, transforming it "into an appearance of relationships between things." Such a relationship is reminiscent of the relationship between Corley and Lenehan in "Two Gallants." Giving Lily the coin is an action that echoes resoundingly in the story as he also gives the cabman a "shilling" and we learn that he has given Freddy Mallins a "sovereign"--actions that immediately precede and contrast with Gabriel's realization in the vision (D,214,217). Gabriel repeatedly commodifies relationships. His interaction with Lily underlines his false language and fixed perception and offers a point from which to measure the transcendence of Gabriel's socially-myopic perception in his culminating vision.

Gabriel moves to reconciliation with his fellow man and transcendence of ego through his relationship with Gretta. Initially, Gabriel perceives her, like the slavey of "Two Gallants", as a reified thing. At the party, Gabriel views his wife's lower body: "He could not see her face but he could see the terra cotta and salmon pink panels of her skirt" (D,209). Returning to their hotel room, Gabriel again focusses on Gretta's "skirt girt tightly about her. He could have flung his arms around her hips and held her still ... " (D,215). Gabriel fantasizes mastery over Gretta and imagines that "her thoughts had been running with his" (D,217). Such a pattern of perception emphasizes Gabriel's ego-centricity; he never acknowledges Gretta's spirit, her identity as a person. Like Mary Jane, who is the "main prop" of his aunts' household, Gretta is equated with an inanimate thing, as Gabriel is proud of her wifely "carriage" (D,176,215). Gabriel wants to be alone with Gretta to

gratify his sexual desire--an animal appetite he shares with Corley. However, the lover that Gretta envisions is Michael Furey, not Gabriel. When

> he [Gabriel] passed in the way of the cheval-glass he caught sight of himself full length, his broad well-filled shirt-front, the face whose expression always puzzled him when he saw it in a mirror and his glimmering giltrimmed eyeglasses (D,218).

Gabriel achieves an altered perspective of himself, one that challenges the fixity and absolutism of his previous mystification. Unlike other Dubliners' characters, who have restricted fields of vision, and who remain locked into fixed "gazes," we witness change in Gabriel's perception. Earlier in the story, Gabriel has a fixed perspective: "he stared blankly down the staircase" (D,196). As an ego-centric, Gabriel has "restless eyes" (D,178). However, when he displays empathy near the end of the story, he possesses "curious eyes" (D,222). In the vision, he recognizes that, in the face of death, he is ultimately alone. Paradoxically, he achieves identification with the whole of mortal life--a collective vision. In his vision, Joyce contrasts Gabriel's sexual desire for Gretta with a new awareness of her as more than an appendage of his ego. In the epiphany, Gabriel symbolically acknowledges Gretta as a person when his eyes rest "upon her face and hair" (D,222). We measure Gabriel's growth in the vision, for he acknowledges that "he had never felt" love "towards any woman" until his epiphany (D,222). He thus transcends ego in his new ability to acknowledge another.

In "The Dead" Joyce gives the reader increasing access to Gabriel's consciousness, so that we become progressively more familiar with the

protagonist's inner speech. This is evident in a review of the story's four sections. As "The Dead" begins, Gabriel is absent; we learn about him from Lily's point of view and from the conversations of others. The narrator gives Gabriel's thoughts indirectly: "as if he felt" (D,178). The narrator tells us "as if he did not understand" when Gabriel speaks to Miss Ivors at the party (D,187). We see a marked differentiation between the narration and the character's speech.

Though Gabriel is at times outside the action of the party, "...[Gabriel] waited outside the drawing room door," and "Gabriel went to the stairs and listened over the bannister," it is through his eyes that we see the party (D,182). Early in "The Dead," Joyce gives Gabriel's thoughts from the narrator's superior intelligence: Gabriel is "undecided," he "feared," and he felt "discomposed" (D,179). Joyce introduces the reader to Gabriel exclusively through the third person mode of telling. Later, Gabriel's thoughts come more directly from his interior voice. When Gabriel observes the picture of the scene from Romeo and Juliet, his thoughts wander and the psycho-narration contains the expressions "probably," and "it was strange," suggesting Gabriel's own speculation and internal expostulation (D,186). Through this section, Joyce gives passages of psycho-narration without pronoun reference, making it difficult for the reader to distinguish whether the speculations come from Gabriel or from the narrator. Prior to Gabriel's speech, a purposely ambiguous digression (in terms of pronoun reference) occurs:

> People, perhaps, were standing in the snow on the quay outside, gazing up at the lighted window and listening to the waltz music. The air was pure there. In the distance

> lay the park where the trees were weighted with snow. The Wellington Monument wore a gleaming cap of snow that flashed westwards over the white field of Fifteen Acres (D,202).

Without pronoun reference, the passage could issue from the narrator's superior intelligence or from Gabriel's speculation. Joyce further bridges first and third person narration by interspersing Gabriel's narrated thoughts with quoted material. When Gabriel rehearses for his speech, he says to himself: "Ladies and Gentlemen ..., but for my part I think" (D,192). In contrast with the exclusively third person narration of the first section, in the second section, Joyce uses speculative language in Gabriel's interior voice, deliberate pronoun confusion, and the insertion of quoted material in the psycho-narration to give increasingly intimate access to Gabriel's interior voice.

Still later, Joyce intensifies many of the first person narrative conventions. The section opens with Gabriel as the narrator of Johnny's tale. His interior expostulation occurs throughout the section as does first person quoted material in the psycho-narration. He remembers his letter to Gretta: "Why is it that words like these seem to me so dull and cold" (D,214). However, Joyce further complicates the distinction between Gabriel's interior voice and the narrator's telling through Gabriel's recollections: when "moments of ... [Gabriel's and Gretta's] secret life together burst like stars upon ... [Gabriel's] memory" (D,213). Gabriel serves as the reader's mode of intelligence when he remembers his honeymoon, the incident at the train station, previous love-letters, and the ride in a horse carriage.

The fourth section completes the alignment of Gabriel's inner voice

with the narrator's voice. Gretta's tale becomes the catalyst for the merger of the character's interior voice with the narrator's telling. The transition is evident in Joyce's pronoun confusion as it relates to Gretta. At the dinner, the narrator refers to her as "Gabriel's wife," but in the final section, Gretta is "she"; the pronoun confuses the reader as to whether the observations of Gretta filter through the narrator's superior intelligence or come directly from Gabriel (D,200,222). One sees this in references to Gretta in the final section of the story: "She was fast asleep ... so she had had that romance in her life: a man had died for her sake" (D,221-222). With such an alignment of character and narrator, references like "generous" tears can refer to a description of the tears' physical size or to the empathy inherent in Gabriel's vision--we get internal and external views without contradiction (D, 223). Gabriel's interior voice becomes the counterpart of the narrator's voice.

Accompanying this shift of perspective and movement beyond fixed point of view is a dissipation of Gabriel's individualistic identity--a process that is foreshadowed at the party when he remarks: "kindly forget my existence" (D,198). Like Duffy, who approaches recognition when he realizes that he will one day cease "to exist," Gabriel, in his collective vision, moves towards a dissipation of ego:

> His own identity was fading out into a grey impalpable world: the solid world itself which these dead had one time reared and lived in was dissolving and dwindling (D,223).

Both Duffy and Gabriel experience a decentring, an experience consistent with the aims of Jameson's dialectical criticism, which alone "provides a way for 'decentring' the subject concretely and for transcending the 'ethical' in the direction of the political and the collective" (JP,60).

Throughout Dubliners Joyce employs fixed point of view to reflect the isolation, self-containment and paralysis of his characters. It is a closed or containing form and suggests a closure that Marxist criticism seeks to overcome. Jameson indicates in "Metacommentary" that a feeling of "completeness" in the "identity or permanence in time of the monad or point of view" reflects a "kind of satisfaction with society as well" (JME,13). In "The Dead" Joyce destabilizes fixed point of view; through the intentional ambiguity of voice we are given multiple perspectives in an "effort of the form [point of view] to transcend itself" (JME,13). According to Jameson, this reflects a dissatisfaction with a prevailing status quo and thus a dissatisfaction with the prevailing social conditions. The radicalization of form challenges fixity and absolutism--the belief in a single, knowable, describable reality. Such thinking is indicative of the contingency of modernism. In Joyce's juxtaposition of perspectives in "The Dead," he undermines fixed point of view and reveals his increasing modernism. He moves closer to the modernist aesthetic. Jameson, unlike Lukács, embraces the dialectical tension inherent in such a poetic mode. We see such poetic tension in the ambiguity between narrator and character in "The Dead" as well as in the cascading imagery at the end of the story, which with poetic intensity, momentarily reconciles the living and the dead.

> Snow was general all over Ireland. It 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 spears of the little gate, on the barren thorns (D, 223).

According to Jameson, "counterconcepts of modernism--with [its] emphasis on the violent renewal of perception"--subversive like the defiant Mrs. Sinico and the "mutinous waves"--challenge a reified world (JA,212). In this world "experience has solidified into a mass of habits and automatisms"--the repeated and futile actions of a Lenehan and the cliches of thought and linguistic patterning of a Duffy (JA, 212-3).

While Lukács complains that modernism "deprives literature of a sense of perspective," Jameson argues, and Joyce's work affirms, that the multitudinous poetic perspectives of modernism offer the radicalizing possibilities of heightened perspective.[13] As we shall see, this destabilizing of point of view, fixed narrative perspective and voice, becomes more pronounced in A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man and Ulysses.

13 Lukács, The Meaning of Contemporary Realism, p.33.

Chapter Two: A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man

Jameson's Marxist critical approach, involving examination of the containment strategy point of view, is particularly appropriate when considering Joyce's A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man. The novel challenges fixity by celebrating fluidity and process. In his introduction to Stephen Hero, Theodore Spencer calls Portrait "one of the best descriptions of a growing mind ever written" (S,26). Marilyn French identifies a major theme of Portrait as being "process--the process by which ... one person escapes the nets and nooses all cultures provide."[14] These are the fixed or categorical responses that Stephen, in his process of growth, transcends.

In Portrait the point of view changes to reflect Stephen's transcendence of habitual responses--the fixed and limited perspective of his previous experience. Stephen overcomes fixity, which threatens to impose its domination over him, to reify him to the level of a fixed or static thing--something easy to exploit and control. Stephen moves beyond the control of the previously dominating "voices" to, in his diary, assume his own voice.

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14 French, "Joyce and Language," p.249.

Through the point of view changes in Portrait, Joyce undermines the notion that reality is fixed or absolute by offering many different renderings of it. The novel functions like one of Ezra Pound's ideograms: the whole has a total intelligibility based on the dynamic interaction of the parts juxtaposed by association. The pattern that emerges is one of form (here point of view) continually in the process of transcending itself, the narrative perspective changing as Stephen's victories are undercut. From Stephen's movement beyond the limitations and the fixed categorical responses--the "voices" of his culture--the reader receives an appreciation of the tyranny of Stephen's colonial situation. The changing point of view reinforces this movement. This chapter will examine how Portrait, like the stories explored in Dubliners, offers evidence of Jameson's claim that "the social reality which lies behind point of view ... stands revealed in the very effort of the form to transcend itself."

Stephen lives in a rigid hierarchical society, and it is the imposed rules of this society that he must transgress if he is to grow. Within such a constricting situation Stephen, like Duffy, falls to the temptation of patterned habits. "From force of habit he had written at the top of the first page the Jesuit motto," and he observed the "habits of quiet obedience" (P,70,83). It is then an artificial, fixed pattern of behavior that denies change or growth.

Joyce indicates the boundaries Stephen must transcend in the repeated references to enclosure and containment. Stephen's early life in Dublin is characterized by confinement. In Chapter One, during Stephen's early schooling, he wanders "corridors[that] were darkly lit"; he imagines "the dark

entrance of ... [a] castle"; after he visits the rector he walks down "the low narrow dark corridor" (P,17,19,58). Before visiting the prostitute in Chapter Two, "he wandered into a maze of narrow and dirty streets" (P,100). Similarly, prior to making his confession to the priest in Chapter Four, Stephen walked "blindly into the box"(P,143). We also see constricting environments in Dubliners and in Ulysses, where the Martello Tower's "gloomy domed living room" and its enclosed smoke and odours threaten to choke the inhabitants (U,10). In Portrait such containment emphasizes the constricting effect of colonial society.

One of the major forces that attempts to contain and fix Stephen's consciousness is the church. In Ulysses Stephen observes that he is a "servant of two masters ... the imperial British state ... and the holy Roman catholic and apostolic church" (U,17). The confining oppression of the church, that seeks to dominate by imposing limits, is also evident in Portrait. Stephen contemplates the "rigid lines of the doctrines of the church," which is overseen by an absolute "Allseeing and Allknowing" god, who pronounces his finite "judgment" (P,106,104,113). The church and its doctrines have an inclination for fixity and control. The heaven and hell visions of Chapter Three are remarkably parallel. In general, one sees in them a mood of fear and disinclination for the unknown--the limitless. The church, with its false rhetoric, tries to impose false limits: God's voice reaches to the "farthest limits of space" (P,113). Hell, on the other hand, is characterized as "limitless": "but the lake of fire in hell is boundless, shoreless and bottomless" (P,121). It is "agony limitless in extent, limitless in intensity, of torment infinitely lasting, infinitely varied" (P,133).

Stephen's aesthetics are similarly characterized by limits. He pronounces a theory of aesthetics and fixes "definitions" of art (P,204). His theories are Aristotelean, based, as Jameson observes, on "stable substances" and "describable properties" (JM,41). However, Stephen, like Duffy, speaks an abstract, powerless and false language in the rhetoric of his aesthetics: "the first step in the direction of truth is to understand the frame and scope of the intellect itself ... the frame and scope of the imagination" (P,208). Similarly, "the esthetic image is first luminously apprehended as self-bounded and self-contained"; and art should be apprehended "part against part within its limits" (P,212). Like the language of the church, the language of Stephen's aesthetics limits possibility.

Stephen's society is also constraining. His is a sacrificial society, dichotomous in its thinking; there are only two sides in matters, right and wrong--one side vanquishes the other. Dialectical reasoning is not acknowledged. As the young Stephen tries to come to terms with politics, he realizes: "there were two sides in it: Dante was on one side and his father and Mr. Casey were on the other side" (P,17). True to this sacrificial society, Dante leaves the political fight saying: "We won! We crushed him[Parnell] to death!" (P,39). Stephen's school classes are also characterized by competition. In house sports "York" or "Lancaster" will win (P,12). The classroom, and Irish society in general, nurtures a capitalist spirit of competition that sacrifices losers.

Yet such dichotomous thought proves insufficient as Stephen attempts

to deal with an everchanging reality. Dissatisfaction with limiting thought spurs him to growth. This is evident when Wells confronts him with the question: "do you kiss your mother before you go to bed?" (P,14). Stephen is derided no matter what answer he gives.

> He still tried to think what was the right answer. Was it right to kiss his mother or wrong to kiss his mother? What did that mean, to kiss? ... Why did people do that with their two faces? (P,15).

There is no right answer. Here he confronts the very modernist dilemma of "contingency," which Roland Barthes describes as:

> The pure and simple "representation" of the "real," the naked account of "what is"(or what has been), thus proves to resist meaning.[15]

Fixed or absolute meaning is unattainable.

Stephen's victories, concluding each chapter, are also provisional. While many of the chapters begin expressing Stephen's dissatisfaction with the provisional victories, within the chapters Stephen is locked into rigid structures of thought. As is the case with many of the fixed or limited Dubliners' characters, Stephen's mode of perception is restricted. He gazed "calmly at the rector's shrewd harsh face"; "he gazed out into the darkening street"; "he gazed calmly before him at the waning sky"; and "his eyes were fixed calmly on the colorless sky"(P,106,111,155,157). Jameson comments, in this

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15 Roland Barthes, L'Effet de réel, "Communications", No.11 (1968), p.87.

> static and contemplative fashion ... [i]t is as though our primary relationship to the things of the outside world were not one of making or use, but rather that of a motionless gaze, in a moment of time suspended, across a gap which it subsequently becomes impossible for thought to bridge (JM,185).

Subject to the tyranny of fixed forms, Stephen's perception is locked into such a rigid mode of perception.

The values of his colonial society are asserted through dominance; force is often used to compel obedience. After visiting the rector, Stephen vows to be "very quiet and obedient" in his contact with Father Dolan (P,59). During his flirtation with religion, he learns that there is "one condition imposed ... by God: obedience to His word" (P,118). In Father Arnault's speech he is advised against the "sin" of "disobedience" (P,144). During this speech Stephen is compliant, listening in "reverent silence" (P,159). Throughout Portrait there is repeated pressure for Stephen to conform to the demands of his rigid society. As a small child he is forced to conform or "apologize" through the threats of a nursery rhyme:

> Pull out his eyes,
> Apologise.
> Apologise.
> Pull out his eyes (P,8).

Later, Stephen is forced to admit that "Byron was no good" as a poet (P,82). "Admit! repeated Heron, striking his cane across the calf of his leg" (P,78). This element of force is pervasive in Portrait. Much of Joyce's work shows a distaste for the use of force and violence. In Portrait, as in "The Dead," the

reader finds evidence of what Terrence Brown terms Joyce's military metaphors. The writer uses these metaphors to emphasize the colonial nature of Dublin. It is a society oppressed by the everpresent threat of military force. Hence we see repeated reference to the "conqueror of forty" (P,10-11,14); "soldiers' slugs"(pp.10,56); as well as reference to a "large bronze shield" and a "Sergeant major" (P,73); "brazen clashes of the soldier's band" (P,74); and "a noise like dwarf artillery" (P,75).

Language too is a source of oppression in Portrait and thus a means of restricting perspective and social vision. "Words which he[Stephen] did not understand he said over and over ... [and] through them he had glimpses of the real world about him" (P,62). Yet language can also restrict perception, be it in Duffy's false and evasive language or Stephen's theoretical literary and philosophical language. Jameson points out that

> rigid constraints imposed by imperialism on the development of human energies account for the symbolic displacement and flowering of the latter in eloquence, rhetoric and oratorical language of all kinds (JH,134).

Such oratorical language--form without content--is seen in the "vast stock of stories, limericks and riddles" of Lenehan in "Two Gallants," the rhetorical flourish of the sermon in Chapter Three, and in the stories of Stephen's father (D,50). His father repeats the "same tale" again and again, and his father's friend, Mr Casey, tells stories to help those gathered at the Christmas meal "digest" (P,93,35). In these cases language is used for kinetic purposes--to amuse or mystify. It is language without power, the impotent and emasculated language of a colonial culture.

While this displaced oratorical language shows the weakness of the oppressed, language can also show the power of the oppressor to impose and dominate. We see an indication of language's capacity to control in Stephen's fascination with naming:

> he had written there: himself, his name and where he was.
>
> Stephen Dedalus
> Class of Elements
> Clongowes Wood College
> Sallins
> County Kildare ... (P,15).

Naming fixes and gives control to the young Stephen; it gives him identity and imposes artificial order on his surroundings.

Conversely, language can control people and thus limit perception. In the sermon of Chapter Three we see, as we did for Duffy in "A Painful Case," the linguistic structuring of experience. In the sermon, words control the speaker; they are generated under their own momentum. It is an example of what George Orwell identifies as a potential problem in language,

> What is above all needed is to let the meaning choose the word, and not the other way around. In prose, the worst thing one can do with words is surrender to them.[16]

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16 George Orwell, "Politics and the English Language," Patterns of Exposition 8, Randall E. Decker, ed., (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1982), p.381.

Politically, words can afford their user the power to dominate, but they can also dominate the user.

Although language can be a way for the young Stephen to order and control his surroundings, of placing him within the universe, it can also enact political domination. Joyce recognizes this when he says, "I cannot speak in English without enclosing myself in a tradition."[17] This dominance through language is also evident when the dean uses the word "tundish," Stephen considers their conversation:

> The language in which we are speaking is his before it is mine. How different are the words home, Christ, ale, master on his lips and on mine! I cannot speak or write these words without unrest of spirit. His language, so familiar and so foreign, will always be for me an acquired speech. I have not made or accepted his words. My voice holds them at bay. My soul frets in the shadow of his language (P,189).

He recognizes

> My ancestors threw off their language and took another ... They allowed a handful of foreigners to subject them. Do you fancy I am going to pay in my own life and person debts they made? What for? (P,203).

Stephen sees the language of his English conquerors as an imposed limit, a source of domination that he must transcend: "You talk to me of nationality, language .... I shall try to fly by those nets" (P,203).

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17 Ellmann, p.391.

Stephen increasingly shows skepticism of authority: "his thinking was a dusk of doubt and self-mistrust" (P, 177). As a result of his dissatisfaction with the status quo, he changes. While being bullied into submission during the sermon of Chapter Three, where he fearfully listens to the fate of the fallen angel who declares "I will not serve," Stephen later overcomes this fear to boldly declare to Cranly, "I will not serve"(P,117, 239). Stephen grows to accept that order is provisional and authority may be challenged.

While Stephen's early life is spent attempting to fix or order his surroundings, more and more he is aligned with the flux of existence and the modernist idea of the contingency of meaning:

> How foolish his aim had been! He had tried to build a breakwater of order and elegance against the sordid tide of life without him and to dam up, by rules of conduct and active interests and new filial relations, the powerful recurrence of the tides within him. Useless. From without as from within the water had flowed over his barriers: their tides began once more to jostle fiercely above the crumbled mole (P,98).

Later, he more openly embraces the flux of the real world:

> The faint sour stink of rotted cabbages came towards him from the kitchengardens on the rising ground above the river. He smiled to think that it was this disorder, the misrule and confusion of his father's house and the stagnation of vegetable life, which was to win the day in his soul (P.162)

As Stephen grows, he connects the sea--fluidity--with the flux of life and life's endless change. While he expresses a very human sense of fear of

the unknown and lists the "sea" as one of the many things he fears, Stephen comes to recognize the sea as a source of vitality and, very practically, as a means of escape from his stifling colonial existence (P,243). He is vitalized through contact with the sea, and the novel's language reaches the level of poetic intensity when Stephen considers the sea:

> There was a long rivulet in the strand: and, as he waded slowly up its course, he wondered at the endless drift of seaweed. Emerald and black and russet and olive, it moved beneath the current, swaying and turning. The water of the rivulet was dark with endless drift a ... new wild life was singing in his veins. (P,170).

Language too is liberated--a more precise agent of perception--when it is fluid, when it does not impose fixed and arbitrary meaning. Joyce expressed the belief "that it was absurd ... [to think] that language was fixed, or exclusively rational."[18] Such a view is evident in his work, as Stephen considers the arbitrary nature of fixed language early in the novel:

> Dieu was French for God and that was God's name too; and when anyone prayed to God and said Dieu then God knew at once that it was a French person that was praying. But though there were different names for God in all the different languages ... still God remained always the same God and God's real name was God (P,16)

Here Stephen confronts the idea that the meaning of words is not fixed. However, in his process of growth, he moves beyond the fixed or "dead language."

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18 Ellmann, p.608

> Sighing with age as he walked on in a lane among heaps of dead language. His own consciousness of language was ebbing from his brain and trickling into the very words themselves which set to band and disband themselves in wayward rhythms (P,179).

Language, for Stephen, becomes more fluid: "a soft liquid joy flowed through the words where the long vowels hurled noiselessly away, lapping and flowing back" (P,225). Contrary to reification, which privileges the "rational," Stephen's new-found fluid language is sensual (JH,130). This language resists closure and containment by opening to change and possibility: "the verse with its black vowels and its opening sound, rich and lutelike" (P,233). And,

> His soul was swooning into some new world, fantastic, dim, uncertain as under sea ... Glimmering and trembling, trembling and unfolding, a breaking light, an opening flower (P,172).

Through the fluidity of language Stephen is placed in a changing world of flux, which allows him to perceive an alternative to and a way out of the fixity and containment of his colonial situation.

In many respects the diary represents Stephen's attempt to forge his own separate voice. In terms of narrative and point of view it is a radical break with the patterns established in the rest of the novel. Stephen successively rejects the external voices that beckon him: "the voices of his father and of his masters," the "insistent voices of the flesh," and "the voice of the director ... [urging] upon him the proud claims of the church" (P,83,152,162). In the diary, in terms of narrative form and content, Stephen breaks with the predetermined patterns of the past. Using his own voice, he

communicates his choice of artistic exile--a preference for the "voices" of "roads, their promise ... of tall ships ... and of distant nations" (P,252).

Prior to the diary, the author presents the fictional world through the mediation of a narrator. It is the narrator who tells the reader that Stephen is "burning with shame and fear," that "a cold lucid indifference reigned in Stephen's soul," and that "he was unheeded, happy and near to the wild heart of life" (P,51,103,171). Gradually, the reader shares Stephen's experience more closely. Initially, Joyce renders Stephen's experience with few references to his consciousness, usually prefaced by such words as he "thought" or he "felt." However, progressively he allows Stephen to speak for himself, as the following passage indicates:

> Perhaps they had stolen a monstrance to run away with and sell it somewhere. That must have been a terrible sin, to go in there quietly at night, to open the dark press ... (P,46).

As in "The Dead," without pronoun reference and with the word of internal expostulation "perhaps," the psycho-narration appears to come directly from Stephen rather than through the mediating filter of a narrator. This thinness of the narrative veil fosters identification with Stephen, while the presence of a narrator controls the reader's attitudes toward the character. Gradually, however, Joyce withdraws the narrator, so that by Chapter Five the reader is given a relatively unmediated view of the protagonist. Joyce reports Stephen's diary factually and neutrally. The diary then climaxes a liberation for Stephen that the author initiates early in the novel.

Joyce offers the reader multiple points of view and perspectives of Stephen. The protagonist's point of view changes as he matures, and this is reflected in the style of the narration. In the opening pages, the environment impinges directly on the consciousness of the infant. It is a strange, sensuous, opening world which the young child does not yet subject to questioning, selection or judgement. For example, we learn through Stephen's intelligence that: "When you wet the bed first it is warm then it gets cold. His mother puts on the oilsheet. That had a queer smell" (P,7). The prose takes on a heavier rhythm and a fuller body of sensuous detail. The reader sees this most clearly in the emotional language that marks Stephen's rejection of domestic and religious values:

> He closed his eyes in the langour of sleep. His eyelids trembled as if they felt the vast cyclic movement of the earth and her watchers, trembled as if they felt the strange light of some new world. His soul was swooning into some new world, fantastic, dim, uncertain as under sea, traversed by cloudy shapes and beings (P,172).

The reader encounters a third prose style in Chapter Five, prior to Stephen's diary. Here the style reflects austere intellectuality as Stephen outlines his artistic task. The prose of his discourse is largely abstract, without sensuous detail or strong rhythm:

> The hypothesis, Stephen repeated, is not the other way out: that, though the same object may not seem beautiful to all people, all people who admire a beautiful object find in it certain relations which satisfy and coincide with the stage themselves of all esthetic apprehension (P,209).

The combination of Joyce's and Stephen's artistic perspective and style contributes to a single effect: it heightens the reader's appreciation of Stephen's character in the diary by eliminating the narrative veil and by providing an intimate context in which to examine the hero.

Throughout Portrait Joyce makes the reader conscious of the imposition of the narrative veil as a mediating device through reference to actual veils. Stephen's mother "put up her double veil to her nose"; "a film still veiled" Stephen's eyes; near the end of the novel rain fell from a "high veiled sky"; "the veiled windless hour had passed," and Stephen imagines that Emma would "unveil her soul's shy nakedness" to the young priest (P,9,86,215,218,221). The presence of veils, eliminating face-to-face contact, is pervasive in Portrait. By withdrawing the narrative veil, the diary presents Stephen's experience in an unmediated way.

Stephen's perspective in his diary is not fixed--no posture he holds is absolute; he is more responsive in his diary entries to the fluidity and flux of life. The style is similar to that of Ulysses:

> Wild spring. Scudding clouds ... Eyes of girls among the leaves. Girls demure and romping. All fair or auburn: no dark ones. They blush better (P,252).

The diary's freer style and sensuality marks a return to the non-judgmental style of the opening pages, where Stephen is an infant. His identity is not fixed within the diary; rather it is open to contradiction. While Stephen views himself as "supple and suave," he more honestly appraises that he has "read little and understood less" (P,248). He takes disproportionate satisfaction at

being right in his argument with the Dean of Studies about the word "tundish" (P,251). The diary also exposes Stephen's bravado in his romantic language: "I go to encounter for the millionth time the reality of experience, to forge in the smithy of my soul the uncreated conscience of my race" (P,253). The journal then offers Stephen's words and thoughts in a language which seems to embody his search for self-definition--a process. With the fluidity of perspective offered in Portrait, Joyce's comment to Frank Budgen on Bloom could also apply to the dimension of his rendering of Stephen, "I see him from all sides, and therefore he is all round in the sense of your sculptor's figure."[19]

The idea of dimension--attained from multiple perspectives and points of view--is crucial to Portrait. Joyce's rendering of Stephen is not a flat and synchronic "portrait," but rather an evolving picture of a growing character. The picture is more diachronic, as Stephen continually transcends fixed frames or forms. Throughout Portrait, "portraits" appear in the narrative background, juxtaposing Stephen's process of change. During the Christmas argument between Stephen's father and Dante, Mr. Dedalus "pointed to the portrait of his [Stephen's] grandfather on the walls" (P,37); as he visits the rector to complain of Father Dolan's "unjust" punishment, Stephen sees "portraits of the saints and great men of the order who were looking down on him" (P,55); in Stephen's home "family portraits leaned against the wall" (P,65); near the entrance hall to Stephen's college "were two photographs in frames" (P,194); and in his aesthetic discussion with Lynch he puts forward the question: "Is the portrait of Mona Lisa good ...? " (P,214). However, no

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19 Ellmann, p.436

fixed frame can contain Stephen as he grows.

Like Marxist literary criticism, which questions the "authority of the textual frame," and seeks to "unframe" the "text's official value," Stephen questions and moves beyond imposed frames and boundaries.[20] Similarly, in the modernist changes of perspective and points of view encountered in the novel, the reader also moves beyond rigid strategies of containment and is forced to question the assumption on which these arbitrary and fixed categories are based.

The opportunity for new perspective is fundamental to Stephen's exile. Through it he may escape the paralysing limitations of Irish provincialism and nationalistic movements. He will become free of the inbred and nationalistic culture that Joyce symbolizes in the incestuous swans and the degeneracy of the captain, who rants of Scott and who seems to be the product "of incestuous love" (P,228).

One can never escape point of view, but one can arrive at the appreciation that no point of view need be fixed. The reader sees that

> there are first of all points of view, they may be true or false but there are nothing but points of view in the beginning, with whose help you then subsequently create your objects (JH,14)

Rather than blindly accepting the speculative monopoly of a narrator and/or

20 John Frow, Marxism and Literary History (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1986), p.187.

fixed point of view, the reader may continually question such textual authorities. Thus in "the effort" of the point of view to transcend itself, we see, as Jameson points out, the "social reality" of dynamic process--a dissatisfaction with the colonial status quo. It is, of course, only an "effort" since point of view can never be fully transcended. The reader is not a passive recipient of what is dictated to him or her through the authority of an omniscient narrator or a fixed point of view, but an active "producer of the text."[21]

In Jameson's Marxist context, art functions as "a way of restoring conscious experience, or breaking through deadening and mechanical habits of conduct" (JH,51). Modernism in particular helps to facilitate this restoration with its "emphasis on the violent renewal of perception in a world in which experience has solidified into a mass of habits and automatisms" (JA,212-13). This "solidified" world characterizes the reification inherent in the age of capitalism. It is this fixed hierarchical world that Stephen transcends in his growth. Slotted or contained in such a society--oppressed by its voices--people are unable to make connections with historical process and are thus deprived of totalizing vision. Such connection will allow them to perceive their oppression and act to change it.

In the modernist juxtapostion between the mediation of an omniscient narrator and the presentation of Stephen's own voice in the diary, we see a radical break with the orthodoxy of the text. As Jameson observes, "Lukács'

21 Roland Barthes, S/Z. Paris: Seuil, trans., Richard Miller (New York: Hill and Wang, 1974), p.4.

achievement was to have understood the strategies of containment" in literature of these hierarchical societies (JP,53). Yet,

> Lukács was not wrong to make the connection between modernism and the reification of daily life: his mistake was to have done so ahistorically and to have made his analysis the occasion for ethical judgement rather than historical perception (JP227).

He employs fixity, "ethical judgement," to dynamic forms, works like Joyce's Portrait, where the changing point of view and narrative perspective continually destabilizes the text. Jameson suggests that such texts carry the potential for their own transcendence. Here we are introduced to "textuality," an idea more fully developed, as we shall see in Ulysses, where

> Rather than being thought as a fixed entity with a definite structure, the text is conceived of as shifting and unstable, a system of relation continuously and variably interrelated with other systems of different orders.[22]

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22 Frow, p.187.

Chapter Three: Ulysses

Textual destabilization is marked in Ulysses. Jameson advances in "Seriality in Modern Literature" that Joyce reacts against the dehumanizing process of reification and points toward the idea of a utopian collective unity, a totalizing vision, through his use of language. However, Joyce achieves this transcendental unity formally, through the radical and modernist de-personalization of the novel that accompanies textualization,

> a self-created sequence of sentences for which narrator and narrative are mere pretext, the realization of a mechanism of well-nigh random narrative free association (JP,219).

Marilyn French has stated that it is on "the former half of the book [Ulysses] that we depend for our sense of characters' reality."[23] Similarly, Jameson observes that textualization, the presence of language without identifiable point of view, becomes more pronounced within the "Sirens" chapter. Traditionally Joyce's verbal experimentation, in the latter half of the book, has been understood within the framework of the so-called "stream-of-consciousness" techniques. They contribute to "point of view," for we read

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23 Marilyn French, "The Voices of Sirens in Joyce's Ulysses," Journal of Narrative Technique, Vol. 8 (1978), p.2.

them as Mr. Bloom's association of ideas, or as Stephen's. However, such narrative as, "Mr. Bloom reached Essex bridge. Yes, Mr. Bloom crossed bridge of Yessex," cannot be explained as originating from Bloom's consciousness (U,215).

In "Seriality" Jameson identifies three techniques through which Joyce displays textualization in Ulysses. Firstly, there are the automatisms, where "language seems to exist by itself, to function like some independent system that transcends any individual speaker" (JS,66). Secondly, we see textualization in the secondary connections and cross-referencing, such as the reappearance of the man in the macintosh. This technique, like Freudian "over-determination," frustrates the mind's

> compulsion for order ... their recurrence is designed to encourage the reader in the conviction that there exists, beyond his reach, some ultimate zone of reality in which everything turns out to be related to everything else (JS,67).

Finally, we see textuality in the "disembodied" structure of the "Circe" chapter, which, in its theatrical presentation, is devoid of connective narrative. Characters arrive and leave fully formed; they are not the creations of any identifiable narrator. These three features amount to

> transcendence of the phenomenon of literary point of view, which is to say they point toward a unity that transcends the reality of the individual, of the individual life, and is to be found in some vaster impersonal system of relationships which suggest some more perfect totality (JS,69).

The utopian direction of Jameson's thesis serves to undermine Lukács' argument that modernism is a "surrender to subjectivity" and that such works lack social "perspective."[24]

The linguistic mechanisms that Jameson discusses are not personal at all; far from implying any human narrative presence, through their automatic quality, they mark its decay. Ulysses undermines fixed forms or structures, preventing surface reification of the text, of its settling into some commodified object. Jameson suggests that,

> the primacy of point-of-view technique in general reflects a society in which individuals still exist as psychic unities, as autonomous centres of value and action is perhaps less and less over time (JS,79).

In the age of modernism shared values are less evident. With Einstein's ideas on relativity and with Foucault and Nietzsche having proclaimed the death of God and the exploitative nature of Christian values, notions of absolute values have been destroyed. Thus the basis for fixed point of view has been undermined.

Given such conditions, in examining literature we must direct our "attention to the recurrence of the socio-economic situation to which the particular style is a reaction [here modernism]" (JS,64). According to Jameson, Sartre's term "seriality" best describes the mode of human interaction in this modernist period. By seriality Jameson means

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24 Lukács, The Meaning of Contemporary Realism, pp.24,33.

> a type of relationship with other people that is neither of an individual face-to-face nature, nor that which we experience in genuine group action .... In seriality, what I happen to be doing, reading a newspaper, waiting for a bus, opening a can, pausing for a red light, is characterized primarily by its identity with the acts of other people in those situations; thus, in such activities, the uniqueness of my own experience is undermined by a secret anonymity, a statistical quality. Somehow I feel that I am no longer central (JS,76).

Consistent with Marxist thought, the individual is decentred in such a mode of human interaction. For Jameson, Ulysses

> reacts to a new socio-economic situation by incorporating it [seriality] into itself, by reproducing it from within according to its own intrinsic laws, opposing the serial structure of the real world with its own mirror-image in the serial structure of the imaginary object (JS,78).

We see a paradox in Jameson's ideas, for he suggests that through the radical fragmentation Joyce presents within the novel, the writer in fact dereifies the text by creating a self-referential system of language. Here seriality is not imposed upon authors, "but rather the result of their own free choice" (JS,74).

Jameson attempts to reconcile Marxism with literary modernism. This chapter will examine the applicability and validity of Jameson's criticism, especially as it is found in "Seriality in Modern Literature," and extend his critical ideas to sections of Ulysses that he does not consider.

To best appreciate Joyce's technical expansion within Ulysses, one must first examine the narrative framework from which the technical experiments

diverge. In the first six chapters of the novel Joyce gives the illusion of unmediated access to the minds of Stephen and Bloom. He employs limited point of view--individual standpoints from which we perceive events.

In the "Nestor" section there is a direct relationship between the containment effect of fixed point of view and the exploitative system that paralyzes Stephen's Ireland. Mr. Deasy illustrates how dependence on the market economy depersonalizes and alienates characters. Money is power to Deasy--he delights in controlling things. Deasy's first words to Stephen are, "Will you wait in my study ... till I restore order here"(U,24). Joyce describes this dealer in commodities in terms of depersonalized objects, such as "his angry white moustache" (U,24). He is an example of reification, where "isolated broken bits and pieces of the older unities acquire a certain autonomy of their own" (JP,63). By focussing on an isolated part of Deasy, Joyce illustrates that he is not an integrated individual. This is particularly pertinent to the idea of reification, for Deasy is obsessed with coinage: "money is power" (U,26). Deasy is also characteristic of the separation inherent in reification; he is unable to communicate: "he cried continually without listening" (U,24). He speaks a rhetoric conditioned by imperialism, using the exclusive pronoun "we": "We are a generous people but we must also be just" (U,26). He also uses the condemnatory pronoun "they": "England is in the hands of jews ... they are the signs of a nation's decay ... they eat up the nation's vital strength" (U,28). Similarly, Deasy makes a scapegoat of women for "having brought sin into the world" (U,40). In doing so he denies responsibility and supports a mechanistic and deterministic universe, which depersonalizes and excludes others. Economically bound to Deasy, Stephen

feels implicated in this alienating universe of fixed perception:

> The same room and hour, the same wisdom: and I the same. Three times now. Three nooses round me here. Well. I can break them in this instant if I will (U,25).

Similar to the Stephen of Portrait, the protagonist is surrounded by portaits, which are emblematic of the contained. It is appropriate that Joyce filters the atmosphere of containment through a fixed point of view. Stephen's consciousness is similarly framed, or roomed, as the author renders it through a limited perspective.

Stephen again experiences confinement in the "Proteus" section. However, in the later portion of the chapter Joyce suggests that through momentary epiphany, which alters Stephen's rigid perspective, there is the possibility for transcendence of psychological enclosure. As the chapter opens, confining guilt torments Stephen in the "houses of decay" of his childhood (U,33). He is "wombed in sin and darkness" (U,32). He thinks of limitations of perception, "limits of diaphane," and of his former residence, the Martello tower, "a shut door of a silent tower entombing their blind bodies" (U,31,47). His father restricts, or yokes, him "as his yokefellow" (U,36).

As in Joyce's aforementioned works, there is a juxtaposition of fixity and fluidity in "Proteus." Fixity is evident when Stephen walks among the "piled stone mammoth skulls ... light ... on sand, on boulders" (U,35). This reference to fixity juxtaposes with Stephen's meditation on his mother's death: "the aunt thinks you killed your mother" (U, 35). His guilt is a fixed categorical response, something he is supposed to feel. Yet "Proteus" has a

non-argumentative structure; without a fixed and logical sequence, a beginning and a middle, no authoritative conclusion is demonstrable. Fixity is then undermined. However, as Stephen approaches the sea, "the new air greeted him, harping" (U,37). He is exposed to the process of "seachange" (U,42).

Stephen experiences epiphany, liberation from fixed perception, when he realizes that he, like the dog who sniffs and digs around the dead dog, has been "vulturing the dead" (U,39). He has been preoccupied with the fixity of a dead past. The epiphany allows Stephen to escape from the nightmare of history in the prolific possibilities of dream: "After he [Haines] woke me up last night or was it: Wait. Open hallway" (U,39). Stephen then is liberated from fixed perception--the "gaze" which restricts his perception. He considers other means of perception: "ineluctable modality of the visible: at least that if no more, thought through my eyes" (U,31). Stephen distrusts the sense of sight to the point of identifying with the blind man. Thomas Karr Richards points out,

> a "mode" necessitates a fixed state of being or of perception; "modality" refers to a mode in application, a mode as it is being used. In more familiar philosophical terms, a mode is natura naturata (nature already accomplished), while modality is natura naturans (nature in the process of being accomplished)[25]

Stephen is engaged in dynamic process rather than a fixed gaze. Alternate modalities of perception facilitate a release from the claustrophobia he ex-

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25 Thomas Karr Richards, "Provisional Fixity in James Joyce's "Proteus," James Joyce Quarterly, Vol. 20, No.4, Summer, 1983, p.387.

periences in the history-laden tower and in Deasy's relic-filled office. Stephen becomes a "changeling," able to throw away the "shadow" of his past and his fixed identity (U,38,40). He considers a new perspective--the possibility of projecting his shadow "endless till the farthest star," thus becoming disembodied (U,40).

In a Marxist sense Stephen is decentred, for he transcends the category of the fixed subject. It is useful to remember the title of this section, "Proteus," from which we derive the word "protean": the ability to "readily assume ... different shapes or roles."[26] In the second part of the chapter, Stephen is able to escape the fixed identity imposed upon him by his past; he transcends his limited perspective. In Stephen's ability to assume different shapes or roles, the chapter becomes like the primitive "pre-individualistic" narratives considered by Levi-Strauss:

> [T]hey emerge from a social world in which the psychological subject has not yet been constituted as such, and therefore in which later categories of the subject, such as the 'character' are not relevant. Hence the bewildering fluidity of these narrative strings, in which human characters are ceaselessly transformed into animals or objects and back again, in which nothing like narrative "point of view," ... emerges (JP,124).

Similarly Stephen recognizes the fluidity of language as a means of perception. He sees written words as "signs on a white field." (U,54). They are arbitrary referents assigning provisional meaning. In the latter portion of "Proteus" Stephen drifts on the tides of language and allows thought to think

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26 The Webster-Merriman Dictionary, 1961 ed.

itself:

> Oom, allwombing tomb. His mouth moulded issuing breath, unspeeched: ooeeeehah; roar of cataractic planets, globed, blazingroaring wayawayawayawayawayaway (U,40). Listen: a fourworded wavespeech: seesoo, hrss, rsseeiss, ooos. Vehement breath of water amid seasnakes, rearing horses, rocks. In cups of rocks it slops: flop slop, slap: bounded in barrels. And, spent, its speech ceases. It flows purling, widely flowing, flowing, floating foampool, flower unfurling (U,41).

The prose celebrates the capaciousness of the human mind and the protean possibilities of free association. Here, Jameson indicates, Ulysses momentarily transcends point of view, the reality of the individual, since language "begins to function on its own autonomously" (JS,69).

The reader observes a more pervasive use of such automatisms in the "Sirens" chapter. In this section there is a radical depersonalization of the text. The reader must also keep in mind the strategic importance of "Sirens" in terms of Ulysses' content: Bloom's visit to the bar coincides with Molly's adultery, and as a result of this, Bloom feels his identity threatened; he feels depersonalized. In "Sirens," Bloom is gradually displaced as the centre of narrative intelligence. Through this movement and the dehumanized narrative we see the provisional nature of limited point of view.

Bloom's depersonalization may be seen in the graphic presentation of his name. His name is often the object of verbal play, "Bloowho," "Bloowhose," and "Greaseabloom" (U,212, 213, 214). Later, near the time of Molly's adultery, his name is the object of further play and truncation:

> At four she. Winsomely she on Bloohimwhom smiled. Bloom smi qui go. Ternoon. Think you're the only pebble on the beach? Does that to all(U,217).

Such play with Bloom's name is depersonalizing. In this instance it identifies a truncated Bloom: "Bloo"; then shows him simply as a male: "him"; then as any person: "whom" (U, 217). This verbal play depersonalizes Bloom to the extent that his name is a thing, reified, an object in a verbal game. The language here functions autonomously so that what we see "is not a human being, but a locus of speech ... [where language functions] like some independent system" (JS,66).

Depersonalization is also evident in the progressive withdrawal of identifiable point of view. Early in "Sirens" we encounter the familiar stream of consciousness technique, where the reader may easily identify Bloom as the centre of narrative intelligence:

> Must see about Key's par. Eat first. I want. Not yet. At four, she said. Time ever passing. Clockhands turning. On. Where eat? The Clarence, Dophin. On. For Raoul. Eat. If I net five guineas with those ads. The violet silk petticoats (U,214).

However, later in the chapter, the reader encounters:

> Bald Pat who is bothered mitred the napkins. Pat is a waiter hard of his hearing. Pat is a waiter who waits while you wait. Hee hee hee hee. He waits while you wait (U,230)

Joyce withdraws Bloom as the centre of narrative intelligence--the point of view character. Language mimics itself and is devoid of human narrative presence or identifiable point of view. Throughout "Sirens" the reader constantly finds language drawing attention to itself, frustrating expectation of narrative movement. For example,

> Miss Kennedy sauntered sadly from bright light, twining a loose hair behind an ear. Sauntering sadly, gold no more, she twisted twined a hair. Sadly she twined in sauntering gold hair behind a curving ear (U,212).

It is discourse without a human narrating subject.

With such depersonalizing textualization, there occur moments in which the book begins to elaborate on its own text. There are two clear examples in "Sirens" where Ulysses becomes self-referential. Faced with the prospect of becoming a cuckold, Bloom eats "Liver and bacon" (U,221). Throughout "Sirens" this information is repeatedly cross-referenced, both within the chapter and with earlier chapters. The reader encounters: "As said before, he ate with relish the inner organs," and "Boom ate liv as said before" (U, 221, 223). These references echo the earlier statement: "Mr. Bloom ate with relish the inner organs of beasts ..." (U,45). One finds a similar example with the references to Blazes Boylan: "He [Bloom] followed the hasty creaking shoes" (U, 219). We are reminded, "Blazes Boylan's smart tan shoes creaked on the barfloor, said before" and then also repeated: "Jingle by monuments of Sir John Gray, Horatio onehandled Nelson, reverend Theobald Matthew, jaunted, as said before just now"(U,217, 227). The text acts as its own point of reference. It will not allow the reader to comfortably accept mimetic illusion--

the work as self-contained or reified thing. Categorical responses, such as Bloom's jealousy, are undermined; what Bloom eats is as important as what he feels regarding his wife's infidelity.

The self-generating quality of language is extended to the theatrical presentation of "Circe." Jameson suggests narrative with fixed centres of narrative intelligence enacts a containment strategy, often tyrannizing perception by "doing our seeing for us," whereas in the dramatic format of "Circe," Joyce merely gives "us information to be seen" (JS,68). In "Circe" forms or figures are sundered from their background and freely permitted to enter and leave without narrative preparation: Mrs. Breen enters Bloom's vision abruptly and as quickly "fades from his side" (U,367). Without the anticipatory-retrospective texture of narrative, it falls on the scenic directions to recombine the figure-ground rupture. As in the diary of Portrait, the perceptual tyranny of a mediating narrator is, to a large extent, removed.

Freed from conventional narrative constraints, "Circe" creates a world of vision where all is possible. Bloom's identity is in continual flux; all attempts to impose categorical identity on him are mistaken. He is a disembodied figure, allowed to explore a range of identities. As Robert Scholes observes, Joyce "accepted less and less willingly the notion of characters bounded by their own skins."[27] Bloom re-enacts history by portraying a series of roles reminiscent of the romantic martyrs of Irish rebellions. His roles imitate the rise, rejection, execution, and canonization of

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27 Robert Scholes, "Ulysses: A Structuralist Perspective," James Joyce Quarterly, Vol. 10, No. 1, Fall 1972, p.164.

Ireland's heroes. The stage directions announce Bloom's shifting identity in his continual costume changes. For example, at different times he wears: a "youth's smart blue Oxford suit with white vestlips," "a purple Napoleon hat," and "oatmeal sporting suit," a "red fez...[and a] cadi's dress," a "torn frockcoat stained with whitewash,"and "workman's corduroy overalls" (U, 358, 364, 366, 371, 390). Not even a definitive gender can be assigned to Bloom. He serves as an "example of the new womanly man," giving birth to "eight male yellow and white children" (U,403).

In Ulysses, particularly in "Circe," Joyce demonstrates the limitations of fixed point of view through the recurrent phenomenon of parallax. The Oxford English Dictionary defines parallax as "an apparent displacement, or difference in the apparent position, of an object, caused by an actual change (or difference) of the position of observation."[28] Bloom is increasingly frustrated with tyrannies imposed on his perception, "the ineluctable modality of the visible," because, as Stephen suggests, the "eyes see all flat" (U,456). In parallax, however, with differing points of observation, one perceives differing aspects of the same reality. To this end, Joyce constantly shifts perspective to produce continually altering pictures of Bloom. The author makes his reader part of the very process his fiction records. This is evident by reviewing "Lestrygonians" as it applies to "Circe." In "Lestrygonians" Bloom reveals: "Parallax. I never exactly understood"; he also resolves to "think no more" about Molly's impending adultery (U,126). But it is through parallax that Bloom gains an altered perspective, which allows him to confront the reality of Molly's infidelity. The agent of this new

[28] The Oxford English Dictionary, 1976 ed.

perception in "Circe" is his grandfather, Virag. Leopold Virag represents the centre of aggressiveness and libidinal drive and the source of language. The monocle-wearing Virag is also closely associated with parallax. Virag rails at the sensual world, which obsesses Bloom and which is designed only to "deceive the eye" (U,418). He exhorts his grandson to "Never put on you tomorrow what you can wear today." Virag offers a similarly liberating perspective to Bloom when he advises, "Stop twirling your thumbs and have a good old thunk .... Exercise your mnemotechnic" (U,419). Bloom then moves to the realization that "Instinct rules the world. In life. In death" (U,421).

Through the disembodied Virag, who carries his detached head, Bloom is able to disengage himself from lust. In an era of reification, the mental functions of "measurement and rational calculation," those functions engendering categorical responses, such as jealousy, are separated from sensual experience (JH,130). In "Circe," however, this process of reification is reversed. Through the parallax Virag offers, Bloom is able to alter his perspective from the torment of lust and to confront the reality of Molly's liaison with Boylan. He escapes the confinement of fixed conceptions. Hence, through the phenomenon of parallax, Joyce demonstrates the provisional nature of perception and the insufficiency of fixed point of view for portraying experience. Bloom discovers through parallax the existence of multitudinous alternative perspectives, and, through the shifting perspectives "Circe" offers of Bloom and Stephen, the reader participates in the same discovery. Bloom's discovery points toward the possibility of interindividual relations with Stephen--an overcoming of ego that amounts

to "a transcendence of literary point of view" (JS,69).

After the climactic transcendence of point of view in "Circe," Joyce lapses back into fixed point of view in "Eumaeus"; that is, "the 'he thought' form of discourse, which reflects the belief in ...[the] central reflective consciousness" (JH,138). Here Joyce uses a modernist technique, juxtaposing the unlimited possibility of the "Circe" chapter with the containment of the "Eumaeus" chapter.

The psychological containment of fixed point of view is again evident in the "Eumaeus" chapter. Bloom's predilection for seeing issues from "both sides" is stifled within this Jamesian chapter (U,525). In seeking Stephen's friendship, Bloom hopes to "cultivate the acquaintance of someone of no uncommon calibre who would provide food for reflection" (U,528). Yet communication becomes difficult because Bloom is preoccupied with his impending return after Molly's adultery, and Stephen is tired and confused, "repeatedly yawn[ing]...," his "mind was not exactly what you would call wandering but a bit unsteady" (U,501). They remain locked in separate subjective worlds. There is considerable awkwardness, as silence and pauses punctuate their conversations (U,510,523). Bloom comments on the beauty of the Italian language he hears spoken by two men, and Stephen informs him that the men are "haggling over money" (U,509). In this awkwardness Bloom tries to force the situation and the word "contrived" is repeatedly associated with his and Stephen's actions (U,518,522). Similarly, the nature of the parody in "Eumaeus" is purposely contrived.

Joyce reinforces this situation of awkwardness, self-containment, and the inability to communicate through the style and fixed Jamesian point of view in "Eumaeus." The style is tired and anti-climactic, filled with circumlocutions, forcing the reader to recognize the communication difficulties. We encounter the following authorial intrusions: "as it happened ... where of course ... in due course ... [and] who at all events" throughout the chapter (U,502).

In "Eumaeus" Joyce continually forces the reader to question the imposition of point of view. The reader participates in Bloom's scepticism regarding the reliability of various story-tellers within the chapter. For example, Bloom is doubtful about the tales told by the sailor he and Stephen meet at the shelter; he is "not an implicit believer in the lurid story narrated" (U,512). Bloom suggests that Stephen's and his "mutual friend could ... lie like old boots" (U,519). Similarly, Bloom feels there is "highly unlikely even a shadow of truth" in the stories told by the cabman (U,530). In the chapter Joyce makes the reader aware of an obtrusive central narrative intelligence. Through this parody technique we are made to question the imposition of fixed point of view.

In his use of irony, the author undermines the tyranny of fixed point of view at the chapter's conclusion. Here we shift from the alternating and exclusive perspectives of Bloom and Stephen to that of the cabman "who merely watched the two figures" (U,543). Using this distant alternative perspective, the narration allows the reader to view Bloom and Stephen together, as the cabman "looked after their lowbacked car" (U,543). While the

perspective adheres to the fabric of Victorian melodrama, which Joyce parodies throughout "Eumaeus" (where the plot is often resolved with a marital union), here Bloom and Stephen have done little more than get acquainted. However, the new perspective releases us from the containment of Bloom's and Stephen's points of view, because it allows us to perceive them as being together for the first time. We see the relevance of Jameson's use of Sartre's ideas on seriality:

> Since the couple cannot really be a unity, unification operated by a third party, by an outside observer or witness; and the crucial role thus played by the "third"confirms the priority of the triadic relationship over the dyad ... (JM,242).

Through the parody of the chapter, and its ironic conclusion, "Eumaeus" intimates the need to transcend the limitation of Jamesian fixed point-of-view narrative and to move towards broader social vision. Ultimately, as Jameson suggests, the chapter forces the question, "Why we should be interested in stories about private individuals any longer, given the extraordinary relativisation of all individual experience" (JH,140).

While Jameson considers "Ithaca," like "Eumaeus," to be among the most "boring" chapters of Ulysses, his argument is too reductive and does not fully consider the social significance of the meeting between Bloom and Stephen at the end of the novel (JH,138). The "Ithaca" chapter considers the transcendence of individual ego needed to achieve liberating perception. In this section Bloom reflects upon the "domain of interindividual relations" and contemplates "the painful character of the ultimate function of separate

existence" (U,545,572). The chapter explores ways of breaking the subjective boundaries evident in earlier chapters, of removing the "enclosures of reticence" (U,558). As in "Sirens," the provisional nature of identity is underlined through name play.

> What anagrams had he [Bloom] made on his name in youth?
>
> Leopold Bloom
> Ellpodbomool
> Molldopeloob
> Bollopedoom
> Old Olledbo, M.P. (U,554).

Such play reduces categorical identity to mere nonsense.

Bloom and Stephen experience a communion in "Ithaca". Bloom especially moves beyond categorical identity. Appropriately, Joyce renders this chapter in the form of a catechism--in a question and answer format, as opposed to an exclusive point of view. The communion Bloom and Stephen experience is suggested in the fusing of their names: "Bloom Stoom ... [and] Stephen Blephen" (U,558). This communion and Bloom's detached "scientific" perspective allow him to transcend his immediate situation as a cuckold and to achieve a more cosmic perspective (U,558). After shattering light in "Circe," Stephen and Bloom "emerge ... silently and doubly dark from obscurity" (U,573). Bloom then moves to an increasingly vaster perspective:

> the parallax or parallactic drift of socalled fixed stars, in reality evermoving from immeasurably remote eons to infinite futures in comparison with which the years, threescore and ten, of allotted human life form a parenthesis of infintesimal brevity (U,573).

He contemplates the eternity devouring the life-span of each individual. Identity is truly provisional. Bloom's all encompassing sympathy stems from his observation of this spatial-temporal condition. He and Stephen then contemplate each "other in both mirrors of the reciprocal flesh of theirhisnothis fellow-faces" (U,577). They transcend the limitations of isolating ego and escape the prison of self. From this position Bloom is able to regard Molly's window and to confront the reality of her adultery. He realizes that because of the "apathy of the stars" her action is cosmically insignificant. With such relativized and ego-transcendent perception, Bloom moves beyond categorical responses and recognizes the futility of kinetic guilt and jealousy.

In "Penelope" Molly elevates quotidian experience to the plane of poetry. Molly resists categorical definition. She is largely oblivious to linear time--more attuned to the cycles of her own nature. In "Calypso" she awakens by a natural clock rather than out of a sense of external or conventional obligation. She "never know[s] the time" as her watch "never seems to go properly" (U,615). She responds to the fluidity of life rather than to the fixity of external time. We see this through her connection with the sea. During her menstrual cycle she expresses, "O patience above its pouring out of me like the sea!" (U,633).

Joyce further conveys fluidity in Molly's thinking process. The fluid style of her monologue is reminiscient of the contradictions found in Stephen's diary. When Molly considers war, she meditates: "you wouldn't

see women going and killing one another and slaughtering" (U,640). However, Molly contradicts herself on the following page as she conveys her dislike for the traits of women: "Some woman ready to stick her knife in you I hate that in women" (U,640). While contradictory, the reversal reflects the fluidity of Molly's mind. She resists fixed thinking; rather she responds to the present moment. Molly also transcends such categorical responses as remorse. When contemplating her dead son, Rudy, she says: "I'm not going to think myself into the glooms" (U,640). She has a truly liberated consciousness, unrestricted by morals: she is not moral or immoral, but rather amoral--a living example of Bloom's observation on the "inanity of extolled virtue" (U,604).

Molly displays totalizing, or integrating, perception. She functions(similar to the cabman), like Sartre's "third", where "unification must be operated by a third party, by an outside observer or witness" (JM,242). Much of her soliloquy deals with Bloom and with the possibility of bringing Stephen into their house. Her perceptions then unify the previously independent perspectives of Stephen and Bloom, to form the perception of a group. Molly's integrative function is also conveyed in the form of the soliloquy. Although her chapter is rendered in the soliloquy form, as Jeremy Hawthorn points out, "her concerns are her relationships with other people."[29] The relative absence of end-stops conveys the rhythm of a mind unfettered by containment, by conventional punctuation or thought concepts. She frequently shifts tense from past ("asked") to present ("ask") to future

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29 Jeremy Hawthorn, "Ulysses, Modernism and Marxist Criticism," James Joyce and Modern Literature, W.J. McCormack and Alistair Stead, eds. (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1982), p.119.

("will"), suggesting she sees all time as contemporaneous (U,643,644). Unlike other Dublin characters she is not oppressed and tyrannized by the dead weight of the past. Joyce reinforces this quality with the obsessive use of the conjunction "and" at the end of the soliloquy. This indicates Molly's tendency to balance and join present, past, and future.

After the blanket dismissal of modernism by the Marxist critic Georg Lukács, it is reassuring to find in Jameson a Marxist critic who acknowledges the social importance of modernist texts. Jameson is anxious to distance his views from vulgar Marxism and from the orthodoxy of Socialist Realism. He dismisses any literary prescription of the socialist-realist type. Instead, he offers a more sophisticated Marxist criticism. Jameson's work refutes Lukács' claim that by "concentrating on formal criteria,"critics" refrain from judgment on the social implications of a work."[30] Through his consideration of Joyce's formal technique, Jameson also undermines Lukács' dismissal of Joyce on the grounds of the writer's "rejection of narrative objectivity" and "his surrender to subjectivity."[31] As Jameson indicates, Joyce's concern for the social and totalizing perception is demonstrated throughout the novel.

Modern art, for Jameson, offers the possibility of the renewal of perception:

> It is only fair to point out that the idea of art as a renewal of perception is not unique with the Formalists, but can be found in one version or another everywhere in modern

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30 Lukács, The Meaning of Contemporary Realism, p.36.

31 Ibid, p.37.

> art and modern aesthetics and is at one with the primacy of the new itself (JH,54).

This renewal of perception is most important. With "reification of the subject under late capitalism," there has been a "fetishization of aesthetic perception" (JI,392). This results in a "failure to see through the reified surface of the outside world"; the prerequisites for a genuinely "historical understanding of life" are therefore incomplete (JM,190).

Perhaps one of the most useful aspects of Jameson's theory as it applies to Ulysses is found in one of his main points: strategies of containment, such as unified point of view, are inevitably inscribed in cultural texts and our way of thinking about them. They are a way of achieving coherence by shutting out the truth about history, sealing off the possibility of totalizing vision. In "Seriality in Modern Literature" Jameson suggests that Joyce, in Ulysses, attempts to transcend the strategy of containment--fixed point of view. In Joyce's case this problem is dealt with technically. He replicates the "seriality" of modern relationships. To do this Joyce uses a language that depicts a world in which identities are unstable, speakers are deceptive, and point of view is not unified.

Both Joyce and Jameson draw attention to the fact that fixed point of view of the individual subject is illusory, a provisional category. In this exploration of the problem of the subject in literature, they share much in common with contemporary thinkers such as Foucault, Lacan and Sartre, who have examined

> the revelation of the reality of the collective beneath the

> appearance of individual experience, the disclosure of the individual subject as a field of multiple force, not a substance but a locus, a nexus, of sheer relationships (JO,131).

Jameson's work draws attention to the ideological limitations associated with the textual determinant point of view. Thus he offers the reader an expanded awareness of Ulysses--a text that, in its content, also reveals the struggle of Stephen and Bloom to overcome the paralyzed colonial consciousness, fixity of thought, and to realize a liberated, more fluid, perception. As Jameson observes in Marxism and Form,

> 'History,' said Joyce's Stephen, 'is a nightmare from which I am trying to awake.' But one cannot awake until one has first measured the extent and the intensity of the nightmare (JM, 305).

In order to measure the nightmare, one must achieve the totalizing perception that transcends limited perspectives--in literature, fixed point of view.

Conclusion

Lukács' criticism is valuable regarding Marxist theories of perception. Like Jameson, his criticism focusses on overcoming containment and achieving liberating historical, or totalizing, perception. Yet in rejecting modernism for older forms, "Lukács' analyses of the novel depend on what is a kind of literary nostalgia, on the notion of a golden age or lost Utopia of narration in Greek epic" (JM,179). He dismisses critics who concern themselves with the formal considerations of modernist works.

Rather than rejecting conflicting critical approaches, Jameson's dialectical approach engages them in the service of his Marxism: "Marxism subsumes other interpretive systems" (JP,47). While disagreeing with Lukács' condemnation of modernism, his ideas on reification are important to Jameson's critical operation. Further, Jameson reconciles Marxism not only with Sartre's existentialism, but also with Marcuse's revival of the Utopian model, Claude Lévi-Straus' approaches, and Benjamin's advocacy of modernism.

There are a number of drawbacks to Jameson's Marxist dialectical approach. Often he tends to slide into asserting that the particular symbolic

narrative act is always one of attempted resolution of contradiction. In some instances the effort to achieve a resolution of such contradictions ends by creating a paradox. For example, he suggests in "Ulysses in History" that Joyce's radical fragmentation within the novel in fact dereifies the text by creating a self-referential system of language that functions much like gossip, which, according to Jameson, describes the perimeter of a community (JH, 135). Thus, paradoxically, one seems to achieve dereification by reification.

The reader must also be aware of Jameson's Marxist presuppositions regarding the upward progress of collective society. He says that Utopian theories allow us to recognize "to what degree thought asphyxiates in our culture, with its absolute inability to imagine anything other than what is" (JM,414). In The Political Unconscious he suggests that Marxist criticism points toward "the simultaneous recognition of the ideological and Utopian function of the artistic text" (JU,299). But in "Seriality in Modern Literature" comments like this are too brief to carry the weight of his argument and often contribute to vagueness. Often his broad cultural sweeps ignore close reading of the texts. For instance, he vaguely speaks of Joyce's work as directing our perception towards "some ultimate, point-of-viewless experience that we approach only as an outside limit" (JS,69). And in his conclusion of "Seriality" Jameson suggests that Joyce perceived "the existential experience of a new society," an ideal that the critic often alludes to but never fully explains (JS, 80).

Yet there is much of value in Jameson's work. His criticism attempts to transcend textual determinants or textual "boundaries" and to establish

connection with history. But it is a history sharply differentiated from academic histories, which are, according to Jameson, "synchronic pictures of history"--like the fixed or framed portraits evident throughout A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man and in Deasy's office in Ulysses (JM 258). Marxist history, on the other hand, sees such permanence and continuity as "illusion" and "change and struggle the reality" (JM,259). Both Jameson and Joyce give strong evidence of the idea that "fixed content or fixed form is a radical denial of active practical consciousness."[32] To this end Jameson explores the need to apprehend "reality as process" and to transcend the "static" knowledge resulting from the "reification into which the outside world ... [has] frozen" for many of the classes within capitalist society (JM,188).

For such contemporary Marxist thinkers as Raymond Williams and Fredric Jameson there is a link between "the radical aesthetic of modernism and the revolutionary theory and practices of Marxism" (JM,164). Indeed, art in general for Jameson is a way of "restoring conscious experience, of breaking through deadening and mechanical habits of conduct ..., and allowing us to be reborn to the world in its existential freshness and horror" (JP,51). This allows one to break with the repetitive and mechanical habits, and the paralysed consciousness of such Joycean characters as Mr. Duffy.

According to Jameson contemporary reification is inscribed in many modern texts through fixed point of view. We are given indication of this in the following quotation from Jameson's "Metacommentary:"

> ...little by little the action of the book comes to coincide

32 Raymond Williams, p.39.

> with the consciousness of the hero, interpretation is once more interiorized, immanent to the work itself, for it is now the point-of-view figure himself who from within the book, reflecting on the meaning of his experiences, does the actual exegesis for us before our own eyes....
>
> Point of view, therefore, is something little more than sheer technique and expresses the increasing atomization of our societies, where the privileged meeting places of collective life and of the intertwining of collective destinies...have decayed (JME,13).

Jameson suggests that one of the means by which Joyce strives to overcome the reification inherent in his society is through language. Joyce's use of language mirrors the basic form of human interaction in capitalist society, seriality, a term Jameson borrows from Sartre. Such an application of seriality serves Jameson's Marxist ends, for

> by showing that interpersonal experience can never precede group experience, it immediately forces the argument in which the solitary individual tries to overcome his ontological socio-eoconomic weakness by the invention of collective acts and collective units (JM,246).

This movement is essential to Jameson's dialectical approach to criticism, for "only the dialectical provides a way for 'decentring' the subject concretely, and for transcending 'ethical' in the direction of the political and collective" (JP,60).

Jameson's cultural criticism, reconciling Marxism and modernism, offers useful insight into the work of James Joyce. Perception and containment are concerns reflected in Joyce's writing and in Jameson's

cultural criticism. Joyce often explores characters who cannot perceive the sources of their own oppression and therefore cannot act to change their conditions. The result for these characters, in their colonial situation, is paralyzed consciousness. They are rooted in a fixed perspective, myopic to social vision. Only when Bloom alters his perspective to achieve a more celestial view is he liberated from categorical responses and able to perceive his own "celestial brevity"--his place within historical process.

Joyce's work increasingly reflects destabilization--it resists becoming a reified commodity or thing. This is particularly true of point of view--no view is absolute; any view can always be countered by alternative views. His work displays a decentring of the narrative subject. We see this in the "Circe" chapter where characters elude fixed skins. The insertion of the subject through fixed point of view is shown to be arbitrary--reflective of the individualism espoused by capitalism. Similarly the fixed frames of narratives--synchronic portraits--are continually undermined in Joyce's work. His writing transcends arbitrarily imposed boundaries in favor of fluidity and change--in short, the diachronic and historical process.

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