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WORDS AND IMAGES: INTERPLAY BETWEEN THE VERBAL AND THE
VISUAL IN LEWIS'S TARR, TAYLOR'S TENDER ONLY TO ONE,
AND FIVE SHORT STORIES BY BARTHELME

by

ANNE QUEMA, M.A.

A thesis submitted to
the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research
in partial fulfilment of
the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts

Department of English

Carleton University
Ottawa, Ontario

March 16, 1987

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AND FIVE SHORT STORIES BY BARTHELME

submitted by Anne Quéma, M.A.

in partial fulfilment of the requirements for
the degree of Master of Arts

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Abstract

The argument of the thesis is shaped in terms of a hypothesis tested through a demonstration in three stages. The hypothesis is that a comparison between the visual arts and literature is necessary in the case of certain literary works.

In chapter One, the theoretical background from which this hypothesis stems is provided. In chapter Two, it is shown that the vortex, the grotesque, and creativity are at the basis of the interrelation between Lewis's Tarr and vorticism. In chapter Three, the interartistic relation within Taylor's Tender Only to One is developed at the structural, fictional, intertextual, thematic, and interpretative levels. In chapter Four, the main technique of Barthelme's "illustrated" short stories is shown to be collage whereby fictional structure, cultural paradigms, and the referential function of words and images are explored.

The hypothesis is therefore confirmed. In a concluding synthesis, further consequences deriving from such comparative studies are probed.

This study is dedicated to
James M. Thompson

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Abbreviations

TOTO: Tender Only to One

SN: Sadness

CL: City Life

GP: Guilty Pleasures

Introduction

Victor Hugo, D.H. Lawrence, Cocteau, Gertrude Stein, Michelangelo, Williams, these are some of the names which come to mind when the comparison between the visual arts and literature is brought under scrutiny. Schapiro argues that, "a great part of visual art in Europe from late antiquity to the 18th century represents subjects taken from a written text. The painter and sculptor had the task of translating the word--religious, historical, or poetic--into a visual image" (9). Two centuries later, the notion of Gesamtkunstwerk was in the limelights again when Cocteau, Satie, Massine, and Picasso cooperated to produce Parade in Paris on May 18, 1917.

My thesis is strictly concerned with the comparison between literary works and visual works including paintings, drawings, and illustrative prints, but excluding films and sculpture. The form this thesis takes is that of a hypothesis combined with demonstration. But before reaching this hypothesis on the comparison of painting and literature, it is necessary to establish the framework of my argument.

To begin with, I am not concerned with the claim that, in general, painting can always be usefully or successfully compared to literature. Furthermore, my study of the problem will not rest on an a priori principle of identity between visual and verbal works. Rather, my argument and subsequent demonstration originate in the hypothesis that the comparison

between certain literary works and certain visual works is not only worthwhile but fundamental for an adequate interpretation of the literary works. Thus the starting-point for the testing of such a hypothesis will always be a literary work in prose in which the basis for a comparative claim with visual works is either implicit or explicit. Finally, the stipulated notion of a fusion of the arts is precluded by the fact that painting and literature are endowed with specifically different media. Given this condition, the interartistic comparison will constantly be regarded in terms of a dialogue or dynamic interplay.

For the sake of demonstration, three literary works have been selected which comply with the above defining hypothesis. These are Tarr by Wyndham Lewis, Tender Only to One by Richard Taylor, and five short stories by Donald Barthelme, extracted from Sadness, City Life, and Guilty Pleasures. The short stories are "At the Tolstoy Museum", "Brain Damage", "The Flight of Pigeons from the Palace", "The Expedition", and "A Nation of Wheels". Each of these three authors belongs to three different cultures and artistic periods. Lewis's background is the British culture of the early twentieth century which was also the soil for the English version of modernism. The American short story teller Barthelme is famous for his contributions to the New Yorker, and is acknowledged as one of the leading figures of postmodernist literature. Finally, the contemporary Canadian writer Taylor is not an exponent of modernism or postmodernism, but takes

hints from both.

Despite these cultural divergences, the works of these three authors present apparent affinities with the visual arts. Tarr was written by a Vorticist, Barthelme's short stories are "illustrated", and, in Taylor's short novel, reference is made to Impressionism and Post-Impressionism. In other words, these characteristics provide a basis for the above hypothesis which can then be tested through a careful study of the three individual works.

The examination of these works does not proceed ex nihilo since numerous studies have been conducted on inter-artistic relations. Therefore the first chapter of the thesis is devoted to a critical presentation of some of the theories on this particular puzzle, from Plato to Gombrich. Although my approach to the three literary works is not a systematic application of any particular theory, it still takes account of specific theoretical points and arguments surveyed in the first chapter.

This is the case, for instance, with Frank's literary theory on spatial form in literature. To provide continuity in the study, both the concepts of time and space have been examined systematically in each of the three works. In The Colors of Rhetoric, Steiner argues that the critical focus on this distinction is gross (50) whereas I think that Frank's statements can be very useful to demonstrate an analogy between the spatial form of a novel and a visual work.

The study of spatialization is quite rewarding because it is one of the levels where a relationship with a visual work can be established through the description of literary devices such as fragmentation, contiguity, mise en abyme (the structural equivalent of the play within the play), and collage. It is by means of such techniques that a relation between literature and spatial, pictorial representation is made possible. It should be underscored, however, that this relation is not phenomenological but symbolic. This distinction derives from the original contrast between nature and art which is created by man-made symbols or signs. The medium, be it word or painting, is both the concrete and abstract support for the symbolic aspect of art as well as for the symbolic distinction between the arts. Only a mimetic claim concerning art can fail to recognize the symbolic interposition of a medium, and this is not the path which will be followed in the study.

This symbolic status probably constitutes one of the chief obstacles to interartistic comparisons. The way out of this deadlock is to decipher functional correspondences or equivalences between two arts. The spectrum of artistic interrelationships is ever widening and its expansion is associated with the development of art. By such interrelations one can mean the different types of interaction between opera and drama; music and literature; the visual arts and literature; drama and film; music and the visual arts, etc.

But the study of one type of interrelation can yield another endless series of combinations. As far as painting and literature are concerned, the two arts can be related through a common aesthetic manifesto or by means of a similar theme. Another case is the fruitful friendship between a painter and a writer, which leads to the dissemination of concepts crucial to the development of both arts: In this respect, literary circles have always played a major role in the interaction between the arts, as was indeed the case in Europe in the nineteenth century as well as during the prolific years before World War I.

It remains the fact, however, that these different aspects only constitute the starting-point for the study of a symbolic interrelation between painting and literature which should be based on functional equivalences. It is around the spatio-temporal cluster described above that such equivalences can be organized. Interrelationships can be thematic, structural, or can involve the manipulation of media according to an aesthetic position implicit in the work. The point is that, in both literature and the visual arts, these features contribute functionally to the conception of the works, and, furthermore, that they can be analyzed and compared. It is only by fostering such analyses that the original hypothesis on the interplay between certain visual and verbal works can be put to the test.

The chapter devoted to Tarr is composed of six sections. In the first the reader is reminded of the existing two

versions of the novel, while in the second a synopsis of Vorticism is provided. The third section is concerned with the critical studies of the novel in so far as they are relevant to the main purpose of this study. The last three sections represent my personal contribution to the comparison between Tarr and Lewis's vorticist paintings. I try to show that the theme of the grotesque is exhibited in both artistic expressions, and that the vortex as a structural principle is common to his writing and painting. Finally, through both media, Lewis makes the conscious attempt to foreground the creative, fictional character of art at the expense of mimesis and verisimilitude.

In chapter Three, I chose to study five different aspects of artistic interplay in Tender Only to One. To begin with, the devices and strategies resorted to in the novel to create a spatial form are examined. Next is the following question: do the references to painters such as Gauguin, Van Gogh, and Nolde confer a factual or a fictional status on the novel? In the third section, the strategy of intertextuality is shown to be another means of establishing a relationship with painting. The fourth section belongs to a traditional approach to interartistic comparison since I analyze briefly the thematic substratum common to the painters mentioned in the novel and fictive characters. Finally I argue that a fifth link between literature and painting is established through the suggestive references to paintings by artists mentioned in the novel and to contemporary

tableaux vivants.

With Barthelme, one is confronted with another set of problems characterizing interartistic relations. In the first section, collage in Barthelme's short stories is examined both as a narrative technique and as a revelatory cultural symbol. It is shown that this technique contributes to as well as derives from new conceptions of time and space as exhibited in painting and literature. Language is the other cultural component stemming from a particular Zeitgeist. In the second section, the propositional and revelatory claims concerning language are presented in order to shed light on the role of language in Barthelme's short stories. The third section is concerned with the revelatory function of literature which, in Barthelme's fiction, is displayed by the interaction between text and so-called illustration.

Chapter One

Theoretical Approaches to Interartistic Comparisons

The aim of this first chapter is not to give a comprehensive report of all the theoretical approaches to artistic interrelations, but to indicate some of the main theoretical contributions to the comparative study of literature and art. The following survey, comparable to that in Steiner's The Colors of Rhetoric, can actually be read as another theoretical salmagundi with entries which were not recorded in other works.

A Brief Historical Survey

Hagstrum's The Sister Arts is a convenient work to start with since it provides the classical theoretical statements on the comparison between painting and writing. In this respect, the theoretical unity of classical antiquity is located in its consistent emphasis on mimesis. In The Republic, Plato claims that the poet is like a painter to the extent that both create imitations twice removed from ultimate reality. Aristotle maintains that all arts are concerned with imitation, but that they are differentiated through their media.

Imitation holds sway over Horace's comparison of both arts and leads him to reject the grotesque or the unreal in painting. This position brings about the famous statement "as a painting, so a poem" in Ars Poetica.

Hagstrum also explains how Lucian and Philostratus categorize literary descriptions of visual arts as iconic writing. Another word for this practice is "ecphrasis" or "ekphrasis" whose Greek etymology is "to speak out", "to tell in full". The complementary definition of the term is provided by Steiner who states that ekphrasis is the literary equivalent of the pregnant moment in painting, that is, "the concentration of action in a single moment of energy" (41). Longus' Daphnis and Chloe, for example, displays an ekphrastic type of introduction.

Finally, attention should be drawn to the major distinction between enargeia and energeia as two concepts of mimesis. Enargeia is concerned with "the power that verbal visual imagery possessed in setting before the hearer the very object or scene being described" (Hagstrum 11). In other words, enargeia designates pictorial vividness and points at a potential interartistic relationship. On the other hand, energeia is concerned with the relation between nature and art. Hagstrum states that it "refers to the actualization of potency, the realization of capacity or capability, the achievement in art and rhetoric of the dynamic and purposive life of nature" (12). But at the same time, this organic tie with nature is cancelled since poetry "possesses energeia when it has achieved its final form and produces its own independent being quite apart from its analogies with nature or another art" (Hagstrum 12). Thus energeia seems to refer to both mimetic and autonomous art.

It should be noticed that these theories evolved not of classical poetry which was the main literary expression. Hagstrum's own definition of pictorialism applies primarily to poetry as well, and, since our main concern is with prose writing, it is not necessary to state the scholar's definition. On the other hand, the classical theoretical tenets remain essential because they constitute the original source to which modern interpreters keep reverting.

The last landmark of my survey is Lessing's much quoted statement on the distinction between painting and writing. This distinction is crucial because it introduces the concepts of time and space into the debate. Lessing argues thus:

If it be true that painting employs wholly different signs or means of imitation from poetry, --the one using forms and colors in space, the other articulate sounds in time,-- and if signs must unquestionably stand in convenient relation with the thing signified, then signs arranged side by side can represent only objects existing side by side, or whose parts so exist, while consecutive signs can express only objects which succeed each other, or whose parts succeed each other, in time (qtd. in Bate 248).

In other words, poetry or writing, which are concerned with the description of action, are temporal. In contrast, by describing bodies, painting remains a spatial art. It is the attendant notions of succession and contiguity that modern theories relate, while Lessing kept them apart and distinct.

Twentieth-Century Theories

The twentieth-century approaches are also characterized by detractors and advocates. From a literary viewpoint, Wellek deals out several warnings against the comparison of the arts in "The Parallelism between Literature and the Arts". According to the critic, the undertaking is hampered by at least three factors. To begin with, influences of ideas on artists and writers do not necessarily imply a parallelism between the arts. The difference in media constitutes the second obstacle, and Wellek argues that "the concrete medium has its own history, frequently very different from that of any other medium" (53). Finally, the formalist critic rejects the Hegelian notion of Zeitgeist as a means of comparing writing and painting. For instance, "the gulf between the poetic thought of the romantic age in England and the prevalent common-sense and utilitarian philosophy of the time" (54) signals cultural discrepancies within the same period. One could argue, however, that both cultural expressions stem from a common industrial society. One rejects its ideology, the other complies with and fosters it.

Wellek does not wipe out the possibility of such a comparison. The latter should be based on "an analysis of the actual objects of art, and thus of their structural relationships" (56) which must function dialectically for both types of art. Ahistorical studies which belittle the autonomous developments of painting and literature are what

Wellek warns us against.

The same wary approach is revealed in the Alpers' "Ut Pictura Noesis?" which examines the feasibility of an inter-artistic comparison. Besides the fact that cultural epochs divide the arts, the Alpers note an asymmetry between a literary work such as Othello and a work of art the iconography of which is rapidly exhausted. This remark betrays a rather narrow approach to the interpretation of painting which tends to be confined to the iconographical and chronological tables of art history. Finally, if both critics concede that both painting and literature share the notions of reference and meaning, they nevertheless ask the following question: "in what sense and in what ways are intention, comprehension, historical reality, social situation and purpose, human use implicit or implicated--literally enfolded --in works of art?" (457). Their claim is that comparative studies of literature and painting are not adequate enough to provide an answer to the above question. Each art has its peculiar critical approach.

The thorny problem of periodization is taken up by another art historian, Fowler, in "Periodization and Interart Analogies". To begin with, Fowler establishes a dialectical relationship between period styles and individual works which determine the specific periods. He further grants that styles are not necessarily shared by all artists at the same time, but this discrepancy does not preclude any comparative attempt. To be successful, a comparative study

of the arts must avoid normative terminology whereby different characteristics of painting and writing are boiled down to the same term for unity's sake. Critical terms must be translated as one shifts from one medium to another because "every interart comparison, even between two visual arts, involves a metaphor ("translation"). This is far from invalidating it, however, so long as the metaphor is sound" (499). Steiner does not find the latter condition reassuring, but she ignores Fowler's second proviso according to which one needs to select "functionally equivalent elements for comparison" (501). This notion of functional equivalence is certainly fundamental for the student in interartistic comparisons.

The last theorist to wag a sententious finger at comparativists is the philosopher Suzanne Langer. In her polemic essay, "Deceptive Analogies: Specious and Real Relationships Among the Arts", Langer applies her aesthetic theory to the problem of artistic relations. The premises of her argument consist of two major characteristics of art. First, art is not identical with life but is autonomous. Then she assumes that all "art is the creation of perceptible forms expressive of human feelings" (80). Whenever "organic unity, vitality of form or expressiveness" (79) are achieved, the same creative principles are involved.

Because she rejects a mimetic claim for art, Langer refers to the different arts as characterized by illusions or apparitions. Painting, for instance, is not defined by

its medium but by its primary apparition or its created form. Thus the primary apparition of visual arts is spatial whereas the primary apparition of literature is temporal. So, the reader might argue, there is no difference between Langer and Lessing. Well, in fact, Langer goes further than Lessing since she argues that "the primary apparition of any art may appear as secondary in another" (83). In the case of a Gesamtkunstwerk, Langer would argue that one dominant art such as music assimilates painting and sculpture as secondary apparitions.

Langer's vision of art is that of a crucible where feelings are poured to be shaped. Ultimately, her thesis is that, if arts are to be compared, they should be in terms of comparable created forms. This idea is certainly valid but the problem is that it remains too general. Confronted with a comparative task, the student must still work out this claim in terms of specific devices and strategies in each type of work which might support Langer's thesis.¹ In fact, Langer's temperate thesis has the function of moderating comparative claims and reducing them to mere creative similarity.

Needless to say, one can count legions of twentieth-century fervent advocates of interartistic comparisons. As with the detractors, the multiple problems of mimesis, periodization, time and space, functional equivalences keep recurring in the on-going debate.

¹ For a not very successful, or at least, very debatable application of Langer's comparative criteria, see Kestner.

Not too long ago, Wylie Sipher and Mario Praz were hailed as the critics at the spearhead of interartistic studies. But for some time now, interest in their works has considerably declined. It is difficult to keep reading Rococo to Cubism in Art and Literature when, for instance, one is instructed that Pope and Rodin were less intelligent than Eliot and Cézanne. But the main drawback of both authors' works is that they rest on a rather simplistic interpretation of the Hegelian notion of Zeitgeist.

Praz's work owes its title to a theory on memory systematized by the Italian philosopher Antonio Russi. According to him, memory is the means of uniting all arts. The problem with this claim is that it is vague. One does not see, moreover, how this statement relates to the comparative study of arts in a certain period. Praz argues that

it can be maintained that there is a general likeness among all the works of art of a period, which later imitations confirm by betraying heterogeneous elements; that there is either a latent or manifest unity in the production of the same artist in whatever field he tries his hand; and that traditions exert a differentiating influence not only between one art and another, but also within the same art (54).

The major flaw in this argument is the insistence that a general likeness exists among all arts. Praz fails because, instead of demonstrating this general principle, he is led to force interartistic comparisons into a frame which cannot accommodate them. Above all, the enterprise collapses because the historicist approach is not backed by a minimal, stable

set of critical categories which could have helped systematize the comparative studies of individual works.

The antidote to purely historicist comparative studies is provided by formalist and structuralist approaches to art. In his essay, "Between Literature and Visual Arts", Mukarovský argues that the arts are governed by the following antinomy: on the one hand, the arts share a common aesthetic goal; on the other, the material means of achieving this goal differ according to the individual arts. Interartistic relations remain possible but they do not alter the nature of any particular medium. For instance, a "word remains a word, and by copying painting, literature attains only the discovery of a new possibility (in some cases, a new configuration of possibilities) of the artistic exploitation of the word" (208). This remark must be replaced in the context of Mukarovský's linguistic theory of deautomatization whereby ordinary language is foregrounded and renewed through literary practice.

Mukarovský's theory is very attractive because it can account for a good deal of experimental art which sprang up at the beginning of the twentieth century. But a question is left unanswered since one wonders why the Prague school theorist conceives the interartistic relation in terms of mimesis as the word "copying" indicates in the above quotation.

Another linguist, Jakobson, tackled the problem from a spatio-temporal viewpoint. In "Visual and Auditory Signs",

Jakobson first distinguishes visual signs characterized by simultaneity from auditory signs characterized by sequence. But he argues that sequence does not necessarily imply linearity and that language is also regulated by synthesis. Through an abstract process, the discrete units of language are resolved into a synchronous structure. It is this transposition from sequence to simultaneity which allows a relationship of similarity between visual and auditory signs, painting and writing. Yet the difference between the two is that spatial arts are stable whereas temporal arts such as literature and music tend to be elusive.

This theory presents the advantage of undermining stereotypes about language by shedding light on linguistic and mental processes invisible to the empirical eye. From a practical viewpoint, this argument can only be used as a prelude to demonstrable affinities between two different arts.²

In the stimulating narratological study, A Poetics of Composition, Uspensky attempts to establish the different devices of an isomorphic relationship between verbal and visual arts. His starting-point is a minute study of the narrative point of view which can be either internal or external. In the former case, a narrator is the witness of certain events or adopts one of the characters' viewpoints. In the latter case, the narrator does not participate in the action, which is the position of the narrator in satirical novels. What are the equivalences of internal and external

² For two linguistic and semiotic approaches to interart analogies, consult Floch and Marin.

viewpoints in painting? They are to be found in the manipulation of two types of perspective.

The internal viewpoint corresponds to inverted perspective which was fostered by medieval pictorial representation. From the beholder's viewpoint, this type of perspective is not based on the recession of figures according to a vanishing point in the background. Instead, figures in the foreground look disproportionately smaller than they "should" be. The reason for this optical effect is that an observer's viewpoint inside the painting is implied. It is from this internal viewpoint that the perspective is organized and inverted. The external viewpoint naturally corresponds to the Renaissance technique of central perspective with the prominence of the subject's omniscient viewpoint outside the picture.

This structural analogy is but one example of Uspensky's comparative study, yet it is easy to realize that this type of approach can be very useful to interartistic comparisons. The points which are made in the course of the study remain debatable, but the success of the enterprise lies in the emphasis on the functional aspect of the comparative criteria. It can be argued that functional criteria are essential for a tangible and concrete demonstration of interartistic analogies.

For a North American version of formalism, one can examine Joseph Frank's "Spatial Form in Modern Literature". He argues that modern poetry, in particular, is characterized

by an underlying spatial form. According to Frank, Eliot's The Waste Land can be properly understood only if word-groups are "juxtaposed with one another and perceived simultaneously . . . for, while they follow one another in time, their meaning does not depend on this temporal relationship" (12-13). In other words, meaning cannot be extracted from sequence but from a simultaneous pattern implemented by juxtaposition. Frank considers that modern, geometric art can be favorably compared to modern literature where "past and present are apprehended spatially, locked in a timeless unity that . . . eliminates any feeling of sequence by the very act of juxtaposition" (59). Such visions lead to the use of devices such as collage both in literature and the visual arts.

Again, Frank's essay is not without its flaws and obscure passages, but it should be underlined that, in this approach, the habitual snag of generalization is avoided. Not only does Frank provide manageable, functional devices such as collage, but he also cautiously confines his remarks to a particular period of literary history. It is only with such individual studies that a general theory on interartistic comparisons can be dreamed of.

In "Spatial Form in Literature: Toward a General Theory", Mitchell tries to systematize the notion of spatial form by projecting it in the four-level model of medieval allegory. At the literal level, the literary work is a physical object but also a temporal one through the reading

process. At the descriptive level, the reader attends to whatever fictional world is represented in the guise of data such as characters, objects, images, sensations, and emotions. At the level of spatial form, temporal sequences such as imagery, plot, the development of a character are mapped out in patterns. The last level is concerned with the generation of meaning in literary works. According to Mitchell, the general meaning stems from the reader's spatial apprehension of the work to which a verbal paraphrase cannot do justice.

Undoubtedly, Mitchell's categories are invaluable since they clarify four levels of examination which are invariably confused in numerous comparative studies of art. On the other hand, it is more difficult to assess the theory of spatial form advocated in his article since it is still at its inception. Such a theory would rest on an iconic theory of language which would emphasize the referential aspect of language or discourse. The hypothesis is as follows: "If every sentence is a picture or spatial form in the mind's multisensory "eye", true reading is visionary (not merely visual) experience. If every picture is a sentence, true vision is not in the innocent or ignorant eye but in the reading of the informed mind" (565). Mitchell's provocative hypothesis rests on psychological research in cognition which shows that "half of our brain is occupied in systematic thinking based in spatial forms that organize consciousness at the level of basic perception (Gestalten), conceptual

patterns (Ideas), and poetic structures (Images)" (565-66).

In this respect, it would be a mistake not to mention Arnheim and Gombrich as influential commentators on inter-artistic analogies.

In "Style as a Gestalt Problem", Arnheim defines gestalt as "a configuration of forces interacting in a field... . Gestalt theory can study the conditions that make a structure remain constant although the vehicle for it undergoes changes" (267). This is made possible because a gestalt theorist considers its object of study as a dynamic whole rather than as the sum of its parts. In "Unity and Diversity of the Arts", Arnheim argues that the arts are concerned with a synthesis of sensory experiences because they rest on concrete media addressing the ear, the eye, and the hand. From a spatio-temporal viewpoint, Arnheim's theory completely subverts Lessing's position. He states that

sequential perception . . . characterizes experience in all aesthetic media, the spatial as well as the temporal ones. What distinguishes the media in this respect is that in music, literature, film, etc., the sequence is inherent in the presentation and is therefore imposed as a constraint upon the consumer. In the timeless arts of painting, sculpture, or architecture, the sequence pertains to the process of apprehension only: it is subjective, arbitrary, and outside the structure and character of the work (70).

Both in the spatial and temporal arts, the process of sequential perception results in a synoptic apprehension of the dynamic gestalt of the work of art.

Although Arnheim incorporates the concept of time in perception, it is evident that the conception of an artwork as a *gestalt* tends to emphasize the spatial aspect. In contrast, Gombrich rejects the divorce between temporal and spatial arts on the ground that the perception of any type of art could not take place outside time. His argument is derived from the psychological concept of "temporal integration" of which Augustine had already an inkling. The process of visual perception, for instance, is described in the following terms: "we scan our surroundings for information and retain the result of previous scanning together with the anticipations of future impressions which can become critically important in confirming or revising a percept" (50). When applied to the deciphering of pictures, this process coincides with what Gombrich calls the effort after meaning.

Again these forays in cognitive psychology are of limited usefulness to the critic engaged in a practical examination of analogies between two different arts. But the theoretical assumptions are still rewarding in that they can be resorted to in order to support comparative claims verifiable through studies of individual works.

Before launching on a similar study of three individual literary works, I propose a synopsis of two contributions to the comparative typology of interartistic analogies. The following table consists of interrelations suggested by Laura Rice-Sayre in collaboration with Henry M. Sayre and

Ulrich Weisstein on the one hand, and of personal examples on the other.

Type of interrelation	Example
Homological conjunction. (affinity as a premise)	Mario Praz's <u>Mnemosyne</u>
Interdisciplinary work	J.M. Synge and J.B. Yeats in <u>The Aran Islands</u>
Ekphrasis	W.C. Williams on Breueghel
Mesological relation (friend- ship between artists)	Picasso and Apollinaire
Literary work as work of art (pattern poetry)	Lewis Carroll and the Mouse's tail
Common aesthetic manifesto	Vorticism: Lewis and Pound
Literary works emulating pictorial styles	Gertrude Stein's <u>Portraits</u>
Accidental collaboration (illustration, interpreta- tion)	Matisse's <u>1001 Nights</u> , 1950
Literary work using visual techniques (collage)	Some of Barthelme's short stories
Radical conjunction (similar theme)	Goethe's and Delacroix's <u>Faust</u>
Literary work presupposing art historical knowledge	Taylor's <u>Tender Only to One</u>
<u>Doppelbegabung</u> : artist with double artistic gift	Lewis's <u>Tarr</u>

Naturally these twelve types of interrelationships do not cover the whole range of possibilities. It is by practising intensive, comparative studies that progress will be made toward an acceptable, rigorous theory. Theories are made for works of art, not the reverse. However, works

of art are irreplaceable when it comes to establishing a theory, whether it proceeds inductively or deductively.

Chapter Two

Study of Tarr by Wyndham Lewis

The Two Versions of Tarr.

Is it possible not to recognize that the following words, were written by a painter? One reads:

There was a slight, a frigid, mist but in the the monstrous starlight, fading but still visible, something like a scene in a ballet was in progress. The light of heavens struck, with a ghastly glare, into a defile, or was this what we should think of as an uncouth passage connecting one street or another? A deep trench, or a cutting, had been made, approximately twelve feet steep, having inclined walls of undressed earth, and this cavernous trench evidently served for people passing through a territory very little cultivated, with only a few rosebushes. . . .

There were five figures in this deep cutting, who were behaving strangely. . . . [They] were exchanging hollow buffets, and it was with the actions of a dance that they delivered them, darting hither and thither in an unreal way (Lewis, Malign Fiesta 7).

These lines constitute the opening of the third volume of The Human Age which can be regarded as Lewis's last literary achievement. The painter's eye is unmistakable with its careful creation of a backdrop from which strange figures emerge to perform a surreal, dream-like scene. No explanation for this performance is provided so that the reader's visual imagination is left to feed on these suggestive lines written in 1955.

Given this undeniable visual aspect, it is difficult to resist the temptation to seek some type of correspondence between Lewis's literary debuts and his Vorticist period.

His literary beginnings are not confined to Tarr since he started publishing short stories as early as 1909, yet Tarr presents the interesting case of being one of the first modernist novels in Great Britain. But this is the point where difficulties arise, for two versions of the novel exist. In 1928, Lewis published a revised edition of Tarr, originally published in 1918. Besides, the novel had been previously published in serial form by The Egoist from 1916 to 1917.

From the short excerpts which can be found in Dasenbrock's, Pritchard's, and Kenner's critical works, it can be seen that Lewis created an experimental novel just before being snatched by the slaughtering war-machine of World War I. The chief characteristic of this first version was its spatializing syntax through two means. One was a deliberate reliance on paratax, the other was the iconoclastic introduction of the sign "=" as a token of modernist punctuation. Both means had the common end of damming the flux of narration by compartmentalizing it. The structural relationship between Lewis's writing and his painting becomes apparent, and it can be argued that part of his aim was to extract the maximum point of stillness or stasis which both media could yield.

The 1928 version of Tarr reflects Lewis's blunting of the extremist edge of his twin arts. To the despair of some and the ecstasy of others, he reasserted the function of the figurative in painting. As for the second version of his

novel, it was published bereft of the uncompromising punctuation and paratax. Lewis's own retrospective assessment of his Vorticist period seems to discourage any investigation of the interartistic relationship between his writing and his painting. He writes:

It became evident to me at once, however, when I started to write a novel, that words and syntax were not susceptible of transformation into abstract terms, to which process the visual arts lent themselves quite readily (Rude Assignment 139).

Thus all the possible conditions are gathered for the line of the interartistic argument to run its course and peter out. I suggest that the only way to extricate oneself from this dead end is to examine the problem with fresh eyes. My approach will consist of three steps. To begin with, a short synopsis of Vorticism will be provided followed by the presentation of critical works which have rather successfully established some type of relation between Tarr and vorticist painting. Finally, I shall attempt to show that, in some structural and thematic respects, Lewis's painting and writing share the same creative genius.

The New Epoch

In the preface to the 1928 Tarr, Lewis refers to the first version as "in a sense the first book of an epoch in England" (7). As far as the visual arts are concerned, Vorticism contributed to the shaping of this epoch in pre-war England. Art historians do not seem to agree on the exact

duration of the Vorticist movement. Thus, while Wees declares the years 1910-1914 to be "the years of the 'Vortex'" (13), Walter Michel locates the movement between October 1913, when some artists dissociated themselves from the Omega workshop, and 1916, when Pound published his essay on Gaudier-Breska the French sculptor. Whatever the demarcations, one thing is certain: Vorticism is part of the visual seism which, in the first decade of the twentieth century, shook man's customary way of representation. To follow Lewis's visual career is to trace the assimilation of cubist and futurist characteristics by the young British painter of those early days.

For instance, The Theater Manager (fig. 1) may, according to Michel, "in fact be the earliest work outside Paris to show a knowledge of Picasso's Demoiselles d'Avignon" (48). A leap from 1909 to 1912 allows the beholder to discover Lewis's full-fledged technique and dexterity as displayed in the designs of Timon of Athens (fig. 2). These drawings were originally supposed to illustrate a new edition of Shakespeare's play, but the project aborted, and only a portfolio of the drawings was published in 1913. The latter year is a turning-point in the history of British painting, for it saw the creation of what is now regarded as a completely abstract painting by Lewis. Composition (fig. 3) is thus the expression of Lewis's abstract extremism. It is interesting to juxtapose this picture with The Enemy of the Stars (fig. 4) which was executed the same year. Through

its characteristic process of reduction, the picture offers a new icon of mankind which draws on the iconography of the machine age.

It is also in 1913 that Lewis and other painters exhibited their works in the "Cubist Room" at Brighton. The following year was marked by two major interrelated events. After a dispute between Fry and Lewis as well as other artists which does not have to be related here, Lewis founded the Rebel Art Centre, gathering artists such as Gaudier-Brzeska, William Roberts, Helen Saunders, Edward Wadsworth, Jessie Dismorr, Frederick Etchells. The first creative move of this loose and nameless group was to publish an avant-garde magazine, Blast, which in fact was mostly written by Lewis. This "Review of the Great English Vortex" was short-lived since only another issue was published during the war in July 1915. In Between, a Vorticist exhibition took place in London, at the Doré's Galleries. In 1917 Vorticist pictures were exhibited in New York, at the Penguin Club where the American intelligentsia had been familiar with modern art since the 1913 Armory Show.

What is the semantic origin of "vorticism"? This is the point where the leonine figure of Ezra Pound steps in. Michel relates how, in late March or April 1914, Pound proposed to baptize the new movement Vorticism, just before the publication of Blast. In addition, Michel compares the poet's role to that of Apollinaire with Cubism in France.¹

¹ See on Pound's role Humphrey's essay "Demon Pantechnicon Driver: Pound in the London Vortex, 1908-1920" in Pound's Artists.

According to Materer, the image of the vortex is to be found in Pound's poem, "Plotinus", published in 1908. He also relates the vortex to the pre-Socratic doctrine of the four elements under formation as they gyrate. On the other hand, vortices are undeniably the structural basis of Lewis's paintings such as the Timon of Athens designs.

Both Kenner and Materer show that Pound's predilection for the image was underlined by the belief in the primacy of energy in art. The vortex can be defined as "a circulation with a still centre: a system of energies drawing in whatever comes near" (Kenner, Pound Era 239). It is also worth noticing that Materer links this notion to the Greek concept of energeia. Again, Lewis's paintings actually embody the same notion. Kenner writes: "[his] earlier pictures announce an energy art cannot accommodate. [With Timon of Athens], Art and Energy moved into sudden conjunction; forms filled his spaces, not forms arrested in grotesquerie but forms locked in passionate stases" (Pound Era 232). Furthermore, the definition of the vortex can be extended to include national, personal, cultural, and historical vortices as systems of energies.

In "Vortices and Notes" (1914), Lewis made the two following statements: "The Vorticist is at his maximum point of energy when stillest" and "The Vorticist is not the Slave of Commotion but its Master" (Lewis on Art 53). In other words, the creator is hemmed in by chaos but keeps it at bay. Thomas Kush's interpretation also reveals the

unmistakable anti-mimetic aspect of this aesthetics. He states that "Lewis's notion of artistic creation thus rules out the aesthetics of both sublime emotion and naive imitation; for him the aim of art is to engender consciousness of the object as a plastic reality, not to deceive the eye or stir the heart" (17). Lewis himself wrote: "Reality is in the artist, the image only in life" (Lewis on Art 38).

One should not, however, conclude that the artist has totally seceded from life. The energy of the vortex also points at Lewis's own interpretation of primitivism which had affected most early modern movements. In Blast Lewis chants: "We are primitive Mercenaries in the Modern World" (Lewis on Art 27). As a result, creation becomes a paradox since the artist assumes an objective viewpoint while his work is galvanized with primary energy.

As Kenner shows, this combination of pattern and energy reveals a shift of aesthetic sensibility no longer romantically emphasizing time, but pushing space to the forefront. The benefit for art is of paramount importance since temporal barriers between periods are abolished. Thus "Henri Gaudier by his 20th year had learned to catch in instantaneous lines the autonomy of a panther or a stag; he and a Dordogne draughtsman were thenceforth coequals" (Kenner, Pound Era 30). This statement is borne out by the following: "The moment a man feels or realizes himself as an artist, he ceases to belong to any milieu or time". (Lewis on Art 25). Art reaches the state of timelessness.

According to Materer, the message of "Vortex Pound" in Blast "not only allows the arts to work together but shows that they exist on equal terms" (24). Yet, if the arts were "all simultaneously released from the mimetic" (Kenner, Pound Era 245), they were also regarded as mutually autonomous. As Mukarovský is intent to show, the different arts should not transgress the limits imposed by their own media. The mere fact of drawing attention to the media, be it stone, paint, or sound, underscores this autonomy. But it is also clear that the Vorticist renaissance displayed a keen interest in different types of media. It is on this multi-media expression that Humphrey's essay concerned with the role of Pound in Vorticism rests. Vorticist experiments were thus conducted in literature (Lewis's play The Enemy of the Stars), painting, sculpture (Gaudier, Epstein), photography (Coburn as the vortographer) and architecture.

Finally a word should be said about Vorticism and its relations to some of the different continental expressions of modern art. As far as Cubism is concerned, everybody seems to agree that its influence on the Vorticists is beyond argument. At the same time, it is generally acknowledged that Vorticism stressed dynamism as opposed to the monumentality of Cubism. Yet, in his search for energy, the Vorticist refused to sacrifice the honed line to the Futurist blurring effect which implies empathy as opposed to artistic objectivity. Was Vorticism more or less abstract than its continental peers? According to Cork, the movement betrayed

some inability to keep pace with abstract innovations whereas Dasenbrock breathlessly claims that Vorticism, Lewis's in particular, never aimed at abstraction.

The problem with Dasenbrock's argument is that it considers abstraction as an end, as the following statement indicates: "the movement towards abstraction can roughly be broken down into three steps: the abandonment of the Subject, the abandonment of interest in representation, and the abandonment of representation itself" (Dasenbrock 66-67). Besides the fact that this description involves highly debatable criteria, it does not actually deal with a movement towards abstraction, but with the very process of abstraction. A painting like The Enemy of the Stars (fig. 4) can be described as an abstract picture characterized by a process of anti-mimetic reduction. As to Cork's argument, one tends to detect in it the Greenbergian syndrome of the represented space where one could unfortunately walk and live. In fact, art historians and critics have started revising their criteria for and their irrevocable judgements on modern art and modernism, so that figurative or semi-abstract art has stopped looking like the helpless dunce sitting on the rear bench of the visual arts classroom.

Tarr Viewed by the Critics

In "The Meaning of the Wild Body", Lewis lays down the principle underlying his vision of the world. It consists in the stern neo-Cartesian dichotomy between the laughing

observer and his Wild Body. This dissociation yields the following tragic vision: "It is the chasm lying between being and non-being, over which it is impossible for logic to throw any bridge; that, in certain forms of laughter, we leap. We land plumb in the centre of Nothing" (Wild Body 157-58). Yet this vision would not be complete without its vast comédie humaine. Lewis's definition of the comic is as follows: "The root of the Comic is to be sought in the sensations resulting from the observations of a thing behaving like a person. But from that point of view all men are necessarily comic: for they are all things, or physical bodies, behaving as persons" (Wild Body 158).

It is this tragic-comic vision which Kush sees embodied in Lewis's paintings as well as in his fiction. In both cases, figures and characters are "betrayed, compromised, and dominated by their bodies and their instincts" (Kush 30). Paul Edwards notes that Lewis's painting and writing display the paradox combining the detachment of the intellect and the irrational Wild Body, which leads to the "godlike but paralysing sense of the absurdity of life". As Lafourcade's important editing endeavour testifies, the Wild Body short stories played a major role in Lewis's literary formative years, and are crucial to the understanding of his system of thought. When, for instance, Kush states that, both in literature and painting, Lewis "envision[s] a morality of the solid and the flowing worlds, of the intellect at war with emotion, of the self standing against the group" (41), and

one might add, of space against time, of the eye's supremacy over the ear, one can readily see that these antinomies derive from the original Cartesian dissociation.

In this respect, Edwards observes that the literary quality of Lewis's pictures can be ascribed to the fact that "they are concerned with relationships between people and their surroundings, and with people's ritualized relationships with each other." Yet he adds that "it would be more accurate to call this concern philosophical, not literary, since the pictures cannot be read as anecdotes, and relations are conveyed by purely visual means" (Edwards). On the other hand, Kush argues that, although Lewis is not a "word painter in his fiction . . . his characters are arranged in tableaux vivants; they are often costumed, or carry objects that signify their social and philosophical conditions" (61). Lewis's novels are peopled by the "giantesses, the submen, the metaphysical dilettantes, the wild bodies and machine-men" (Kush 61) who are also the tragi-comic figures of his paintings.

It is against this thematic and philosophical backdrop that a first group of critics studies Tarr whether in its earlier or later version. A first interartistic relationship is established when Kush argues that "Tarr explores the theme we find in The Theater Manager, i.e., whether artistic compulsion can be reconciled with the sexual and destructive impulses it resembles" (64). As a Bildungsroman, the novel examines Tarr's attempts to disentangle art from life, the

organized from the organic, and, on the other hand, Kreisler's descent into matter and life, away from the intellect and art.

Pushing his analysis a step further, Kush regards Tarr and Kreisler as the embodiments of Worringer's complementary principles of abstraction and empathy. Thus Tarr's impassioned talks on art reflect his desire to pull painting out of the puddle of contingency and maudlin verisimilitude into the ascetic realm of the artist's Reality. Fighting off sexual desire, Tarr decides to set to work and here is a description of his finished picture: "[it showed] a witty pastiche on the way suggestive of the work of the hellenizing world--it might have been the art of some malicious Syrian poking fun at the greek culture" (Tarr 206). According to Kush, Tarr's painting conveys his ability to transform "the identification of viewer with object into a symbolic language" (70) and to detach himself from life.

Kreisler, of course, stands at the opposite end of the artistic spectrum since, instead of painting his model, he rapes her. Kush writes: "Like Bergson's hymenoptera, he seems to have an inner knowledge of Bertha's sensations" (68). In addition, Kush regards Kreisler's rape as the parodic expression of Worringer's concept of empathetic art.

Freedom or, rather, the absence of freedom is the next theme connecting Lewis's painting and writing. Enclosure can be expressed in different ways. The characters of the novel are not only prisoners of their bodies, which dictate

their behaviours, but also of matter in general. Tarr, Kush argues, discovers at the end of his education, that art does not escape matter since it springs from it. Moreover, Kush shows that this thematic concern is paralleled by the iconography of paintings such as the Centauress (1912), Figure Holding a Flower (1912), or, one might add, Figure Composition (fig. 5) where the central figure seems to be enclosed as well as crushed backward by tilted space. The other type of confinement is that of the city. "The rooms", Kush writes, "brain cells or prison cells; recall the architectural grid of The Crowd, and represent freedom denied" (73) (fig. 6). Figures and characters are locked in the megalopolis with its mechanical sub-life.

The second type of commentary on Lewis's novel is one that draws attention to its idiosyncratic style and use of syntax. Kush notes that part of the visual effect of Tarr is implemented by the "narrative voice [which] provides a distancing and commentary on the characters' lives through visual presentation" (77). This combined technique of showing and telling is best illustrated by the passage which describes Bertha's state of shock after her rape, as she is psychologically confronted with the fragmented, "architectural friezes of Kreisler's distinct selves" (Kush 76).

Materer considers that Lewis's early play, The Enemy of The Stars, originally published in the first issue of Blast, is endowed with the "purest examples of Vorticist style" (113). In fact, Kenner's study of Lewis's works represents

the pioneering forays in the criticism of vorticist prose.

The two thrusts of Kenner's observations are concerned with the spatial and anti-mimetic characteristics of Lewis's early prose. He writes:

[Lewis's style is] composed of phrases, not actions. The verb, inexorably the time-word, is where possible reduced to impotence (. . .) or else simply omitted. . . . Sporadically conscious though he was of the necessity, Lewis didn't succeed in making his prose move rather than accumulate, until, in the 1930's, he had struck his truce with Time (Lewis 15).

Kenner also argues that the most extremist examples of Lewis's prose are not specifically concerned with transcribing reality but, rather, parade as oneiric passages of singular energy.

This is an interesting argument, for, in some respects, it jeopardizes the analogy between painting and writing. Before visiting Bertha, Tarr decides to buy a lunch for the two of them. A description takes place which compares the street to a "pleasant current, setting from some immense and tropic gulf" (Tarr 45). Then houses are introduced into the picture. One reads: "The houses, with winks of the shocked clock-work, were grazed, holding along their surface a thick map of soft warmth" (Tarr 45). Kenner's assessment is that this sentence fails to convey a visual impression. The sentence "becomes a puzzle . . . the words, failing to slip into each other's company smoothly, become atoms of dreamlike verbal sensation" (Lewis 38). But one can also reply that--if one accepts Kenner's line of argument--Lewis's rejection of mimesis in both painting and writing meant

jettisoning the referential function of paint and words.

Finally, mention must be made of Russel's invaluable contribution to the study of spatialization in Lewis's prose. "Lewis", he writes, "great enemy of Time that he was, always had a faculty for transforming temporal into spatial entities" (Russel 131). Simultaneity, disjunction, and the emphatic reliance on the term "as" are shown to be the three decisive spatializing features of Lewis's style. The first two devices are interrelated as can be seen in the following example: "[Bertha] disengaged her arms wildly and threw them around [Tarr's] neck, tears becoming torrential" (Tarr 54). This sentence, Russel notes, consists of two juxtaposed, disjuncted clauses, and the latter clause relates an event which is simultaneous with the event related by the former clause. In addition, Lewis's use of these two devices is not sporadic: legions of examples can be found.

Russel also points out the astonishing recurrence of the term "as" which, as a rule, is endowed with a spatial connotation in ordinary language. Thus in a passage of about one hundred and fifty words, Russel computes no less than six uses of this term with its different usages and syntactic functions. The following passage also gives evidence that the word is used to introduce similes. While trying to convince Bertha that things are not the way they used to be, Tarr grabs Goethe's book of poems. One reads: "As soldiers used to go into battles sometimes with the Bible upon their persons, he prepared himself for a final

combat, with Goethe laid upon his heart" (Tarr 57). Again, the example is far from being a pin lost in a haystack, but is part of a multitude of similar cases.

Looking back at this brief exposition of critical work, one can venture to say that most of the thematic correspondences between Lewis's painting and his writing have been researched and demonstrated. So it seems as if there is not much left to discover. But, after all, the game of the academic scribe partly consists of throwing down the gauntlet, possessed, as he is, of the itch for provoking the sleepy reader into thought-process. So let us screw up our eyes once more!

The Grotesque and Satire

In a short essay on his career beginnings, Lewis wrote the following: "You cannot be one man in one art and another in another, though you must certainly be the painter when you are painting, and the word-man (or homme plume) when you are writing" (Lewis on Art 293). This perceptive remark assumes that the same creative genius is at the origin of two types of art. But from a critical viewpoint, this genetic approach is insufficient, for only critical categories can be used when it comes to supporting the claim concerning an interrelationship between novels and artworks.

Let us take, for instance, the case of the affinity between the figures of Lewis's paintings and the characters of his writings. Even though Lewis never systematically

illustrated his novels,² critics have been intent on establishing the affinity from a philosophical and thematic viewpoint. The question is, however, whether a critical category can be introduced to describe this phenomenon and, above all, to allow Lewis's writing to enter literary history for comparisons' sake.

In his comparative study of art and literature, Kayser succeeds in showing that the grotesque is common to both. In fact the term was used to describe the uncanny motifs of classical freezes rediscovered by the Renaissance. Among his criteria for the definition of the grotesque, one finds three elements which turn out very useful for Lewis's writing and painting. Thus the grotesque is characterized by autonomous, animated objects which have a threatening life of their own; by lifeless human beings who are reduced to the state of automata, puppets, or masks; by the sense that the familiar world has become ominously alien.

It is interesting that Lewis's own account of the Wild Body overlaps with Kayser's definition. Given the affinity between his figures and characters, it is, to say the least, surprising that art historical or comparative studies of Lewis's work hardly tackle the problem in terms of the grotesque. Yet this particular aspect is fundamental in Lewis's twin arts, and an indirect route must be followed in order to show that the eye or perception are, in his case, the factors bringing literature and painting together.

² Lewis, however, illustrated Naomi Mitchison's novel, Beyond This Limit (1934).

The comic and epic description of the Restaurant Vallet is bound to persist in the reader's memory. It relates how the business developed from a little creamery to a full-size restaurant. The goad for this expansion turns out to be the customers' irrepressible appetites. One reads:

bursting through walls and partitions, flinging down doors, [the business] discovered many dingy rooms in the interior that it hurriedly packed with serried cohorts of eaters. It had driven out terrified families, had hemmed the apoplectic concierge in her 'loge', it had broken out on to the court at the back in shed-like structures (Tarr 96).

This passage is a striking example of a thing behaving like a person. At first sight the link between it and Lewis's paintings seems remote. What happens is that the subject "it" stands in a metonymic relation to man's ravenous appetite which lends its crude energy to the description. Similarly, Lewis's heavy-limbed creatures of the Two Vorticist Figures (fig. 7) exude their truculent and primitive appetites.

As was reported above, critics did not fail to mention the theme of man as machine, puppet, automaton, or dummy. Tarr swarms with such classifications, whether they apply to Tarr, Bertha, Guy Butcher or others. Particular attention should be paid to Lewis's reinterpretation of the Pygmalion myth. In fact the novel is endowed with two divergent, complementary interpretations. The former is to be found in the passage describing Kreisler's attendance at the Juan Soler Academy, on the day of the Bonnington dance. One reads that Kreisler

was confronted by a fellow statue . . . he was as torpid as the Model was, as indifferent as these mechanical students. The clock struck. With a glance at the Massier, the Model slowly and rhythmically abandoned her rigid attitude, coming to life as living statues do in ballets (Tarr 118).

What this passage emphasizes is not so much the miraculous awakening to life proper to the myth as the grotesque animation of what was previously described as a statue which is an object. Yet the myth recovers some of its magic in this other passage where Anastasya appears as a white statue in the moonlight:

It was solid white flowed round by a dark cloud: it crossed into the moonlight and faced him, its hands placed like a modest statue. . . . This tall nudity began laughing with a harsh sound like stone laughing (Tarr 320).

It can be argued that, in these lines, the grotesque has been toned down, and one of the rare pictures which matches this utopian vision of life is the evocative 1942 The Island (fig. 8).

The Kafka-like helpless feeling of moving into an alien world is also undergone by some characters in the novel. Tarr's experience with Bertha in the ordinary, bourgeois-bohemian flat shatters the deceptively solid picture of his surroundings. Tarr "had become bewitched by [the room's] strangeness. It was the farthest flight of the humdrum unreal" (Tarr 50). It is precisely this uncanny feeling of alienation which the beholder of Lewis's paintings experiences.

But what function does the grotesque have in Lewis's twin arts? The pat answer is satire. Lewis's is not the traditional satire of manners, but the satire of man with, according to the author, his fundamentally absurd Cartesian dualism. Satire is relevant to the interartistic relation in so far as it is rooted in the perceptual or visual in Lewis. He wrote that the "great opportunity that narrative-satire affords for a visual treatment is obvious" (Satire and Fiction 46). It is within this satirical context that the visual treatment of grotesque party-goers such as Der Mathematiker or Isold can be underscored. From a pictorial viewpoint, the consequence is that Lewis's unsparring representation of man is inevitably satirical. Painting becomes the almost perfect medium for the displaying of a vast caricature of mankind.

Vortex

In his study of literary vorticism, Dasenbrock states that "no one could write a novel according to the painterly principles outlined in [Lewis's] criticism". Fiction cannot suppress the element of time and depict simply the timeless or even simply the spatial". He adds that it can at least "depict the course of time stopping" (169). Now Dasenbrock's distinction is very fine but, seeing that it is impossible to represent timelessness, it is difficult to conceive how it can be easier to convey the passage from time to timelessness. Dasenbrock is certainly right in presenting the

narrative as a process, but the latter is nothing but a phenomenological aspect of literature. What the critic seems to deplore is that time can never actually be arrested. This remark is completely irrelevant because, by condemning Lewis's enterprise, Dasenbrock inadvertently cancels the essential distinction between "reality" and fiction. If time were stopped, the reader would be dealing with a rusty watch perhaps whereas, in Lewis's case, the reader discovers a vision which is symbolically spatial.

In fact the peculiar structure of Tarr reflects the fictional paradox which juxtaposes time to timelessness. In his essay on "Inferior Religions", Lewis introduces the characters of the Wild Body short stories as "studies in a savage worship and attraction" (Wild Body 149-50). For instance, the "inn-keeper rolls between his tables ten million times in a realistic rhythm that is as intense and superstitious as the figures of a war-dance. . . . Broctonaz circles round Julie with gestures a million times repeated" (Wild Body 150). As Beckettian studies show, repetition is very close to timelessness since temporal succession is abolished. In Lewis's case, primitive energy develops into repetitive action. This conception of human action is crucial, for, in both writing and painting, it yields the structure of the vortex.

Most art historical specialists of Lewis's early painting agree on the recurrence of the vortex as a structural design for his pictures. Workshop (fig. 9) for instance, is

structured around the blue triangular patch around which the right-hand coloured panels statically revolve. In The Dancers (fig. 10), three figures are enclosed within three sweeping arcs, as if they were caught in the blue amber-like maelstrom of their frantic dance.

From a literary viewpoint, Dasenbrock tries to demonstrate that the vortex-like structure of Lewis's novels is based on an acceleration of events towards the latter end of the narrative which, as it peters out, "depicts" the passage from time to timelessness. The study of the structure of Tarr, to which Dasenbrock does not refer, actually contradicts this assessment. For one, the narrative tempo of the novel does not accelerate and peter out at its end. Instead, a dynamic tempo is sustained throughout as the fairly constant length of the chapters, which approximates two to three pages, testifies. Furthermore the novel is not only characterized by several vortices, but its main vortex is located not at the end but at its very centre.

"Bourgeois-Bohemians" constitutes the third part of the novel and consists of two chapters only. In the former chapter, Kreisler meets Anastasya and then Bertha. The latter describes the dance at the Bonnington club and, more precisely, in the central room of the club to which a conservatory and a refreshment room with a small chamber are adjoined. This room with all its recesses turns out to be the setting where an infernal yet hilarious vortex of energy starts wheeling. Kreisler's ill-fate derives from his thirst for

action which blinds him. In other words, Kreisler the failed artist does not control time but remains its pawn. By means of vortex-like action, the second chapter expresses the character's enslaving.

Ostracized from Anastasya, Kreisler triggers his mad dance with the stately Victorian widow, Mrs. Bevelage. Here is a full description of the vortex:

He took her twice, with ever-increasing velocity, round the large hall, and at the third round, at breakneck speed, spun with her in the direction of the front door. . . . Another moment and they would have been in the street, amongst the traffic, a disturbing meteor, whizzing out of sight, had not they met the alarmed resistance of a considerable british family entering the front door as Kreisler bore upon it. . . . They received this violent couple in their midst. The rush took Kreisler and his partner half-way through, and there they stood embedded and unconscious for many seconds (Tarr 149-50).

Mrs. Bevelage stands in fact as a substitute or as a burlesque Ersatz for Anastasya by whom Kreisler is fascinated. In order to secure her attention, Kreisler brutally brushed against her dancing partner and establishes a short-lived flesh contact with the Russian girl. Thus Anastasya "[had experienced] the sensation of the first tugs of the maelstrom [Kreisler] was producing and conducting all by himself which required her for its heart" (Tarr 155). Kreisler's is the primitive dance performed around his object of worship.

Tarr's behaviour provides an antithesis to Kreisler's, even though he himself is confronted with a sexual vortex. The first part of the novel also rests on a vortex-like

structure with Bertha at its centre. The first three chapters are concerned with Tarr's encountering three of his acquaintances. In each case, the centre of conversation is Bertha, that is to say, woman, sexuality, life. What happens is that Tarr insensibly drifts towards the vortex of Bertha who is "intensively alive in her passivity . . . maelstrom-like in her surrender" (Tarr 68). But, contrary to Kreisler, Tarr wants to disengage himself from this vortex.

It is in part two that Kreisler develops his fascination for Anastasya. In her absence the "frac" becomes the fetish of his love, and, by the sixth chapter, the vortex of his desire is in full swing. It is marked by events such as his encounters with Lowndes and Vokt. His unexpected encounter with Soltyk and Anastasya drives him into a personal phantasmagoria in which he is the sole actor. Feelings whorling inside himself, "Kreisler seemed squatting on air, or upon one of those gyrating platforms in the Fêtes" (Tarr 120). Despite his failure to recover his "frac", Kreisler yields to the temptation of the Bonnington dance and is "back into the vortex" (Tarr 124) which ominously sucks him in.

Bertha is of course the victim of Kreisler's machine-like primitive drives, as she pays dearly for her attempts at manipulating him for the sake of her romance with Tarr. In this respect, the fourth part is organized in such a way as to reach its climax when the vortex of action is at its maximum speed. Thus Bertha's rape is described in the following terms: "[Kreisler] flung himself upon her: her

tardy panting expostulation, defensive prowess, disappeared in the whirlpool towards which they had both, with a strange deliberateness and yet aimlessness, been steering" (Tarr 194). The absurd revolutions of these vortices can only be stopped at life's cost, and this is what takes place when Kreisler commits suicide in his prison cell.

But where is the still point of this structural vortex? Well, in fact, this still point is almost omnipresent in the narrative, so much so that it paradoxically tends to hoodwink the reader or the critic. Looking back at the opening paragraph of the novel might help find this still point. This passage is a bit of a mystery with its dumbfounding talk about Thébaïde, western Venuses, and sacrifice. It is actually based on the Lewisian contrast between the artist and the non-artist, the former standing at the still point of the vortex, the latter caught in its swirl. The individual, who wants to be part of the Parisian Thébaïde, has to make a sacrifice and to cultivate an ascetic state which contrast with the "indulgent and congruent kind" (Tarr 11) as well as the western Venuses.

Tarr's omniscient narrator is in fact this ideal anchorite. This type of narration as well as its truly idiosyncratic punctuation are symbolic weapons against time. Dasenbrock argues that, by dropping the sign "=" and by reverting to normal punctuation, Lewis re-established a flowing type of narration. The very opposite viewpoint, however, can equally be defended. With his heavy reliance

on a fragmented type of syntax, Lewis succeeds in resting his narrative on contiguity and juxtaposition. To achieve this effect, colons, semi-colons, and dashes are lavishly resorted to. The passage describing the four distinct selves of Kreisler illustrates the use of two of these punctuating signs. Here are Bertha's feelings in a turmoil:

The figure talked a little to fill in an interval; it has drawn: it had suddenly flung itself upon her and done something disgusting: and now it was standing idly by the window, becalmed, and completely cut off from its raging self of the recent occurrence (Tarr 194).

In this case, the fragmented aspect of Kreisler's identity is reflected by the metonymic compartments of the syntax.

Finally it can be argued that this vortex-like structure is framed by means of the structural device of mise en abyme. This narrative strategy corresponds to the "pictures within picture" visual device which, according to Michel, characterizes only one painting by Lewis, namely, The Crowd (fig. 6). Even though this strategy is not fully developed in the novel, it can still be detected. To some extent the conception of the novel demands such a device since it rests on the contrast between the two complementary alter egos of Kreisler and Tarr.³

A series of interrelated, intra-referential events can be enumerated to illustrate the point. In part one, for instance, Tarr visits Lowndes to talk about German women,

³ The point has been made by Chapman in Wyndham Lewis: Fictions and Satires.

while Kreisler encounters the same character, but thinks of borrowing money from him. Tarr metaphorically spits at life and its absurdity in front of Hobson whereas Kreisler spits in a sink, actually directing his saliva at Lowndes. In part two and three, Kreisler meets in turn Anastasya and Bertha, both of whom fall in love with Tarr. In part four, Bertha watches Kreisler approaching her flat the way she did in part one, as Tarr paid her a visit. Tarr's repressed sexual drives give room to a painting whereas Kreisler yields to his and rapes Bertha. In part five, Tarr visits the Liepmann circle and meets Anastasya, which should be related to Kreisler's search for the same girl at the same circle in part two. In part six, Tarr's humorous strategy against Kreisler whose scapegoat is Soltyk can be related to the German character's constant manoeuvring spirit. These are a few examples of this structural mise en abyme.

It should be added that this device is rooted in Lewis's existential and nihilistic vision which Tarr's imagination elaborates, as he is holding Bertha in his arms. One reads:

The husk he held now was a painted mummy-case, say. — — —
He was a mummy-case too. Only he contained nothing
but innumerable other painted cases inside, smaller
and smaller ones. . . . His kernel was a painting, in
fact (Tarr 35).

Lewis's totemic representation of human puppets in the late 1920s is in fact a perfect pictorial counterpart to the above passage. But in Vorticist Design (fig. 11), the same vision of a box within box self can be seen to prevail.

Creative Patterns

Despite fundamental divergences between the Renaissance and the Modernist renaissance, their respective literatures share a common rhetorical device, namely, the conceit. In this respect, the first lines of the Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock are often compared to Metaphysical poetry. But, as a close study of Tarr reveals, the modernist conceit is far from being confined to poetry, and may well be the fictional sinew of this particular novel.

In "Vortices and Notes", one can read the following description of German woodcuts: "The black, nervous fluid of existence flows and forms into hard, stagnant masses in [a] white luminous body. Or it is like a vivid sea pierced by rocks, on to the surface of which boned shapes rise and bask blackly" (Lewis on Art 39). What this passage displays is a Lewisian predilection for similes and metaphors which usually develop into intricate conceits. This rhetorical device, moreover, is in perfect accordance with the author's emphasis on the "external" approach as opposed to the "internal" one, that is to say, the "stream-of-consciousness" technique. Chapman observes that Lewis "does not attempt to convey the processes of the thinking mind, but rather solidifies and externalizes the mental flux into a clearly defined progression of tableaux vivants" (75). Tarr thrives on such an approach whereby the characters' psychological turmoils are translated into as many analogical conceits.

Two types of Lewisian conceits can be distinguished: the short one and the long one. The novel swarms with the short type and four specific examples can be provided. The first one describes Tarr's intellect in mechanistic terms. His intellectual machinery "was full of sinister piston-rods, organ-like shapes, heavy drills" (Tarr 13). Through the conceit, effects of surprise and puzzle can also be achieved. One reads: "[Tarr] beamed upon his slip: he would swallow it tranquilly, assimilating it with ostentation to himself. A personal weakness slipped out, he picked it up unabashed, looked at it smilingly, and put it back in his pocket" (Tarr 15). This passage actually conveys Tarr's behaviour whenever he makes a mistake.

If one now examines Kreisler's own psychological cogs, one finds the following fantastic description of Kreisler enjoying Parisian scenes: "Objects--kokotten, newsvendors, waiters--flowed through Kreisler's brain without trouble or surprise. His heavy eyes were big gates of a self-centered city--this was just a procession (There was no trade in town.)" (Tarr 75).. The last example relates Kreisler's conception of and attitude to woman. Thus the omniscient narrator explains how "Womenkind were Kreisler's theatre, they were for him art and expression: the tragedies played there purged you periodically of the too violent accumulations of desperate life. . . . The Missis is his little bit of unreality, his ration of play" (Tarr 101).

These are but a slight indication of the frequency of this device in the novel. The reader may recall that love, for instance, is compared to dismemberment, then disease. Difficulties are described as a flock of monsters and demons, and Suzanne's bedroom becomes one of the cells of the city-brain, while Frau Liepmann is the fortress besieged by master Eckhart.

The long type of conceit is also practised fairly often and becomes the governing principle of extensive narrative passages. Bertha, for instance, copes with problems the way she arranges and organizes furniture in her flat, and this simile unfolds over more than a page. After Bertha has broken into tears during Tarr's first visit, both engage in a dialogue which is based on an image initiated by Tarr. It is based on the "precise form of two partners, perhaps comfortable wine-merchants, going through their books or something of that sort" (Tarr 61). Thus a conceit on accounting is woven into the lines of the ensuing dialogue.

With Lewis, the conceit can accommodate the comic, as is the case with the account of the meeting between Kreisler and Anastasya at the Restaurant Vallet. This passage could be entitled "Portrait of the Artist as a Dog", for it is developed along the lines of a simile comparing Kreisler to a dog. The German artist is prepared to do anything to win Anastasya's love, and the humble image of the dog imposes itself on his mind.

4
The intricate conceit starts with: "He would be her dog! Lie at her feet! He would fill with a merely animal warmth and vivacity the void that must exist in her spirit" (Tarr 103). Thereupon Kreisler's tone assumes "the deep servient bass of the faithful St. Bernard" (Tarr 103). He also looks at Anastasya "smiling solemnly and rolling his head up and down, with something in fact of the misplaced and unaccountable pathos and protest of dogs (although still with a slavish wagging of the tail) at some pleasantry of the master" (Tarr 104). Kreisler suddenly acts as a "perplexed dog for some time" (Tarr 104), or undertakes "several desperate dog-like sorties" (Tarr 104) when he realizes that Anastasya slips out of his hand or his paw.⁴

But what is the relationship between the modernist use of the conceit and painting? What is its relevance? Well, from the multiple examples of this device, it can be seen that Lewis's fiction does not open with "Once upon a time", but with "It is as if". My critical assumption is that the same creative principle governs the author's vorticist paintings.

⁴ It should be by now evident that Jameson's argument on metonymy and analogy in Lewis's prose should not be taken for granted. According to this critic, Lewis's writing rests on the "fundamental subversion of that still organic aesthetic ideology for which the very essence of the poetic process consists in the perception, or better still, the invention, of analogies". My own study of similes and metaphors reveals a totally different picture. Jameson's argument can be found in Fables of Aggression, 28-29.

In his study of Composition in Blue (fig. 12), Cork judiciously remarks that the painting is based on a pictorial ambiguity. On the one hand, the picture seems to be organized around a receding cavity. On the other, the same cavity can be seen as the helmet of a figure with abstract limbs and body. From a creative viewpoint, Cork's examination is seminal, for it means that Lewis's picture can be grasped "as if" it had a central recessing cavity or "as if" it projected an abstract figure enclosed by lines and planes. In fact, a third possibility is available if the base of the picture is swivelled to the right, so that the left-hand side becomes its base. The cavity becomes the fourth layer of a hair lock, while the two slanted lines, departing from the cavity, delineate the abstract nose of a head whose eye appears as a semi-circle surmounted by a heavy eye-lid.

The same pictorial ambiguity prevails in the Timon of Athens designs. In Timon of Athens: Act III (fig. 13), for instance, the beholder is first confronted with a consternating assembly of lines and patches. It is only progressively that these lines and patches can be seen "as if" they were faces, noses, eye slits, ears, arms, and hands. Besides, the same type of approach can be applied to the totemic paintings Lewis executed in the late 1920s.

What the strategy of the "as if" conveys is Lewis's modernist repudiation of the naturalistic type of representation, be it in literature or painting. Through its manifold conceits, the narrative of Tarr is endowed with a multi-

faceted aspect whereby the conceits ~~compete~~ to create a fiction with self-referential, rhetorical patterns. In "Inferior Religions", Lewis wrote: "Beauty is an icy douche of ease and happiness at something suggesting perfect conditions for an organism: it remains suggestion" (Wild Body 153). In other words, naturalistic reference has lost its claim, as both the modernist conceit and pictorial abstraction contribute to the art of suggestion.

Chapter Three

Study of Tender Only to One by Richard TaylorSpatio-temporal Structure and Interartistic Relation

Taylor's short novel is like the stone picked up at random by the shore of a lake. Its surface, smooth and polished, lends itself to endless observation, and each examination reveals concealed treasures for the mind's eye.

Tender Only to One is based on the attempt to re-establish the broken harmony between painting and writing. With this general purpose borne in mind, it is not surprising to discover that the novel thrives on literary types of interrelationship. From a generic viewpoint, the narrative combines the multiple aspects of short story telling, epistolary devices, Bildungsroman, interview,¹ and utopia. The means of narration themselves are far from being monolithic since a constant shift takes place from the omniscient type of narrator to the more personalized and expressive "I". Like any other, this coin has two contradictory sides. One constitutes a threat to unity through dispersal; the other promises a dynamic synthesis of fragments. The following study of the novel's spatio-temporal structure entirely rests on this tension between totality and dislocation which underscores the relationship between painting and writing.

¹ The first section on Van Gogh as well as the second and third section on Gauguin are letters. The last section of the novel is a short Bildungsroman, and the section on Emil Nolde reads like an interview.

The organization of the novel revolves around two types of sections recognizable by their divergent spatio-temporal references. The recognition of these references, however, is different for each type of section. The first type, which will be called the painter section, is often characterized by both temporal and spatial precisions conveyed by the title of the section. In addition, the title can also refer to a specific painter. For instance, the first section of the novel is entitled "Saint-Remy, 1890", while the next section of the same type reads "Gauguin: Tahiti, 1901". Ten sections of the novel are devoted to the six following well-known painters: Van Gogh, Gauguin, Degas, Monet, Nolde, and Bonnard. From a temporal viewpoint, what these artists hold in common is that they were born in the nineteenth century. Thus their lifetimes span the latter part of that century and the beginning of the next one. Therefore, most painter sections are temporally and spatially circumscribed.

On the contrary, the second type of section is characterized by temporal and spatial vagueness. Yet the reader is able to distinguish these other sections from the former ones and locate them both in time and space as well. These sections can be pinpointed because they are scattered with deictic words or group of words indicating both a contemporary period and a Canadian setting. Examples of spatial and temporal deictics can be extracted from a short study of the first three contemporary sections "Bachelors", "Isabel", and "A Winter".

It can already be noticed that out of these three titles, only one refers to time and, more precisely, to a season. Yet words such as "Shirley Temple movies" (TOTO 9), "TV reruns of W.C. Fields and the Three Stooges" (TOTO 11) indicate that "Bachelors" is located within a certain culture, at a certain point in time. With "Isabel", the reader knows that he/she deals with a contemporary section not only because events take place after 1949 when one character's parents died, but also because the same character and his girlfriend ride a snowmobile. Despite these temporal deictics, a specific date cannot be ascribed to these sections, as was the case with the painter sections. "A Winter" is crammed with indications such as "a chilly October", "in the morning", "many years ago", or with clock-times such as "11.45". But these deictics are deceitful since they are not anchored to any precise date.

The same ambiguity prevails with the spatial deictics. It becomes evident that both "Bachelors" and "Isabel" are set against a rural backdrop whereas the cityscape characterizes "A Winter". It could be argued that the frozen canal where citizens skate refers to Ottawa, but there is no way of telling where "Bachelors" or "Isabel" take place exactly. The only possible assertion is that "Isabel", for instance, is concerned with Canadian nature with its chipmunks, silky milkweed, mosquitoes, blackflies, and groundhogs. It should be added that, in spite of these unidentified settings, the spatial references remain extremely vivid.

It turns out therefore that both types of section do not display the same temporal accuracy. This blatant temporal asymmetry is certainly not to be attributed to some sort of flaw in the novel. Rather its function seems to be twofold: on the one hand, a temporal gap exists between the two types of section; on the other, this vagueness could suggest that a certain link exists between these two types of section, which is not temporal. It can be further observed that the fragmentary structure of the novel displays a conspicuous dislocation of the narrative. Thus temporal gaps, vagueness, and fragmentation, each of them combined, produce a contiguous type of structure where sections are juxtaposed to one another, devoid of any temporal relationship. In other words, the novel rests on a metonymic type of structure where contiguity instead of sequence rules. This metonymic structure is essential, for it enables the novel to throw a bridge between writing and painting. By using devices and techniques which will be explored below, Taylor succeeds in having his text share the spatial characteristics of painting.

This deliberate emphasis on space, however, does not mean that time is totally discarded from the novel. In his search for interartistic equivalences, the writer is burdened with a heavy handicap which is the irretrievable temporality of word succession whether in poetry or prose. But is the assertion that painting is purely concerned with space tenable? As was seen in chapter one, this argument has

been challenged by psychologists such as Arnheim who demonstrates that the optical grasp of a pictorial structure is actually a process. The optical synopsis of a painting emerges indeed as the product of eye movement over the heterogeneous parts of the canvas. Paradoxically enough, painting is not only characterized by juxtaposition but also by simultaneity. In turn, the same remark applies to Taylor's novel whose fragmentary sections could be apprehended simultaneously.

In order to achieve the metaphorical relation with painting as a predominantly spatial art, the writer has no other choice than to fight time with time. This is precisely the function of simultaneity which is a rather ambiguous term. Although the word denotes time, it nevertheless refers to the absence of sequence or succession which is one of the definitions of time. To that extent, simultaneity signifies the abolition of time. Ellipsis, typography, and paratax are Taylor's means of damming the flow of words. These three devices of simultaneity can be found in the painter sections as well as in the contemporary sections.

Ellipsis is one of these narrative devices which prevent a narrative from being sequential. In Taylor's novel, it governs not only the general fragmentary structure, but also the inner structure of most sections. For instance, four different sections are devoted to Gauguin, and each of them refers to the three discrete dates 1901, 1902, 1902, and 1903, respectively. The point is that the shift from one

date to another is without transition. This elliptical structure is reinforced by the fact that contemporary sections are located between these four sections referring to one and the same painter.

As far as the internal organization of the sections is concerned, ellipsis prevails too. In most of them, the recurrent past and present tenses are juxtaposed to one another through the elliptical shift from one paragraph to another. In "The Princess", for instance, this temporal dislocation is conveyed by the four disconnected main parts of the narrative. The first part deals with the general descriptions of the setting and situation in the present; the second one is concerned with frequency, that is, what usually happens in winter; the fourth one focuses on a single evening. The third part is a brief historical parenthesis relating Cook's fatal expedition in the South Seas. This parenthesis is literally wedged in the narrative flow and does not present any causal or sequential link with the rest of the section.

"A Winter" is an interesting case to study briefly, for it does not rest on the juxtaposition of different tenses but, rather, emphasizes narrative continuity. Yet it can be argued that what triggers the narrative shifts is the spatial alternation between inside and outside, from the canal to Bobby's place, from Alvin's place to outside, from Bobby's place into the street where he meets the young girls, and from the street to Bobby's place again.

Typography functions as a doubly efficient tool, for it both takes part in the narrative technique and makes points visually. The most conspicuous typographical feature of the novel lies in its recurrent blanks which concretely convey temporal discontinuity. For instance, the elliptical nature of "Broken Harmony" is signalled by no less than four such blanks.

Paratax is the writer's cherished means of obstructing narrative continuity. "The Other Heaven" entirely rests on this flattening syntax. In "Marquesas Island, 1902", one reads: "Imagine if I could open this tropical night to a Breton village in snow" (TOTO 32). This sentence can be regarded as the axis of imagination flanked on each side with paratactic sentences such as "Yellow fires like sequins in the dark" and "Cold against my naked belly, clutching my balls with its icy grip" (TOTO 32). Through paratax, the depth of memory is flattened out so that Brittany and Oceania, cold and warmth become simultaneous or juxtaposed, as when one beholds paintings, and preferably Gauguin's with their flat, interlocked areas of colour.

"Cannibals" and "Bonnard and Marthe" are among the few sections which contradict the distinction between painter and contemporary sections. The spatial deictics of the former are to be found in "The Princess" which is supposed to be a contemporary section whose minimal action takes place at Kealakekua Bay. It turns out that the Princess' parents are the characters of the next section which is,

perforce, contemporary. This structural anomaly, impinging on the alternation between the two types of section, actually points at a spatial convergence rather than at a temporal gap.

I have discussed ellipsis, typography and paratax as the means of elaborating a spatialized narrative structure whose chief purpose is to produce a simultaneous effect comparable to that of a painting. This metaphorical relationship with painting is nowhere stated explicitly in the novel, yet the major devices are buried in it. It is at this point that the reader's role becomes essential, for only through his/her participation can the metonymic or simultaneous links between the two types of section be revealed.

To clinch the matter, one can conclude this spatio-temporal study with a short interpretation of "Bonnard and Marthe". The latter can be considered as the pearl of the novel, and its function is crucial for the interartistic relation between painting and writing. It combines Bonnard's and Marthe's viewpoints and the French setting of the Méditerranée with an old man's viewpoint and the Canadian setting of Quebec. Thus the narrative rests on constant shifts of viewpoints and on spatial divergences. Besides, the text wavers between simultaneity and temporal discrepancies.

The function of this section is to abolish this dislocation in order to achieve an aesthetic unity which merges characters, viewpoints, settings, and the theme of desire.

In other words, this section actualizes the implied structure of the whole novel and stands therefore as a typical mise en abyme. Here is the crucial revelatory passage:

Like the afterimage from a flashbulb, Marthe gleamed against the wall, or rather it was not Marthe, but [the old man's] wife. She lay elongated in Marthe's bathtub" (TOTO 67)...

The gap between painting and writing, Bonnard and Taylor's character is momentarily bridged, for simultaneity has become the seal of this interartistic harmony.

The Status of the Painter Sections

The question about the painter sections is quite straightforward: is the reader confronted with fiction or factual events of the painters' lives? As is expected, the answer is located in the grey area between fiction and fact. In order to indicate the demarcation between the two, one has to establish the biographical references of the sections.

It is a fact that Van Gogh stayed in the Saint-Remy asylum from May 2, 1889 to May 16, 1890. Suffering from hallucinations and convulsions, Van Gogh entered the asylum on his own initiative. Just before this period, the painter had lived in Arles where he had rented the right wing of a detached house which is referred to as the yellow house in Taylor's novel. Van Gogh writes: "It is painted yellow outside, white washed inside, on the sunny side. I have rented it for 15 francs a month" (qtd. in Cabanne 126).

The painter's means of living were provided by his brother Theo who regularly sent 50 francs to Vincent three times a month. While the painter remained a bachelor the whole of his life, in January 1889 he learned that Theo was to marry Johanna Bonger. This biographical information is actually woven into the narrative of the first section on Van Gogh.

The second section explicitly refers to the painter's stay in Auvers-sur-Oise from May 20, 1890 to July 29 of the same year. There Vincent was under the care of Doctor Gachet who was a non-conformist of Flemish origin, and who counted acquaintances among artists. The circumstances of and the reasons for Van Gogh's suicide are rather vague. On July 27, 1890, he shot himself with a revolver in a farmyard and died two days later. This first biographical example gives evidence that Taylor's painter sections are carefully elaborated. On the other hand, it is the reader's role to take heed of the biographical clues disseminated in the other sections.

The four sections on Gauguin are based on his second stay in Oceania where he exiled himself in 1895 until the year of his death, 1903. Gauguin's "tinned tripe and asparagus" (TOTO 12-13) as well as "scaly legs" (TOTO 14) actually refer to the painter's heavy reliance on French tinned food as well as to his suffering from eczema on his feet and halfway up his legs (Danielsson 261-62). The first of the four sections alludes to the traumatic relationship between Gauguin and Van Gogh. In December 1888, two months after

his arrival at the yellow house, Gauguin finished a portrait of Van Gogh painting sunflowers. On seeing it, Van Gogh is said to have exclaimed: "It's me all right, but me gone mad" (qtd. in Cabanne 155). In Taylor's section, one reads that Vincent hurled an easel at Gauguin. Van Gogh actually hurled a glass at Gauguin's face in a café. As everybody knows, Gauguin packed and left after learning that Van Gogh had clipped the lobe of his ear.

In September 1901, Gauguin moved from Tahiti to Hiva Oa in the Marquesas islands in search of unstained primitivism. This period corresponds to the three remaining sections in Taylor's novel. Two of them are letters addressed to Daniel who turns out to have been one of Gauguin's closest friends and correspondents. Daniel de Monfreid was a painter who, among other things, recovered the illustrated manuscript of Noa Noa which he gave to the Louvre.

The House of Pleasure is a translation of La maison du jouir which was the name of the house Gauguin had built at Atuona. It is also a fact that its walls were decorated with Japanese prints, photographs of paintings by Manet, Puvis de Chavannes, Degas, Rembrandt, and with pornographic pictures Gauguin had bought in Port Said. In a letter to a lieutenant of the local gendarmerie, the painter relates how women, who were curious about his pictures and harmonium, visited him frequently (Writings 293).

The last Gauguin section carries ominous overtones because it points at the year of the painter's death. The

last months of his stay on the islands made him more and more pessimistic. The Mercure de France was one of the rare links with French intelligentsia. To Gauguin's desire to go back to France, Monfreid indeed replied: "you have passed into the history of art" (Writings xxxi-xxxii).

Gauguin's pessimism was increased by the loss of his daughter Aline who died of pneumonia in 1897. To crown it all, he had to struggle against the vapidness of the French colonial administration. The facts are that Gauguin asked for an inquiry about a gendarme who had been bribed by American whalers to let them trade illegally with the people of the islands. Another gendarme then decided to sue the painter for slander. As a result, Gauguin was sentenced to three months in prison and to a fine of five hundred francs.

It is assumed that Paul Gauguin died of an overdose of morphine in 1903. On the morning of his death, during a conversation with the clergyman Vernier, "he turned abruptly to the discussion of art and literature, especially Flaubert's novel Salammbô" (qtd. in Danielsson 292). He died a few hours later.

In the Degas section, the biographical references remain sparse, yet the narrative does allude to the painter's stay in Italy and Naples in particular. Incidentally, it can be mentioned that Degas' father was born in Naples. His mother was a creole from New Orleans where Degas stayed visiting his brother in 1872-1873. Degas was also prone to rambling in the streets of Paris at night, probably gathering visual

material for his paintings. Finally, the painter died in the midst of European chaos in 1917, suffering from almost total blindness.

Marthe Boursin, alias Marthe de M^eligny, became Bonnard's wife in 1925. They had met in 1894 when she was working as a model for the painter. Their first stay in Southern France took place in 1910. In 1925 Bonnard bought a house in Le Cannet where he and his wife spent the rest of their lives. It is also a fact that Marthe became obsessed with personal hygiene. Vaillant writes that "she always felt the need to lather herself, scrub herself, and massage herself with a sort of meticulous sensuousness, for hours on end" (140). Marthe suffered from anaemia, so that she kept eating sardines in cod-liver oil. In 1942 she died, and Bonnard is supposed to have locked her room. In addition, Taylor's text refers to two biographical details worth mentioning. Bonnard hardly used easels but painted on canvases tacked to the wall. Finally, the Bonnards did enjoy dachshunds, and one of them was named "Ubu".

The Monet section is in part the story of the painter's passion for his artificial garden. The sales of his paintings made him prosperous, and in 1890 he bought a house and its surrounding land at Giverny. In 1892 he hired six gardeners and built greenhouses. The following year he bought another tract of land with stream and pond across from his house. He then built the Japanese footbridge over the pond. In 1901 an arched lattice for wisteria was added above the

bridge. Monet was also allowed to divert a branch of the river Epte through his property.

Monet was certainly the "Lord of a rambling house" (TOTO 39), for in 1892 he married Alice Hoschédé who already had six children, while he had two sons from a previous marriage. Many photographs attest to the fact that Monet was a chain-smoker and that he wore thick glasses after an operation which helped him recover partial eyesight. Finally, it is impossible to identify the female narrator of the Monet section, but her parents' presence may be related to the context of American painters who visited Giverny seeking to emulate Monet.

With Gauguin, Nolde is probably the other painter whose life conveys mystery and adventure. In 1913-1914 he was the "pictorial reporter" (Selz 33) of the Külz-Leber expedition across Russia to Korea, China and Polynesia. This expedition was organized by the German Colonial Office. From 1926 to 1956 Nolde lived in North Schleswig which was his birthplace. There he built a house and a studio and gave the place the name of Seebüll. Nolde is described by his biographers as a taciturn, introverted, misanthropic man who expressed a deep mysticism in his paintings.

In 1941 he was denounced as a degenerate painter by the Nazis and forbidden to paint. (Incidentally, and according to Selz, he was "anti-Jewish, anti-French, and a pan-German chauvinist" (70)). Despite this order, Nolde secretly painted small water colours he called "unpainted pictures".

In 1946 Ada his wife died of a heart attack.

Despite the strong evidence, it remains the fact that the painter sections do not read as sheer biographical reports. If this were the case, these sections would turn out to be based on a mimetic approach to what is now accepted as historical reality. Taylor's approach is actually that of a Janus. While it establishes the realistic background of the painters' lives, it simultaneously denies any reading of the sections in terms of verisimilitude. This rejection of mimesis is achieved through five interrelated factors.

To begin with, the painters are detached from their historical backcloth to enter the world of fiction as protagonists who express themselves through the narrative voice "I". The only case of a painter section narrated by the omniscient narrator is "The House of Pleasure, 1902". But at this point in the novel, Gauguin has already acquired a fictional status developed in two previous sections. It also becomes clear that the events of the painters' lives are transformed into the elements of very schematic plots, within each section. It can even be shown that factual events in turn foster fictional happenings. For instance, I have not found any biographical references to either Monet's little train at Giverny or Gauguin's parodic burial of a rat at Tahiti. What happens then is that fiction progressively encroaches on factual territory. Finally, one must not forget that these partly biographical sections are the components of a structure which implicitly discards

mimetically chronological links since it relies on ellipsis and contiguity.

The consequences for the interartistic relationship within the novel are invaluable. With only one throw, Taylor succeeds in hitting his target twice. First of all, by manipulating the painters' biographies, he incorporates the world of art into that of fiction. But by grafting these two worlds, he implicitly reiterates the modernist rejection of mimesis which both painting and writing share. Yet, in this respect, Taylor's trump is still to come, as will be shown in the next section.

Intertextuality and Interartistic Relation

It is no coincidence that out of the six painters referred to in Taylor's novel, five of them were affiliated with writing. This affiliation is actually twofold: either the painter produced written works or he was acquainted with a literary circle and provided illustrations for fiction and poetry. Monet is the only painter who apparently never wrote nor illustrated any work. In other words, Taylor explores what German scholars call Doppelbegabung or artistic double gift. What happens in the novel is that the interplay between writing and painting is reinforced by the intertextual bond between the painter's literary production and the narrative. The two sets of sections which mainly develop these other interartistic ties are those focusing on Gauguin and Van Gogh. The remaining painter sections are endowed with

the same goal though to a lesser degree.

Bonnard's literary legacy is practically non-existent since we only have sparse notes on painting which he scattered in his annual diaries. It is through the indirect route of illustration that he secured his ties with literature. From 1891 to 1893 he illustrated the literary magazine of La revue blanche which was concerned with both naturalist and symbolist writings. He also illustrated poems by Jules Renard and Gide's Prometheus Misbound.

Degas is another interesting case because it exemplifies the stimulating interaction between painters and writers which characterized the nineteenth century in Europe. In his study on the painter, Reff has convincingly shown that Degas and such writers as Zola, Goncourt, and Huysmans were mutually influenced in their respective artistic creations. For instance, there is little doubt that Degas' washerwomen and Zola's Gervaise belong to the same family. It is also worth noting that Degas composed eight sonnets around 1889 and that, though he claimed to retain his Naturalist position, he visited the Symbolists' literary circle quite frequently.

The intertextual relation within Taylor's novel does not, however, refer to a literary work by Degas, but to one of his letters written in New Orleans. In the Degas section one reads: "I can remember the negro women of New Orleans with white children darting about in sunlight" (TOTO 21). This sentence can be compared to the following excerpt from Degas's letter:

Everything attracts me here . . . I like nothing better than the Negresses of every shade holding in their arms white, so very white, babies in front of white houses with wooden fluted columns (qtd. in McMullen 234).

The intertextual strategy in the Degas section consists in distorting the original quotation. As will become more and more apparent, this distortion is quasi-systematic throughout the novel. At the same time, it is quite evident that this distortion is nothing else than the process of fabulation characterizing fiction. Again, ~~a literal~~ quotation of the original text would locate the Degas section in the area of verisimilitude whereas mimesis is expelled as soon as the New Orleans letter is manipulated for fiction's sake.

What has it got to do with painting? Well apparently a lot because not only Degas but also Van Gogh, Gauguin, Monet, Bonnard, and Nolde created paintings which either deliberately or unconsciously relinquish any pictorial mimetic claim. Rich points out that, for Degas, "one built a work of art mentally" (14). Valéry, the French poet, is reported to have said the following: "Degas saying that drawing was a way of seeing form, Mallarmé teaching that poetry is made with words, were summing up, each for his own craft, a [fundamental] truth" (qtd. in Reff 191).

With Emil Nolde, the intertextual dimension turns even more tangible when one realizes that, between 1931 and 1934, he published the first two volumes of his autobiography, and that his letters written between 1894 and 1926 were also

published in 1927.² I was not able to identify the quotation opening the Nolde section. In fact, here again, the accuracy or veracity of the quotation are not necessarily to be taken for granted. On the other hand, there is no doubt that this passage is intertextual, for in Nolde's 1947 diary one can read: "I have sometimes thought that I am not a true human being at all, but a kind of outcast" (qtd. in Urban 34).

Furthermore, the imaginary interview taking place in this section can be regarded as the fictional elaboration of what Nolde wrote about his encounter with New Guinea in 1914. One reads:

Primordial peoples live in their nature, are one with it and a part of the entire universe. Sometimes I have the feeling that only they are still real people, while we are like malformed puppets--artificial and full of darkness (qtd. in Gordon 388).

Nolde was avowedly anti-intellectual, so that he never established any theory about his own art. Yet his expressionistic brushstroke is enough evidence of his rejection of mimesis which is also conveyed by Taylor's intertextual strategy.

Gauguin has an impressive literary production to his credit. In 1892 and 1893 he created the two illustrated

² Nolde's main writings consist of letters, Briefe aus den Jahren 1894-1926, and of four volumes of autobiography. These are: Das eigene Leben (1931), Jahre der Kämpfe (1934), Welt und Heimat (in publication in 1963), and Reisen-Achtung Befreiung (manuscript to be published in 1963).

works, Cahier pour Aline and Noa Noa respectively. He was also an essayist, as is testified by The Catholic Church and Modern Times, published in 1897. In 1899 and 1900 he was the editor of two newspapers, Le sourire and Les guêpes, the latter ironically published on behalf of the Catholic Church against Protestantism. In 1902 he wrote a treatise on art entitled Racontars de rapin (Dauber's Gossip). Two months before his death, Gauguin was still busy with the writing of an autobiography, Avant et après, about which he wrote:

This is no literary work deliberately cast in a chosen mould. It is something else: the civilized man and the barbarian face to face. The style has to be in keeping, laid bare, showing the whole man, often shocking. That comes easily enough. I am not a writer (Writings 227).

To Gauguin, writing was synonymous with literary conventions which prevented the full expression of man's most primitive nature. So it is only to that extent that he was not a writer.

The fact that four sections of the novel are devoted to this painter points out that his position and function are central. Of all the painters referred to, he is probably the most articulate when it comes to the problem of the relationship between art and reality. Gauguin is the painter of anti-mimetic suggestive abstraction. While Monet refused to acknowledge that he did not always work from nature, Gauguin proclaimed that he worked from memory first and foremost. In a letter to Monfreid, he wrote the following:

I have always said, or if not said, at least thought, that a painter's literary poetry is special, and not the illustration or the translation, through shapes, of something written. In other words, what you should try for in painting is suggestion rather than description, just as in music (Writings 211).

Gauguin's interartistic analogy sheds an extraordinary light on Taylor's own intertextual practice which does not reproduce an original text but suggests an elusive and desirable bond between painters and writers. In Gauguin's quotation, it should be noticed that the terms "illustration", "translation", and "description" are specifically endowed with a mimetic connotation.

The mutual illumination between Gauguin's and Taylor's works is once more exemplified by the following intertextual passage: "What concerns me is the letting go of whatever shapes me as a man. The possibility that I might be giving up without knowing it" (TOTO 13). This febrile search for identity clearly underlines Gauguin's own words: "For two months I have been filled with one mortal fear: that I am not the Gauguin I used to be" (Writings 212). The world of fantasy shared both by writing and painting is also suggested by the reference to Odilon Redon's "one-eyed monsters" in the first Gauguin section. In Avant et après, one reads the following tongue-in-cheek warning: "Do not get the notion of reading Edgar Poe except in some very reassuring place. . . . And, especially, do not try to go to sleep, within sight of an Odilon Redon" (Writings 244). Finally, Avant et après is also alluded to as the autobiography "that

should scald a few delicate sensibilities when it is published" (TOTO 75). The latter intertextual sentence can once more be compared to Gauguin's statement that his autobiography "includes things that are very harsh for some people, especially for my wife's behaviour and for the Danes" (Writings 227).³

This ceaseless criss-crossing of intertextual references turns out therefore to be the canvas where writing and painting interact. On the one hand, the painter does not stand without his scribbling shadow; on the other, the painter also comments on the interrelations between the arts. What the reader is confronted with is another instance of mise en abyme whereby Taylor, as a writer, explores the relations between writing and painting by referring to painters such as Gauguin who, in turn, writes as well as examines the relations between painting and writing. The recurrent device of the mise en abyme is not a coincidence because it precisely rests on a spatialization of the narrative flux.

The same approach can be observed in the two sections on Van Gogh. The Dutch painter's epistolary writing is not of an ordinary nature but reads like a multi-generic work combining confessions, theoretical statements on art,

³ From a letter to Monfreid, February 1903. Gauguin's wife was Danish. She went back to live in Denmark when he decided to devote his life to painting.

illustrations and visual poetry.⁴ It is important to notice that Van Gogh did not view his paintings as mimetic pictorial representations. Laying down the principle of what was to become expressionism, he wrote: "instead of trying to reproduce exactly what I have before my eyes, I use colour more arbitrarily, in order to express myself forcibly" (qtd. in Chipp 6). When he shifts to literary expression, Van Gogh demonstrates an acute perception of the literary power of suggestion as opposed to mimetic reproduction. Commenting on the work of a minor writer, Henri Conscience, he remarks to Theo:

[Conscience] described a brand-new little house with a roof of red tiles full in the sunshine, a garden with dock and onions, potatoes with their dull green, . . . the heather all yellow. Don't be afraid, it was not a Cazin, it was a Claude Monet (Letters 3: 196).

Mention should also be made that Van Gogh was an assiduous reader who referred in his letters to writers such as Voltaire, Shakespeare, Dickens, Maupassant, Zola and Lamartine.

As in the other sections of the novel, the intertextual strategy establishes the relationship between Van Gogh as

⁴ Here is an example of Van Gogh's writing:

One night I went for a walk by the sea. . . . The deep blue sky was flecked with clouds of a blue deeper than the fundamental blue of intense cobalt, and others of a clearer blue, like the blue whiteness of the Milky Way. In the blue depth the stars were sparkling, greenish, yellow, white, pink, more brilliant, more sparkling gem-like than at home--even in Paris: opals you might call them, emeralds, lapis lazuli, rubies, sapphires (qtd. in Cabanne 131).

the painter and Van Gogh as Taylor's character. In the first section, he is described sitting by the window and gazing "out at the sky waiting for the sun to rise" (TOTO 6). In one of his letters written at Saint-Remy, the painter writes: "Through the iron-barred window I see a square field of wheat in an enclosure, a perspective like Van Goyen, above which I see the morning sun rising in all its glory" (Letters 3: 173). Having moved to Auvers in Northern France, Vincent expresses his loneliness to his brother: "if my disease returns, you would forgive me. I still love art and life very much, but as for ever having a wife of my own, I have no great faith in that" (Letters 3: 293). If we now shift back to Taylor's section, the intertextual origin of the following sentence is revealed: "I want to lie in bed with a woman who sleeps calmly, with a smile on her lips" (TOTO 6). Incidentally, the spatio-temporal framework of the section does not correspond to that of the letter, which is another case of intertextuality claiming its rights over fiction.

Enough evidence has now been provided to show that Tender Only to One aims at suggesting the anti-mimetic characteristic common to painting and writing. In addition, the interartistic bond is tightened by the reference to artists who had a gift for writing. Performing a last pirouette, Taylor reverses the perspective so far adopted, when he devotes a section to the Victorian writer Robert Louis Stevenson. This selection does not rest on coincidence

anymore than did the previous choice of painters. Not only did Stevenson exile himself in Samoa, but he was also possessed of the gift for visual expression which materialized in watercolours for instance. Through this move, the reader has come full circle, from the painter to the writer, from the writer to the painter.

The Function of Themes

In the first section of this study, I tried to show that, from a spatio-temporal viewpoint, the novel is characterized by the states of simultaneity and contiguity. The spatial aspect of this structure is also reinforced by a remarkable thematic consistency. The temporal barriers between the painter and contemporary sections are brought down because the people of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries are shown to share the same predicaments. What dominates both types of section is a pessimistic vision of human relationships which are chiefly characterized by alienation, primitive or archetypal behaviour, and unhappiness.

What most characters and the painters of the novel share is their position of outcasts. For instance, both old Bobby and Van Gogh live on the margin of society. To others "old Bobby must have looked like a scab or dead blister . . . short, unshaven and sometimes muttering" (TOTO 24). Furthermore, Van Gogh almost epitomizes the artist's alienation from society, as he is deprived of wife and friend, and as

he has to bear the brunt of his viewers' negative criticism which purports that his "paintings are painted with an exaggerated vengeance, a feigned desperation as if they might never get finished" (TOTO 7). Most tragically, the painter is alienated from himself, and his split ego takes over in the second Van Gogh section of the novel.

Both Gauguin and Percy as the Wandering Jews are searching for a better world. This is the reason why one exiles himself in Oceania, and the other, one suspects, in British Columbia. It is certainly no coincidence that the "heavenly odour" (TOTO 58) of the lavender bushes at the beach can be associated with Gauguin's Noa Noa which means, "very fragrant".

Alienation is also experienced through the lack of communication which again characterizes different sections in the novel. Gauguin exclaims: "Painting and writing cannot expel the horror of uncertainty I feel on this island, so I resort to talking to myself" (TOTO 13). In fact, whether in the case of contemporary characters or that of painters, the narrative voice "I" has the equal function of signalling a profound isolation. As the title "Solitary Confinement" points out, the characters remain prisoners of high-rise apartments, wheel-chairs or beds. The Degas section in particular is certainly a typically Beckettian reminder. Whole sections such as "The Other Heaven" read with almost no word exchanged between the protagonists. If words are exchanged, they are cast in the mould of reification,

which is the case of Monet's "Très bien!" (TOTO 41) or Alvin's stories "Bobby had heard too many times before" (TOTO 26).

As Nolde explains in the interview, he and Gauguin were fascinated by the then exalted primitivist cultures of exotic origin. Through the contemporary sections, one discovers that both desire and destruction tap the same primitivist source. The result is the curious patchwork displaying Percy's pictures of "piles of broken bodies with the shadowy outline of keepers" (TOTO 54), the slaughter of an American soldier in Vietnam, the disquieting splitting of a pig, the clubbing of Cooke, the cruel death of a moose, and the tiger of desire in "Interlude".

It remains the fact, however, that happiness and love are given a chance to redeem this rather gloomy situation. But only moments of relief are provided such as Mrs. Stewart's nocturnal epiphany at the end of "Broken Harmony" or Paul's quasi-maternal comfort in Loretta's lap. These moments are precious yet ephemeral, for the house where Mrs. Stewart lives is to be sold, while the slipping razor across Paul's face opens old wounds again. Moreover, what is the borderline between pain and pleasure in Gauguin's erotic relation with the young girl or, for that matter, in the old man's longing for his absent wife at the end of "Bonnard and Marthe"? Do not Gauguin and old Bobby share the same voyeuristic fascination for photographs of young girls? One can see that the moments of harmony are not bereft of jarring

notes.

Grace's aquarium, Percy's Monet-like artificial garden, Percy's Third Beach where he is lucky enough to meet a German man, Kealakekua Bay where the ants are cannibals, all these convey the protagonists' attempt to create the microcosm of their dreams to enjoy finally peace and plenitude. Yet this land is to be found nowhere, hence its name is utopia. This is what Paul discovers at the end of the last section: "[he] stood for a moment blinking in the falling snow, then hurled the sphere into the air and watched it fall short of the island and slap on the water" (TOTO 106). For both Gauguin and his homonym Paul, happiness does not belong to this world. At this point, we stand at the brink of nihilism.

Paintings and Tableaux Vivants

Where is the locus of harmony in the novel which can redeem its vision from a nihilistic finality? I suggest that a clue to the answer is embedded in the passage where Gauguin remarks: "Perhaps one day my life will epitomize the artist and many will try to follow my example both physically and metaphorically, because one must find out one way or another" (TOTO 79). Undoubtedly, Taylor has been on Gauguin's tracks throughout his novel by establishing a metaphorical relationship between painting and writing. The locus of harmony is utopia, the place which escapes the rules of time and space governing this world. But this is

In the courtyard off the Boulevard de Clichy, birds" (TOTO 22). In the same breath, Degas recalls how he strove to produce the effect of tension in the bodies of his figures. This fascination for the temporal effect within a purely static framework, which only arrested movements can depict, can be seen in such paintings as The Curtain Falls (fig. 19), At the Race Course (1869-1872), Two Laundresses (fig. 20), The Morning Bath (fig. 21), and Café-Concert: At Les Ambassadeurs (1876-1877).

One would easily think that Monet created his artificial garden just for the sake of his pictorial hankering. The Giverny years led to the composition of Monet's most famous paintings, and this is what Taylor's section on the painter recaptures. In his study of the Giverny period, Daniel Wildenstein writes: "[Monet] implied that to isolate a specific moment, by painting a subject only once, was to deny one aspect of reality: the passage of time". (12). Hence the painter produced series of a given subject. In the novel, the allusions to his paintings are scattered all over the section through seemingly unimportant words such as wisteria, flowerbeds, irises, footbridge, lily pads. Without cease, Monet produced series of Japanese footbridges, wisteria, waterlilies, irises, and garden paths (fig. 22 to 26). In 1888 he also painted A Bend at the River Epte, near Giverny.

With Nolde, the textual references waver between the exotic primitivism and the Northern mystic imagination of

precisely one of the definitions of painting which, free from alteration, projects a fictional microcosm issued from the painter's vision.

The next question is, beyond the interartistic relations so far established, is there any kind of reference to paintings themselves? Actually, the paintings of Taylor's novel are conspicuous by their absence. To begin with, one observes that each section, whether referring to painters or to contemporary protagonists, displays a typographical lay-out which leaves a blank space between the title and the beginning of the narrative. This lay-out is not accidental or fashionable but systematic. On the other hand, the sections literally swarm with veiled references to paintings by the six mentioned painters. It can be argued that these typographical blanks are meant to be filled by suggested paintings and vignettes.

The reason why these veiled references may remain unheeded is that they are conveyed by a narrative style which does not assert but suggests, or which does not state tragedy but often verges on irony. The references are inserted in and blend with the deceptive description of settings, characters and events. But for the receptive reader, they trigger a wealth of visual stimuli parallel to the text. Given a limited amount of space, I shall only indicate a few examples for each of the six painters.

Confined in Saint-Remy, Van Gogh expresses his sense of isolation with the following words: "I could not paint.

this room. The chair says nothing to me, the bed remains a bed" (TOTO 6). These words are far from being contingent, for they belong to the frame of reference specific to Van Gogh's paintings and in particular, to his celebrated The Artist's Bedroom (fig. 14). Again the following passage can be regarded as an ekphrastic type of description. One reads: "In daylight the sun came through cypress trees and dappled the stone walls of lanes, and the peasants herded their animals into wooden stables" (TOTO 6). This sentence does not only convey Van Gogh's memories but also fits within the pictorial context of the painter's numerous representations of cypresses. One can think of Wheatfield and Cypresses (1889), Cypresses (fig. 15), or even of the light-throbbing Starry Night (1889).

The second section on Van Gogh is a vivid dramatization of the painter's self-destructive anxiety. Taylor resorts to an expressive style based on the juxtaposition of paratactic fragments such as "Out into the light. The road. Trees walking, fields weeping. Dry throat. Birds scream. Sky tilts, crashing around me" (TOTO 51). It is difficult not to relate this ekphrastic passage to one of Van Gogh's last paintings, Crows in the Wheatfields (fig. 16). Again, the reference to Doctor Gachet has its pictorial counterpart in Van Gogh's portrait of the same man who leans with his right elbow on a table where two French novels lie.

In Gauguin's case, it can be argued that the statement "What concerns me is the letting go of whatever shapes me .

as a man" alludes to the painter's spiritual quest which he expressed in his important painting Where Do We Come From? What Are We? Where Do We Go? (fig. 17). In addition, Gauguin also painted a still life with a group of sunflowers and a chair entitled Sunflowers on a Chair (1901) which, in the novel, he dedicates to Van Gogh. In "The House of Pleasure, 1902" Gauguin nostalgically recalls "the young girls bathing in streams years ago when he first came to the islands, floating with their breasts, the wet black hair and the mocking laughter" (TOTO 57). These memories seem to derive from such idyllic pictures as Fatata Te Miti (1892) and The Day of the God (fig. 18). In the same section of the novel, the thirteen-year-old girl is reassured by the unfinished painting of "a pair of thick Tahitian women and a panting dog" (TOTO 57) which in fact are recurrent symbols in Gauguin's iconography. Paintings such as La perte du pucelage (1891), Pastorales Tahitiennes (1892), and Adam and Eve (1902) resort to the dog or the fox as an erotic symbol.

One of the features of Degas' paintings is his predilection for the chiaroscuro effects to which the text alludes, in the following way: "In this room the yellow lamp creates a sharp chiaroscuro, divided in half with me in bed" (TOTO 22). It is also through paratactic sentences that the painter's recurrent subject-matter is suggested. For instance, one reads: "My dancers, my bathers, my washerwomen, my horses-- repeated, over and over. My little dancer. There was music.

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the painter's works: In 1912 he represented the evil forces of civilization side by side with the primordial Mother of the South Seas in The Missionary (fig. 27). Nolde is also well-known for his watercolour technique which consisted of painting wet paint on wet paper. With such means, he produced, for instance, the uncanny magic of Evening Landscape, North Friesland (fig. 28):⁵

Finally, the reader can take Bonnard's The Table (fig. 29) as a possible pictorial counterpart to the following ekphrastic, paratactic description: "[Woman] sitting before a table of fruit, jam jars, basket of bread, the dog peeping up from the floor" (TOTO 62). But, of course, the last image the reader retains from this section is one of Bonnard's recurrent bathroom scenes, such as Nude in Bath (fig. 30) by which the old man might be fascinated.

This pictorial network of references is essential, for it reveals the last feature of the contemporary sections. It turns out that these sections also share the visual aspect of the painter sections. Apparently, mention is not made of specific Canadian paintings, but the suggestive pictorial quality of the narrative supplies the basis for what should be called tableaux vivants. In the Bonnard section, for example, one reads: "By the river [the old man and his wife] relaxed on wooden lawn chairs eating dainty sandwiches under an umbrella" (TOTO 65). While reading

⁵ Nolde's watercolours were left undated.

"Bachelors", one cannot help visualizing the hanging carcass with its sustained iconography from Rembrandt to Soutine and Francis Bacon. Sketchy portraits are provided contrasting Percy's frailty and the German's huge bulk. In addition, the narrative is studded with visual similes such as that of Mrs. Stewart "tucked into bed like a long white mouse" (TOTO 47).

The common visual aspect of both types of section is finally underscored in the last section of the novel which presents itself like a synthesis of the painter sections. One thus discovers Degas' chiaroscuro in the "silhouette of a woman in the window of a white house" (TOTO 98). The flowerbeds of Loretta's garden also share some affinity with Monet's Giverny. The assembly of grotesquely disguised people could join the distorted carnival masks of Nolde's paintings. Bonnard is alluded to when Loretta and Paul are described standing "naked in the bright glare of the [bathroom] mirror" (TOTO 105).

If one now looks back at the total picture, one obtains a kind of tryptich. At the center, the text stands with paintings on the right and tableaux vivants on the left. Furthermore, this structure reveals a Kantian conception of art by creating a playful combination of knowledge and imagination on which the reader draws, as he/she undertakes the interpretation of Tender Only to One.

Chapter Four

Study of Five Short Stories by Donald Barthelme

Collage and Zeitgeist

Some of Barthelme's short stories are almost a must for the student interested in the relationship between painting and writing. These "illustrated" stories provoke an initial state of shock in the reader to whom the following thought occurs: "What does this mean?". The possible answer is twofold: either these illustrations are sheer parodies, or something more is at stake which requires a close examination.

A glance at the author's biography confirms a critical intuition, that is, Barthelme is well aware of possible affinities between the two types of art. In 1957 he was the founder and the general editor of the University of Houston Forum which was devoted to contemporary literature and art. Two years later Barthelme was appointed director of the Contemporary Arts Museum in Houston. The author, whose father was a designer in architecture, was also the managing editor of Location which was issued only twice, in spring 1963 and summer 1964. This periodical, created by Harold Rosenberg and Thomas B. Hess, was supposed to "chart the relationships between the contemporary visual and written arts" (Stengel 2).

The claim that a relation exists between writing and painting in Barthelme's work is made by two different critics.

In his recent study, Stengel asserts that "Barthelme's dual interest in modern art and contemporary literature has led him to search for the literary equivalent of modern art in the structure and language of his own writing" (2). Molesworth also argues that Barthelme's display of self-conscious parody of styles can be compared to the parodies performed by pop artists such as Rauschenberg. He adds that a "sense of spatial form" (58) characterizes the author's stories.

It should be underlined that these noteworthy claims do not constitute the main arguments of the two critics' studies. More often than not, these claims read like assertions or suggestions rather than demonstrations. Furthermore, and strangely enough, the critics rarely grapple with the problem of interartistic relationship in Barthelme's fiction within the context of his "illustrated" short stories. In order to solve this mystery, I propose to delve into five short stories which Barthelme has published in three different anthologies between 1970 and 1974. These are "At the Tolstoy Museum", "Brain Damage", "The Flight of Pigeons from the Palace", "The Expedition", and "A Nation of Wheels".

These five short stories share two common features. One is the alternation between narrative and pictures; the other is a particular approach to the concepts of time and space from a literary viewpoint. These stories are invariably characterized by the narrative techniques of disjunction and juxtaposition which prevent the plot from unfolding

chronologically.

In "At the Tolstoy Museum", for instance, the narrative reads like a string of disconnected elements such as Tolstoy's biography, the narrator's eating a sandwich, the description of the Tolstoy museum, the visitors' lachrymose reaction at the museum. Besides, no causal relationship exists between the number of visitors and the tiny portrait of Turgenev or between the sinister musician on the plaza and the Tolstoy Jubilee Edition. The biography of Tolstoy turns out to be a sheer parody of the biographical genre with its traditionally chronological account which remains rooted in our linear vision of existence, beginning with birth and ending with death.

Since no linear principle governs this story, the different paragraphs constituting the narrative acquire a certain independence. Thus the paragraph on the tiny pictures of Turgenev, Nekrasov, and Fet could be moved to the first page of the story without affecting the narrative. In other words, the narrative rests on the levelling juxtaposition of paragraphs which become, as it were, interchangeable.

If considered separately from the text, the series of pictures also undermines the notions of linear time and causality. The first pictures seem to provide a visual account of Tolstoy as a mature man, but also as a child, as an adolescent, as a hunter. Yet this biographical linearity suddenly snaps off when the next pictures show the Anna-Vronsky palace and the scene "at the disaster". In the

latter case, the use of the determining deictic "the" is ironic since neither text nor picture heralded this unaccounted for event.

These visual and textual devices of juxtaposition have been compared by critics to the pictorial technique of collage.¹ It is apparent now that, through both strategies, Barthelme succeeds in spatializing his fictional art. In addition, the literary transposition of collage is crucial, for, not only does it affect the overall conception of a plot, but it also shapes the texture of the narrative. According to the same principle, paragraphs can be juxtaposed to paragraphs, sentences to sentences, words to words.

To clinch the matter, the spatial aspect of Barthelme's stories can be studied in "Brain Damage". Once more, the story does not fit the Aristotelian pattern based on beginning, middle, and end. Its ten sections are concerned with an apocalyptic epidemic of brain damage; girls in an elevator and a Mother Superior; a spiritual adviser at a university; waiters; an anthropological description of the "Wapituil"; the memories of a journalist; a dream and an experience; the death of Guignol; plugged-in blue flowers; the book of happiness and spiritual teachers. As can be remarked, the latter list of sections has been run from end to beginning to show that these terms are bereft of their meaning in Barthelme's short story. This undermining of linearity is

¹ In the course of literary history, Max Ernst has been one of the first visual artists to inaugurate this genre with his Une Semaine de bonté: A Surrealistic Novel in Collage (1934).

naturally reflected by the disconnected and juxtaposed pictures.

The second means of spatializing in the story is the now familiar device of mise en abyme. The ten fragments can in fact be regarded as ten narrative skeletons the function of which is to exhibit the fictional principle or creativity. Thus the short story is based on a constellation of plots within plots which, however, do not develop but abort. Moreover, it is not impossible that this notion of fictional creation is symbolically conveyed by an implicit comparison to birth. Indeed, the text consists of nine sections where the narrator struggles to conceive a story, and of a last section where brain damage is claimed to affect the whole world, that is, the whole creation. This fictional and existential abortion is in turn reflected by the fragmentary aspect of the narrative as well as by its parataxis. If, for instance, the words in boldface appearing on the pages of the story are put together, one obtains the following "cadavre exquís":

CROWD NOISES MURMURING MURMURING YAWNING RETCHING
 FAINTING DISMAL BEHAVIOR TENDERING OF EXCUSES RHYTHMIC
 HANDCLAPPING SLEEPING WHAT RECOURSE? WRITHING HOWLING
 MOANS WHAT RECOURSE? RHYTHMIC HANDCLAPPING SHOUTING
 SEXUAL ACTIVITY CONSUMPTION OF FOOD TO WHAT END? IN
 WHOSE NAME? WHAT RECOURSE (CL 135-145).

And of course the reader is left with a puzzling collage which combines three types of elements: pictures, text, and boldfaced words.

It could be argued that this disjunctive pattern of juxtaposition does not prevail in "The Expedition". The story does indeed rest on a linear plot which relates the expedition from its inception to its termination. Yet it can be noticed that this plot is, to say the least, rather schematic. Further, linearity is essential to the story since "The Expedition" actually apes the linear plot for parody's sake.

From a Hegelian viewpoint, it can be argued that a correspondence exists between a work of art and its cultural cradle. This relationship is not confined to resemblance or subservience to the cultural environment, as some critics would have the reader believe (Steiner 186). The artist's stance, be it conventional or revolutionary, is more often than not a more or less elaborate reaction against his environment. On the other hand, it can be held that time and space are essential in the artistic representation of the world or, from a formalist viewpoint, in artistic form or structure.

The concepts of time and space are far from being static. Instead, they evolve simultaneously with the historical succession of civilizations. In The Myth of the Eternal Return, Mircea Eliade shows that cyclic time is a concept of a civilization whose bread and butter were myths. The supremacy of the Christian civilization corresponds to a historical, chronological view of time. With the Middle Ages, emphasis is laid on the apocalypse whereas the

Renaissance is the period when our occidental notion of the subject was born. Interestingly enough, this new subjectivity was paralleled by the flourishing of the technique of perspective with its implied omniscient bird's eye viewpoint. With romanticism, the subject's identity unfolds itself in time, hence its effusion but also its innermost fragility.

Time and space are, therefore, the parameters of cultural visions or ideologies. Whenever a new manipulation of these concepts is displayed by a work of art, be it visual, auditive, or written, the hypothesis can be made that a new approach to the world is under way. Whether considered in modernist or postmodernist terms, Barthelme's work ultimately stems from the early twentieth-century tremors giving birth to the modern Zeitgeist to which we are almost accustomed.

Barthelme's novel The Dead Father (1975) and "At the Tolstoy Museum" share the same thematic concern for the impact of literary history on modern literary creation. In this respect, Tolstoy is perceived as a symbolic representation of a certain literary period with its idiosyncratic ideology which the author's Christian ethics as well as historical and mimetic realism convey. For Barthelme, the assertion of his own creativity seems to imply the acknowledgement as well as the rejection of the Tolstoyan type of authority.

In the same short story, the point is made by way of narrative contrast between Barthelme's fragmentary, metonymic technique of collage and the paraphrase of Tolstoy's

traditionally chronological short story "The Three Hermits" (1886). Furthermore, it can be argued that "At the Tolstoy Museum" and "The Flight of Pigeons from the Palace" constitute implicit comments on the ideological shift which has taken place between Tolstoy's days and Barthelme's.

The point is that both short stories display the lack of a narrative continuum in addition to pictures concerned with the laws of perspective. In "The Flight of Pigeons from the Palace", the first two pictures are studies in perspective applied to a neoclassical type of building. In the second picture, the study is complemented by a neoclassical type of statue. In the other short story, the same kind of study in perspective appears towards the end of the narrative (CL 48). The latter picture is extremely interesting, for it visualizes the contrast between two conceptions of space, and, therefore, between two approaches to the world. One is the Renaissance conception to which Tolstoy was heir; the other belongs to the twentieth century and is signalled by the collage of two characters on the perspectival background of the picture. Finally the study of both short stories leads one to state that chronology is to perspective what temporal disjunction is to collage.

Between Mathematics and Religion

The relationship between language and space has already been hinted at when it was shown that the collage technique inflates the value of the word as the prime medium of

literature. Yet, like space and time, language is also endowed with the function of conveying cultural views of the world. And in all cases, these media are not only the vehicles but also the products of ideology.

What this relationship between space, time, and language on the one hand, and the world on the other, discloses is the referential aspect of writing and painting. It is through spatial manipulation that Max Ernst's post-Freudian Les Pleiades (fig. 31) refers to a specifically modern vision of the self. It is also through language and collage that Barthelme's short stories refer to the modern world of trash culture which erodes and finally obliterates the self. In other words, from a purely artistic viewpoint, time, space, and language function as symbols or signs.

From a philosophical standpoint, a distinction is made between two types of linguistic reference. On the one hand, language is characterized by propositions or statements which can be either true or false. The knowledge which is stated in a proposition can be empirically verified. This process of verification is very important, for it allows one to contra-distinguish propositions from non-discursive statements. The latter type may convey some truth about the world, but it remains unverifiable. As a result, scientific sentences fall into the first category whereas literary sentences are considered to be revelatory of a certain truth which cannot be empirically verified. In aesthetics, this major distinction is anchored in the debate,

contrasting the proposition theory with the revelation theory.

This central issue is in fact one of the chief aesthetic concerns of writers such as Gass and Barthelme. In a symposium on fiction, Barthelme asks Gass the following question: "What does a painter know?"; the answer that a painter knows how to make something that is beautiful is not allowable" ("A Symposium"). A Socratic dialogue between Gass and Barthelme ensues which leads the latter to claim a revelatory function for literary language. He states that

there is a realm of possible knowledge which can be reached by artists, which is not susceptible of mathematical verification but which is true. . . . I believe that's the place artists are trying to get to, and I further believe that when they are successful, they reach it; my painter friend, for example, reaches an area somewhere probably between mathematics and religion, in which what may fairly be called truth exists ("A Symposium" 11).

Consequently, this epistemological claim for art prevents critics from labelling Barthelme a formalist. Given such a claim, Klinkowitz's statement that the "key to Barthelme's new aesthetic for fiction is that the work may stand for itself" (80) needs serious overhauling.

But the issue is far more complex than it seems since it involves self-contradiction. On the subject of the painter James Weeks, Barthelme is reported to have said that this artist "proposes a kind of painting in which the organization of structural elements is not placed at the service of some kind of literary "meaning" but is, rather, enriched by

anonymous human presences: people in the service of painting" (qtd. in Klinkowitz 76). Finally the collection of short stories Guilty Pleasures is said to consist of "brokeback fables, . . . bastard reportage. . . . [and of] pretexts for the pleasure of cutting up and pasting together pictures, a secret vice gone public. Guilty pleasures are the best." (vii). Yet the same work is described as non-fiction.

The epistemological problem is crucial when it comes to examining the referential nature of verbal and visual signs in the five short stories I have selected. Stengel, for instance, seems to argue that two statements are implied in "At the Tolstoy Museum". On the one hand, the "story serves as a parable on the modern tendency to institutionalize the art and artists of other times" (191); on the other the story "becomes a metaphor for the way a contemporary artist, momentarily blinded by the brilliance of an earlier writer, nevertheless can use the author's basic materials to transcend them and claim his own art." (192). Unfortunately, Stengel bypasses the role of the pictures in the story and his thematic interpretation is reached with little demonstration.

In the next section, my aim is to examine the nature of visual and verbal signs in connection with the problems of reference and meaning. My main purpose is not, however, to discover what is being stated, but how meaning is conveyed.

Words and Images

What is the relationship between words and images in Barthelme's five short stories? "In 'Brain Damage'", Stengel states, "form becomes content, and Barthelme cleverly uses collage to illustrate the chaos of a world forever divided between the self, others, and the behaviour found acceptable by the masses" (34). But what does this clever use consist of? About the collages of "At the Tolstoy Museum", Stengel claims that they "demonstrate the powerlessness of many contemporary images, visual as well as written, to evoke an aesthetic response in an audience" (191). This statement is far from being convincing because the pictures of the short story cannot be properly described as contemporary images since the costumes, the setting, and even the very style of the pictures point at a nineteenth-century background.

Stengel's statements raise the following question: should the pictures be considered as illustrations of the short stories? In "Brain Damage", for instance, one may wonder whether the picture of a woman sitting in an armchair and clasping her face between her hands serves as an illustration of the section on the Wapituri. Again, should the third picture of the same story be related to the section on the journalist or to the boldfaced words? It could be argued that both the picture and the section draw on the Promethean theme, but the isolated words could also be said to describe the different poses of the four figures of the

picture. To take a last example, the sixth picture shows a nun carrying an umbrella side by side with a girl afflicted with huge pear-like breasts. Opposite the picture, the section does refer to a girl and a Mother Superior. But how can one ascertain that one deals with the same characters in both cases?

The same type of questions could be asked of each of the five short stories, and they would all lead to the same claim, that is, the pictures do not function as illustrations. The traditional kind of illustration rests on the two principles of referential transparency and equality. It assumes that a transparent relation exists between the following three terms: the word, the picture, and the world. Through this mimetic relation, the three terms become interchangeable or equal.

One can cite at least two different cases where the illustrative principle prevails. In a scientific textbook, be it astronomy, natural sciences, or physics, the illustrative principle of diagrams and photographs is commonly taken for granted. The caption "The Human Skeleton" and the pictorial representation of a human skeleton are held in a relation of referential equality and transparency. Advertising is, of course, the other case. In such an illustration, the message is that good soup equals Campbell's which equals the phenomenological soup on your kitchen table. The distinction between artifice and nature is suppressed for the sake of the viewer's identification with the

represented product.

With Barthelme, the principles of equality and transparency collapse, and illustrators bear the brunt of his parody. In "The Flight of Pigeons from the Palace", for instance, the third picture represents a view of a neo-classical building with a statue in the foreground. The mimetic, illustrative principle on which the picture rests is also parodied within the picture. Thus the line running from left to right is supposed to be equal to the word "horizon", which, in turn, is equal to the "real" horizon. The same parodic point is made in "The Expedition" where captioned pictures succeed one another. Yet the mimetically illustrative relation between text and image is flouted when the reader comes across six crosses which stand as the six landmarks on the expedition route. One can read captions such as "Where we made our landfall" or "Joseph Pearce overboard. I knew him" (GP 119). The problem is that the crosses cannot function as illustrations since the third term of illustrative reference is absent. Indeed, the crosses are bereft of any geographical reference.

It should be apparent now that the referential framework of the pictures in Barthelme's stories is not illustrative but fictional. It is through fiction that artifice is given free rein, but it is also through fictional awareness that a distinction is maintained between artifice and nature. And in his short stories, Barthelme consciously explores the referential potential of words and images.

That fiction thrives on non-discursive statements is the suggested meaning at the core of "The Flight of Pigeons from the Palace". This self-reference indicates the meta-fictional genre of the short story. But it does not follow that the short story is deprived of any other referential function. At first sight, the non-illustrative claim seems to be undermined by the lay-out of the story. Indeed, pictures and paragraphs are apparently related in terms of mutual reference. For instance, the section describing the Numbered Man is illustrated with the picture of the same man. So is the reader confronted with the principles of transparency and equality? No, he is not because this particular description is a classical example of a non-discursive statement. The picture indicates the very nature of the statement because it is not a representation of an actual being. It can be found either in natural science textbooks or classrooms.

What happens then is that such statements as the Numbered Man "never failed to say "Hello" and "Good-bye" and "Why not?" (SN 130) cannot be verified on an empirical basis. Were the statement taken literally, it would simply be absurd. From this observation, one can draw two consequences. To begin with, the statement turns out to be a veiled simile. Thus the Numbered Man looks as if he were saying "Hello". As a result, the text no longer reads like a caption, but like a fictional interpretation of the picture. Furthermore, this referential strategy points at the genre

of the text which revels in the surreal, the fairy-tale, dreams and magic. The "Singing Sword", the "Stone Eater", and the "loud-roaring strong-stinking animals" (SN 132) people a world of imagination which only fiction can create.

The same type of analysis could be applied to the other four short stories, but one more example will suffice. The third picture of "At the Tolstoy Museum" shows two couples on a visit to the museum, walking around a huge coat whose collar reaches the ceiling. Now the juxtaposition of this picture and the caption, "Tolstoy's coat" (CL 43), triggers an absurd meaning. The visual message of the picture amounts to stating that Tolstoy was/is a giant, and, from an empirical viewpoint, this statement remains unverifiable. But from a fictional viewpoint, the statement becomes metaphorical and does make sense since it can be connected with Tolstoy's overawing moral and literary authority to which the text refers.

What this example reveals is that one aspect of the relationship between words and pictures is contextual. This contextuality partly constitutes the strength of these short stories because it fosters the sense of interpretation in the reader, which a traditionally illustrated text does not. In other words, the reader is offered an exercise in hermeneutics. The context, moreover, is not necessarily confined to the narrative itself, but can extend to include the works which contributed to literary history. In "At the Tolstoy Museum" again, this type of intertextual reference

is provided through the second picture where the juxtaposition of Tolstoy's portrait with the dwarfed Napoleonic figure refers to War and Peace.

But even the latter interpretation sounds too forceful, for Barthelme's fiction does not rest on assertive statements but, rather, on suggestive ambiguity. In the practice of traditional illustration, the visual medium does not interfere with the intended message.-- But in "The Expedition", for instance, both visual and textual media are purposely resorted to for their ambiguity which contributes to the opacity of the message. Thus the fourth picture of the story (GP 116) shows a huge, circular structure within which men pose for a snapshot. From this picture, the reader cannot gather what the structure is. The caption, which reads "This was fabricated specially for the expedition" (GP 116), is even less informative. This caption is a pseudo-proposition because the deictic "this" refers to an unknown object. With the eleventh picture of the story (GP 123), the same ambiguity recurs since the reader is debarred from making head or tail of either the picture or the caption.

What Barthelme shows through his short stories is that ambiguity stands at the very core of language, and pictures are juxtaposed to the text either as the comic outcome of this ambiguity or as ambiguous, visual signs. In "A Nation of Wheels", for instance, the term "wheel" functions as a paradigm of creation and interpretation. The narrative becomes a playful exercise in all the visual and linguistic

potential of this term. Puns such as the "spokesman of the committee of wheels", the "guidance of the Vehicle of State" (GP 141) proliferate. Polysemy prevails in the wheel of/will to power. Hence the second picture depicts an aggressive, phallic ice cream cone wedged between two tyres or wheels. The same polysemic aspect holds true for the term "revolution" the three connotations of which shape the referential texture of the narrative. Simultaneously, the reader is told a story concerned with a technological and political revolution to which the physical revolution of the wheel must be added.

The distinction between denotative (literal) meaning and connotative (figurative) meaning is also at the origin of comic collages such as the third picture of the same story (GP 137) which derives from a literal interpretation of the topos "to sound the alarm". The same remark can be applied to the "Welcome Waggon" (GP 136) giving birth to the rolling ice cream cone mentioned above.

Again, polysemy and pun thrive in "The Flight of Pigeons from the Palace" where such sentences as "Winding-sheets were unwound" or "Sad themes were played by the band, bereft of its mind by the death of the tradition" (GP 134) are found. This equivocal aspect leads to the momentarily mind-boggling picture supposed to show a bunch of fools. The text, of course, plays with the ambivalent meaning of the term which can refer either to the king's fool or to an imbecile. The narrator complains that "fools

are hard to find. Usually they don't admit it" (GP 135). So, in retrospect, The picture turns out to show a group of diversified imbeciles. In addition, a noodle can be seen on show.

Does this mean that the picture is an illustration of the second meaning of the term "fool"? No, it does not because, as in every other case, the picture is issued from a fundamentally equivocal statement. The narrative of these short stories constantly shuttles back and forth between denotation and connotation, which forbids any illustrative relationship between word and image.

A last type of ambiguity can be examined which is in fact an ingenious transposition of the notion of ambiguity in visual terms. The last picture of "At the Tolstoy Museum" seems to illustrate the caption which reads "Museum plaza with monumental head (Closed Mondays)" (CL 50). The point is, however, that the strategy of ambiguity has been reversed, so that it has to be looked for in the picture. The picture is another of these studies in perspective based on the principle of recession according to a point in the background toward which all lines converge. But in this picture, the principle is flawed because the head of the Tolstoyan figure is bigger than it should be. This disproportion is indicated by the otherwise regular succession of the spheres in the left row of pillars.

Actually, the picture is not flawed but is based on a perspective as well as on "inverted" perspective whereby a

point of view inside the picture is implied.² It is this position that the Tolstoyan figure holds, and, logically, the beholder should appear tiny from this inverted viewpoint. Through this visual ambiguity, Tolstoy's dwarfing authority is once more suggested.

On account of his deep interest in media, Barthelme is often exclusively thought of in formalist or autotelic terms. My study has shown that such a view cannot be seriously held. By means of visual as well as linguistic signs, Barthelme refers to fiction, but this self-reference constitutes the first stage of a dialectical approach. Metafiction is the pretext for the author to explore the epistemological function of language. Through suggestion, satiric reference is simultaneously made to other aspects of the world.

² See Uspensky referred to in chapter one.

Conclusion

Degas is famous for his pithy sayings, and he once stated that the writer is "an absolutely remarkable stylist who could create vital, colorful images of life and men" (qtd. in Reff 161). On the same day perhaps, he added on behalf of painters that "in a single brushstroke we can say more than a writer in a whole volume" (qtd. in Reff 165). A few centuries before, Leonardo da Vinci had proclaimed that painting was at the pinnacle of the artistic hierarchy, while today some critics do not hesitate to argue that painting was the goad driving Modernism forward.

In this respect, painting is extolled as the supreme art whereas writing is pointed at as the slow learner. Or the painter is supposedly the artist who never recovered his voice whereas the poet holds sway over the reader with wondrous chants. Whatever the aesthetic position, the above studies have shown that literature has nothing to lose by establishing links with the visual arts.

The aim of the three individual studies of Tarr, Tender Only to One, and Barthelme's five short stories was to supply enough evidence for a comparative claim concerning painting and writing in the case of certain literary works. This aim has been achieved since the original hypothesis has yielded new interpretations of the three works. Without this deliberately chosen angle, the new critical vistas revealed in the three chapters would have remained submerged.

A synthesis of these three studies can be obtained by focusing on three levels of interpretation. These are themes, time and space, and artistic creation, as can be observed in the following table:

	Lewis	Taylor	Barthelme
Themes	grotesque and satire	identity	art and knowledge
Time & space	vortex as structural device; <u>mise en abyme</u> ; contiguity	ellipsis; contiguity; parataxis; <u>mis en abyme</u>	collage; parataxis; <u>mise en abyme</u> ; disjunction
Creation	"as if" and abstraction; suggestion	intertextual fiction; suggested paintings	ambiguity; contextual relation between word and image

Considering the thematic level first, one can notice a conspicuous thematic divergence between the three works. This is to be expected seeing that the three works were produced by three different personalities within different cultural contexts. But in each case, the link between painting and writing involves the same thematic concern. With Lewis, both artistic expressions are founded on the vision of a grotesque humanity; with Taylor, both artists and contemporary characters pathetically try to reconstitute a lost unity; with Barthelme the question of the epistemological function of visual and verbal signs is raised.

The second level can be seen as the irrefutable demonstration that the study of space and time within the

context of interartistic relations remains extremely valid. It is certainly no coincidence that, by examining the function of these two parameters in each individual work, one unveils something which looks very much like a spatial form. What is more, the structure of each work consistently exhibits a predilection for strategies such as contiguity, parataxis, juxtaposition, mise en abyme, caesura, and disjunction. This structure is no longer the scaffolding for a temporal vision of the world, but can be regarded as the necessary springboard for a symbolic relationship with the spatial art of painting.

With the last level of study, one is confronted with the sustained celebration of the art of fiction. Each work draws attention to the contrast between life and art or nature and culture. It is by means of the strategic, narrative "as if" and abstraction that Lewis creates a visionary world. Taylor eschews verisimilitude by converting biographical facts and artistic quotations into intertextual fiction. As for Barthelme, ambiguity, polysemy, and the contextual relation between word and image become the acknowledged tokens of his short stories. This emphatically creative stance can be attributed to the rejection of mimesis for which the aesthetic of suggestion is substituted.

If one bears in mind Lessing's Laocoon and its forbidding warning, one can regard the three authors' works as experimental fiction which functions like a post-Laocoonian statement. A similar provocative stance is to be found in the

developing years of Modernism when Gertrude Stein could think of nothing else but painting in order to break new ground with respect to the novel. Therefore one of the collateral aspects of interrelations between literature and the visual arts is the experimental property of the literary genre through which such a comparative step is taken. The concern about mimesis, for instance, is not the privileged feature of interartistic fiction, but the means of achieving anti-mimetic fiction remain idiosyncratic and distinct.

The next question to be raised, once interartistic relations have been demonstrated, is the following: why is a symbolic contact sought between literature and what is initially a two-dimensional art? Or, to put it another way, why is it that interrelationships between literature and sculpture are not at the forefront of such interdisciplinary works? One of the answers is that, unlike sculpture, a two-dimensional work of art is generally not endowed with the tactile quality which makes statues objects. The implicit problem here is the distinction between an artistic object and an ordinary one. The two-dimensional picture is an extraordinary case because, through canvas and paint, it can be apprehended as an embodiment of artistic creativity. Yet, it cannot be referred to as an object in space in the same way Henry Moore's sculpture is.

The reason why interrelations between literature and sculpture are so few is that literature is too abstract an art to bridge the gap between itself and sculpture. But in

the case of two-dimensional pictures, bonds can be created not only through common themes, but also at the level of a common symbolic space. By sharing a spatial aspect with painting, literature can then claim one of the defining attributes of two-dimensional art for itself, that is to say, autonomy from ordinary objects. As a result, inter-artistic relations can be seen as self-referential means of exploring the definition of art and literature. Through Tarr, Tender Only to One and Barthelme's short stories, the distinction between nature and culture, life and art, utilitarian objects and "constructs" is once more examined.

By widening the scope of inquiry, one can also consider these interrelationships within the generic context of the novel and short fiction. While Tarr and Barthelme's short stories do not present any generic equivocity, Tender Only to One is situated at the boundary between the short novel and a metonymic string of short stories. The point is, however, that these three examples of prose writing rest on a generic paradox: on the one hand, they are experimental works but, on the other, they belong to the tradition of the novel and short fiction. Indeed these two genres have always been elusive because they can display sub-genres as different as tales, short stories, and novellas in the case of short fiction, as well as myth, romance, history, journalism, and detective stories in the case of the novel. In this respect, interartistic works are but contributions to these two loose bags.

It has also been shown that, through interartistic relationships, the convention of mimesis is implicitly discarded in the three works. In turn this concern reflects a preoccupation as old as the novel and short fiction. Writers such as Poe, Henry James, and Kafka are known to have explored the concept of reality in their short stories by resorting to such stock genres as the fairy tale, the fantastic, and the ghost story. As to the novel, Bradbury and Fletcher write that it "has always conducted complicated transactions between its propensity toward realism, empirical detailing, the illusion of facticity, and elements of form and making involved in the realistic illusion" (395). These two poles are represented by Defoe's Roxanne and Sterne's Tristram Shandy. But these same poles tend to interact in our three works on account of their ambivalence. Barthelme is concerned with some type of social realism; Lewis with grotesque realism; and Taylor with descriptive realism. Yet, at the same time, interartistic bonds constitute the basis for fictional self-awareness in the three cases.

Finally, what the three studies of Lewis's, Taylor's, and Barthelme's works reveal is that interartistic relationships are not confined to one single principle of identity, but thrive on diversity. Interart comparisons must allow for a corresponding multiplicity of critical tools and approaches which helps one to perceive and be pleased by the individuality of each creative expression.

ILLUSTRATIONS

1. Wyndham Lewis, The Theater Manager, 1909.
Pen and ink, watercolour, 29.5 x 31.5 cm.

2. Wyndham Lewis, Timon of Athens: Alcibiades,
1912-13. Process engraving, 39.5 x 29 cm.

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3. Wyndham Lewis, Composition, 1913.
Pencil, pen and ink, watercolour, 34 x 26.5 cm.

4. Wyndham Lewis, The 'Enemy of the Stars', 1913.
Pen and ink, ink wash, 44 x 20 cm.

5. Wyndham Lewis, Figures Composition, 1912.
Pen and ink, watercolour, pencil, gouache 25 x 31 cm.

6. Wyndham Lewis, The Crowd, 1914-15.
Oil on canvas, 198 x 152.5 cm.

7. Wyndham Lewis, Two Vorticist Figures, 1912..
Pen and ink, gouache, 23.5 x 32 cm.

8. Wyndham Lewis, The Island, 1942.
Oil on canvas, 55.9 x 78.7 cm.

9. Wyndham Lewis, Workshop, 1914-15.
Oil on canvas, 76.5 x 61 cm.

10. Wyndham Lewis, The Dancers, 1912.
pen and ink, watercolour, 29.5 x 29 cm.

11. Wyndham Lewis, Vorticist Design, 1914.
Pencil, ink and wash, 23.5 x 18.5 cm.

12. Wyndham Lewis, Composition in Blue, 1915.
Ink, crayon and watercolour, 47 x 30.5 cm.

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13. Wyndham Lewis, Timon of Athens: Act III, 1912-13.
Process engraving, 39.5 x 28 cm.

14. Van Gogh, The Artist's Bedroom, Arles, October
Oil on canvas, 72 x 90 cm.

15. Van Gogh, Cy
Oil on canvas

16. Van Gogh, Crows Over the Wheatfields, Auvers, July 1890.
Oil on canvas, 50.5 x 100.5 cm.

17. Gauguin, Where Do We Come From? What Are We? Where Are We Going? 1897.
Oil on canvas, 111 x 376 cm. Detail.

Don Venons Nous
900 Sammes Nos
Ou Allons Nous

18. Gauguin, The Day of the God, 18
Oil on canvas, 66 x 108 cm.

19. Degas, The Curtain Falls, 1880.
Pastel on paper, 21 1/4" x 29 1/8".

20. Degas, Two Laundresses, ca
Oil on canvas, 29 7/8" x 32"

21. Degas, The Morning Bath, ca 1890.
Pastel on paper, 27 1/2" x 16 7/8".

22. Monet. W
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23. Monet, Irises, ca 1918-25.
Oil on canvas, 200.7 x 100.3 cm.

24. Monet, The Path through the Irises, ca 1918-25.
Oil on canvas, 200 x 180 cm.

25. Monet, Water Lilies and Japanese Bridge, 18
Oil on canvas, 90.5 x 90 cm.

ge, 1899.

26. Monet, The Japanese Footbridge at
Giverny, 1899.
Oil on canvas, 93 x 90

y Pool,

27. Nolde, The Missionary, 1912.
Oil on canvas, 79 x 65.5 cm.

28. Nolde, Evening Landscape, North Friesland.
Watercolour.

29. Bonnard, The Table, 1925.
Oil on canvas, 103 x 74.5 cm.

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30. Bonnard, Nude in Bath, 1936.
Oil on canvas, 93 x 147 cm.

*La puberté proche n'a pas encore enlevé la grâce tenue de nos
Pléiades / L'égard de nos yeux pleins d'ombre est dirigé vers le
pavé qui va tomber / La gravitation des ondulations n'existe pas encore*

31. Max Ernst, Les Pléiades, 1921.
Collage of photographs, gouache and oil on paper,
24.5 x 16.5 cm.

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