

"IF YOU ARE LOOKING FOR THE BILDER DEEP YOUR EAR
ON THE MOVIE TONE!":
LITERATURE AND THE CINEMATIC PARADIGM

THESIS

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By

Jeffrey S. Longacre, B.A.

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DEDICATION

This is for my mother, for her endless compassion; my father, for cultivating my love of bookstores and libraries when I was young; and my brother, for being a constant source of inspiration.

Also, this is for my friends, for putting up with my whining; and all of the Professors here at SWTSU who have inspired me to be better than I am.

But, most of all, this is for my wife Kim, who took my own lesson and taught it back to me: "Now, Patience; and remember patience is the great thing, and above all things else we must avoid anything like being or becoming out of patience" (Finnegans Wake 108.8). Thank you all.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Plato would have hated the cinema. He thought poets like Homer and other artists, by creating reflections of reflections of the "truth," were detrimental to his ideal Republic; he would have thought that film-makers were the most deceitful of artists outcasting them eternally from his vision of utopia. His allegory of the cave, in The Republic, which describes the plight of unenlightened man as being chained in a cave, forced to watch shadows of real objects cast on the wall by flickering flames and perceiving the shadows as reality, is about as close to describing the apparatus behind cinema as one could expect from a man who lived about 2500 years ago. He wonders at the implications of one of these men being freed from their chains, rising and leaving this ancient cinema to emerge into the blinding sunlight of "reality." Plato goes on to relate how it would be this person's duty, having been exposed to the "truth" to return to the cave and enlighten the others. His eyes would have to readjust to the dark and he would seem strange and different to them now since he was "enlightened." However, this man would be the natural leader since he had moved closer to perceiving the "truth" (Plato 205-8). Maybe, instead of moving one farther from the truth, art is the medium through which humanity perceives the metaphysical a bit more closely; an instrument, like a telescope or a microscope, through which we come in closer contact with the truth.

In this case, our cinemas throw an ironic twist into Plato's paradigm. Modern society, with all of its modern neuroses (sensory overload, stress, anxiety), all brought about by the speed and fragmentation of our existence in this century, goes to the cinema or a museum or reads a book as a means to refresh sensory perception. This seems to be the true purpose of art: something not meant to distract one from the truth, but to offer an objective vision of reality with which audiences can better reflect on their own visions of reality. In her essay "On Style," Susan Sontag considers this role of art as "a mode of nourishment . . . the experience of detaching oneself from the world. But the work of art itself is also a vibrant, magical, and exemplary object which returns us to the world in some way more open and enriched" (28). The artistic medium in our century which reaches the most people and most immediately offers this "mode of nourishment" is the cinema. On Friday nights, after a long and tedious work-week, we move in droves to movie theaters all over the world in search of this celluloid baptism so that we may return to the "real" world refreshed. Plato's cave has become our movie houses: complete with flickering images, shadows of the "reel" world.

However, my purpose is not to philosophize over the nature of reality in a Platonic or any other sense. I offer this preamble as a short illustration of how far reaching an aesthetic phenomenon can become. As William Carlos Williams said, "You must understand if you change the poetic line, you change civilization" (Packard 20). The invention and rise of cinematic art is one of the pivotal points of the Twentieth Century. To study its influence is to better understand the aesthetic developments of the past one-hundred years. In "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," Walter Benjamin states: "The uniqueness of a work of art is inseparable from its being imbedded in the fabric of tradition"

(223). By studying the part (cinema and literature) I hope to better understand the whole.

With the development of more sophisticated narrative forms, cinema became a major influence on Modernism and its satellite movements. Its unique way of structuring narrative elements offered a verisimilitude to our modern world that the writers in the early 1900's must have found irresistible as a model for their increasingly experimental styles. "Make it new!" was Ezra Pound's battlecry as the Modernists strove to separate themselves from the banalities and fluff characteristic of much Victorian art. What was more new, more "modern" than the cinema? Unlike earlier art forms, cinema seemed to some to have come to maturation too fast. Virginia Woolf saw it as a "savage" art in which "sometimes . . . in the midst of its immense dexterity and enormous technical proficiency, the curtain parts and we behold, far off, some unknown and unexpected beauty" (91). However, she thought the speed of its technical development left the new medium short of anything serious or important to say.

Despite apprehension and skepticism among many "serious" writers, there were those who early on saw the implications of this new aesthetic technology. Perhaps the most prophetic of all was Leo Tolstoy as the following indicates:

You will see that this little clicking contraption with the revolving handle will make a revolution in our life--in the life of writers. It is a direct attack on the old methods of literary art. We shall have to adapt ourselves to the shadowy screen and to the cold machine. A new form of writing will be necessary. I have thought of that and I can feel what is coming.

But I rather like it. This swift change of scene, this blending of emotion and experience--it is much better than the heavy, long-drawn-out kind of writing to which we are accustomed. It is closer to life. In life, too, changes and transitions flash by before our eyes, and emotions of the soul

are like a hurricane. The cinema has divined the mystery of motion. And that is greatness. (10)

Many other writers began to show a serious interest in the cinema and its aesthetic techniques. James Joyce showed enough interest in the fledgling art form to open and manage--with his Trieste business partners--the first cinema in Dublin in 1909 (Ellmann 300-4). Granted, financial gain was a primary motivating factor in his decision, but it still shows an interest (very early on I might add) in the cinema. Joyce's protege, Samuel Beckett, showed enough interest to write Sergei Eisenstein regarding a position as a "trainee," and he read books about Vsevolod Pudovkin and Rudolf Arnheim (Knowlson 212-13). In America many writers--such as Faulkner, Fitzgerald and Hemingway--would eventually do their time writing scripts in Hollywood with various levels of success. Literature begat cinema, and their relationship has been of an oedipal nature ever since. Sergei Eisenstein traces the literary roots of cinema in his essay "Dickens, Griffith, and the Film Today": "From here, from Dickens, from the Victorian novel, stem the first shoots of American film esthetic, forever linked with the name of David Wark Griffith" (195). The two narrative forms are often incestuous and murderous at times (especially when a particularly bad adaptation of a classic novel is filmed), but as their relationship grows it becomes more co-dependent.

Trying to find--or prove--the evidence of cinematic influence on literature in this century is a Sisyphean task. It is like asking: which came first, the chicken or the egg? For what artist or writer can honestly comprehend all of the social, technological and cultural influences on the unconscious or even conscious mind? Even if artists are aware of a particular influence on their style, that does not mean they will make any record of it in their notes, letters or journals. It may

just be a single thread of influence which they weave into the tapestry of their work.

At this point I would do well to justify to myself and my readers the point in executing so seemingly futile a work. It is like an archeological dig. An excavation into the literature--and inevitably culture--of the last 100 years. What do I hope to find? Some grounds, however fragmented in this first foray, to support the claim that the structure inherent in cinematic form was one of the greatest influences underlying the experimental literary styles of this century (particularly those lumped under the general headings of Modernism and Postmodernism). Hugh Kenner has already illustrated the far reaching influence of technological advancement on the literary mind in his book The Mechanic Muse. In that work he analyzes the influence of the automated modern city on T. S. Eliot and James Joyce, Ezra Pound's fascination with machines and how the typewriter helped to form his poetic line, and he shows us how Beckett's literary mind worked like a computer. Without a doubt technological advancement influences the direction of the creative mind, and I hope to better understand this by isolating the cinema and tracing the outlines of its influence on literature and--to a lesser extent--on the sweeping cultural phenomena that split our century in half: Modernism and Postmodernism.

The precise definition of these two terms is still hotly debated; however, I will outline some parameters for our purposes here. Modernism has "its origins in the Enlightenment period" (Milovanovic 20). It is characterized by a move towards certainty and boasts a centered subject. It relies on exact science and seeks a unified vision. Postmodernism, first and foremost, questions the possibility of this "totality," and questions whether or not anything can be known with certainty. It boasts a "decentered" subject, and aesthetically it is marked by self-reflexivity and playful experimentation. Dragan Milovanovic's essay "Dueling

Paradigms: Modernist versus Postmodernist Thought” is one of the best short pieces that compares the two schools of thought, and was relied upon heavily for my understanding of their general theories.

Due to the concise nature of a thesis, I have had to significantly narrow and focus my attention. I intend to pursue the following course in my study. I will begin with a broad overview of cinema from its inception through the formative years of its development. This should provide socio-historical, cultural and theoretical background to the thesis as a whole by starting with Lumiere and Porter and working up through the refinement of cinematic form with D. W. Griffith and the Russian avant garde. The next chapter will deal generally with Modernist poetry--as well as the various strands within that movement--and its relationship with cinematic form. Focusing primarily on T.S. Eliot and The Waste Land, I will analyze the importance that cinematic montage played on the shape and form of Modernist verse. Under the Modernist paradigm, since cinema was still in its nascent stages, the influence of cinema on literature was primarily structural; therefore the emphasis of this section will be both structural and semiotic.

With the fourth chapter I will “zoom-in” and focus mostly on a particular work--James Joyce's Ulysses--to analyze the synthesis of cinematic structures into the Modernist narrative style. The title of this thesis was culled from the pages of Joyce's Finnegans Wake; a work which contains many references to the cinema. In the following chapter my focus will move from an overview of the theater's reaction to the cinema to an analysis of Samuel Beckett's Film. With this work I intend to comment on the reaction to the threat of film, the exploration of its limits and to look at the work of a major literary stylist as he turns his talents toward the cinematic medium.

Beckett will serve as a segue into the Postmodern era, which shall be dealt with in the subsequent chapter by way of conclusion to the whole. Under the more loosely defined parameters of Postmodernism, the cinema seems to have become more of a cultural influence on literature as new generations of writers who had grown up with the cinema came of age. As Brian McHale points out in Postmodernist Fiction, "Instead of serving as a repertoire of representational techniques [as with Modernism], the movies and television appear in postmodernist writing as an ontological level" (128). Cinema, to the decentered world of Postmodernism, is one of many "ontological" and cultural levels. Briefly considering the implications of some "Postmodern" writers, I will "zoom back out" attempting to outline the dialectic of cinematic influence--and beyond--as we come to the end of the twentieth century. Shoring these fragments against my ruins, I will bring my work to an end.

As already stated, cinema is the youngest of art forms. Yet, in only a century of existence it has become a valid and powerful influence on styles of writing and literature. This is something almost all scholars agree on without question, but the topic has not been explored with great depth. There has been much emphasis placed on the influence of music, art and the classics on modern literature, but any consideration of the cinema has primarily focused on literature's influence on it. It is time to shift focus and consider the other side. It is time to move back into the cave and wonder at the implications and impact of those wavering, flickering shadows.

CHAPTER 2

THE DEVELOPMENT OF FORM: A STRUCTURAL HISTORY 1895-1930

"Last night I was in the Kingdom of Shadows" (Gorky 3). So begins Maxim Gorky's description of his first exposure to the Lumiere brothers' Cinematographe. Instead of a celluloid net which caught reality, he saw it as other worldly: "It is not life but its shadow, it is not motion but its soundless specter" (3). To Gorky the gray, ashen images he saw on July 7, 1896 were eerily disturbing--perhaps even cathartic. The soundless images seemed like shades sent from "death's other kingdom." He described these modern images much the way a young T. S. Eliot might have:

And all this in strange silence where no rumble of the wheels is heard, no sound of footsteps or of speech. Nothing. Not a single note of the intricate symphony that always accompanies the movements of people. Noiselessly, the ashen-gray foliage of the trees sways in the wind, and the gray silhouettes of the people, as though condemned to eternal silence and cruelly punished by being deprived of all the colours of life, glide noiselessly along the gray ground. (4)

This great imitator of empirical reality, in the beginning, distanced its audience by its silvery-gray, magical appearance. The History of Cinema begins, like Dante's epic masterpiece, in the underworld.

We know when cinema was born. So, unlike painting, writing, speech, or the human organism itself; we can study its development and evolution from the

beginning. Granted, the first years of the new art remain murky, and many films from this time period have been lost forever, but the exact time and place of its conception is known: Paris, December 28, 1895. This is when Louis and August Lumiere first “began paid public performances of their films in a basement cafe” (Ellis 2). Film came from the fever of science and invention which burned throughout the Victorian era, stretching all the way back to the invention of photography. Art, theater and literature were not even in the picture at the very beginning; it was largely a scientific enterprise.

How, then, can we be sure of this moment as the true beginning of cinema? There were many who had experimented with motion and the persistence of vision before this date, but it was out of this chaos that cinema emerged on the night of December 28, 1895. In his article “Let There Be Lumiere,” Dai Vaughn assures us of this fact:

We need not doubt that, so far as the genesis of film art is concerned, these shows mounted by the Lumiere brothers represent the nearest we will find to a singularity. Before then, notwithstanding such precedents as the photographic analysis of animal movement by Marey and Muybridge, the public projection of animated drawings in Reynaud’s Theatre Optique or anticipations of film narrative methods in comic strip and lantern slide sequence, cinema did not exist. (63)

As the story goes, the first audiences of the Lumiere films--when confronted by a train seemingly headed straight for them--dodged the imminent catastrophe due to the realism of the spectacle. However, as Gorky has illustrated, these images were not realistic; which prompted many critics to wonder at the truth behind this legend. After all, these were upper-class educated French audiences, so what could have prompted such a reaction? Vaughn offers a suggestion, “What this legend means is that the particular combination of visual signals present in that

film had had no previous existence *other* than as signifying a real train pulling into a real station" (63). The new technology is born.

These first years of cinema consist mainly of experimenting with the new form, testing its limits, and learning how to operate the new machinery. Narrative and what I will call the "language" of the cinema were slow to evolve. I speak tentatively of cinematic "language" because in recent years the idea of cinema as a language has come under much dispute as Gregory Currie notes in "The Long Goodbye: The Imaginary Language of Film": "We must abandon the way of language, convention and code, and think about cinema narrative in terms of natural generatively and intentional, rationalistic explanation" (218). My purpose is not to debate this issue, so I shall refer to the organizational and semiotic aspects of film as cinematic language for the purposes of this thesis.

The narrative structures of cinema are what we must deal with, and they have a much more muddled origin than cinema itself. In the essay "Film Form 1900-1906," Barry Salt states: "It should be mentioned that around half the films surviving from before 1906 consist of just one scene done in one shot, and these are of no interest as far as film construction is concerned" (35). It was with Edison, Porter and Melies--around the turn of the century--that we get the first forays into narrative form. Georges Melies's film, A Trip to the Moon (1902) was probably the first coherent narrative film--and the first to employ special effects. Melies was a magician who saw a gold-mine in the new medium as a means to create illusion. Jack C. Ellis notes that "He did manage to tell a complete story of many incidents in a coherent fashion; script, staging, and performance are carefully controlled to achieve a satisfying whole" (10). Earlier, in 1896, Melies had a problem with his camera jamming while filming a bus coming through a tunnel. When he got it cranking again he filmed a hearse thereby creating the illusion of the bus turning into a hearse. David A. Cook points out the

implications of this serendipitous accident: “[Melies] had discovered that film need not obey the laws of empirical reality, as his predecessors had supposed, because film was in some sense a separate reality with structural laws of its own” (14).

The next major step in narrative development came with Edwin S. Porter. Porter was an American who was hired by Thomas Edison to work for his film production company. His two major contributions to the history of cinema are both from the year 1903: Life of an American Fireman and The Great Train Robbery. In these films he employs an idea of continuity editing for the first time as Ellis relates: “By employing a double line of action, Porter was forced into cutting from one setting to another, thus demonstrating for the first time that a film scene didn’t have to be played through in its entirety before being followed by another (as is the usual practice in the theater)” (11). The Great Train Robbery also made use of masking shots and special effects to heighten the realism as opposed to the fantastic role it played in Melies’s films. It was enormously popular, widely imitated and began the tradition of “classical” narrative which descends all the way to the present. Neither Melies nor Porter were able to break wholly from previously established narrative traditions however. Cook illustrates their shortcomings:

All of its [The Great Train Robbery] interior scenes are photographed in the stage-like fashion of Melies, with the actors moving from left to right, or vice versa, across the “proscenium” of the frame, and the actors’ gestures are exaggerated and stilted. Furthermore, Porter never uses more than one camera angle or position in any one setting, and, like those of Melies, most of his shots are long shots showing the actors at full length. (28)

This was pretty much the state of narrative cinema until we come to D. W.

Griffith and the consolidation of all of these experiments and narrative strands into a unified, working and distinctly cinematic system.

Revisionist film-historians have recently worked to decenter Griffith from the origins of narrative cinematic structure. For instance Barry Salt debunks the myth that Griffith developed the concept of cross-cutting between parallel actions by claiming that the film The Hundred-to-one Shot (Vitagraph, 1906), contains “fully developed cross-cutting . . . with repeated cuts between a speeding car and events at its destination . . . [seeming] to be the beginning of a development that continued through 1907 into 1908, and for which D. W. Griffith incorrectly claimed credit” (39). Another example characteristic of this trend is Jacques Aumont’s essay “Griffith: the Frame, the Figure,” the point of which seems to be to debunk the Griffith myth. Here is a characteristic example:

It is banal to include the close-up amongst Griffith’s inventions, or at least a certain use of the close-up, since, as Mitry pointed out, Griffith was not the first person to use it. But it is in his work all the same . . . that it begins to escape from the role of pure functional repetition of a detail supposedly not clearly seen in the shot as a whole, to become a fully signifying unit in the narrative discourse (acquiring, as Mitry says, dramatic value).

(Aumont 356)

It is true that Griffith may not have invented many or any of the techniques that he had claimed to, but he is the unifying element--the *omphalos*--of early narrative cinema. It was Griffith who took all of these disparate elements and shaped them into a cinematic language (or language system as Christian Metz would have it) regardless of the almost unbearably melodramatic content of his films. Griffith took cinema to the next step, bringing it out of its scientific and photographic background and created a narrative structure closer to the novel than the theater. David A. Cook goes so far as to say, “The achievement of

David Wark Griffith (1875-1948) is unprecedented in the history of Western art, much less Western film;" but he also sums up Griffith's paradoxical nature of being "a nineteenth-century man who founded a uniquely twentieth-century art form (59).

For the most part, films before Griffith were filmed theater. The new technology had yet to be mastered so that it could break through the bonds of its rudimentary beginnings and develop a style uniquely cinematic. Silent films could only convey meaning primarily in one way only: visually. There are two ways this visual meaning can be conveyed; they are through the *mise-en-scene* and *montage*. The *mise-en-scene* is simply everything within the frame, or what David A. Cook calls, "intraframe narrative" (67). For our purposes this will also include camera movement--i.e. panning, tilting or tracking movements and intertitles. Griffith's experiments with movement set the standard and, although he was not the first to use camera movement, he took it far beyond the primitive state it was in. Cook emphasizes the importance of Griffith in this area: "In the horizontal sweep of the panning shot, Griffith was able not only to follow the movement of his principals through any given scene but to engage the audience in the total environment of his films" (69). The long tracking shot in the "Babylonian story" of Intolerance is still impressive by today's standards.

Griffith was also the first to develop a grammar of cinema. As Jack C. Ellis points out, "Perhaps Griffith's single most important insight was that the shot rather than the scene should be the basic unit of film language" (16). This was the first big break with the theatrical narrative structure which plagued the early days of cinema. By breaking scenes down into a series of shots, Griffith brought cinematic narrative closer to the novel than to the theater. Indeed, he was greatly influenced by Victorian and nineteenth century American literature--particularly Dickens, Browning, Tennyson and Whitman. In fact, when

the executives at Biograph--concerned about how the public would respond to his narrative experiments--approached him and said:

"How can you tell a story jumping about like that? The people won't know what it's about."

"Well," said Mr. Griffith, "doesn't Dickens write that way?"

"Yes, but that's Dickens; that's novel writing; that's different."

"Oh, not so much, these are picture stories; not so different." (Cook 65)

The importance of literary influence on Griffith cannot be overstated. It is the impetus of his emerging cinematic grammar. Thomas Elsaesser and Adam Barker illustrate this point: "Griffith's 'cultural' ambitions to retain for the cinema the prestige of an essentially literary mode (emblematically represented by Whitman's democratic universalism) made him strive for an elaborate allegorical mode of hieroglyphics . . . rather than the visual transparency of the emergent classical style" (306). Griffith would employ these novelistic styles only to transcend them into the realm of cinematic art.

This grammar of "hieroglyphs" that Griffith had invented consisted of shots. As pointed out earlier, other directors had divided a scene into shots before and had used such devices as the closeup, but it was Griffith who realized the emotional impact that could be created by various shots, thus formulating, by trial and error, his grammatical style. Ellis relates the meaning that Griffith gave to particular shots, which have become conventional today:

. . . the *long shot* usually begins a scene, establishing the action and its setting. It might be used to "reestablish," after closer partial views, so that the parts could be kept related to the whole. . . . The *medium shot* rather than the long shot became the standard framing from which the director departs for special purposes, just as we usually deal with life around us from middle distance. . . . The stress of the medium shot is on

relationships, on interaction. . . . [In] a *closeup*, the visual information becomes quite limited--perhaps to one face, a hand stroking fur, a pot boiling over--but the emotional weight becomes very heavy. (17)

These developments of "intraframe narrative" were widely imitated, and still form the basis of film grammar today. The early comedies that were becoming popular throughout the teens made great use of "intraframe narrative." Charles Chaplin became world famous and a cultural icon in part because of his manipulation of this visual grammar. He often employed full shots so his entire body could be seen; a point which was integral to his physical style of comedy. He also made excellent comic use of the visual pun, taking this structure to new heights. Chaplin's second great contribution was a fictional character as Ellis notes, "Chaplin would develop a comedy character into one of the great comic figures (along with Falstaff, Till Eulenspiegel, Don Quixote and Sancho Panza, and the creatures of *commedia del' arte*). . . . [The little tramp], ingenuously and ingeniously triumphant while maintaining his cheerfulness and dignity in an adverse world, was quickly taken to the hearts of audiences everywhere" (45). This character that Chaplin developed from 1915's The Tramp on performed another function. For many--in the U.S. and abroad--who questioned the legitimacy of film as an art form, Chaplin (and Griffith) showed that cinema could be a valid art form, entertaining the masses as well as being intellectually and aesthetically pleasing at the same time. Michael Roemer sums this ability up beautifully: "Perhaps his use of the medium is ultimately so rich and effective because he could give--as only childhood can--to the invisible and subjective the concrete imminence of fact" (190).

The cultural phenomenon that was Chaplin invaded the Parisian salons in the twenties, and was one of the first filmic influences on the literary scene. James Joyce wrote to Valery Larbaud: "Expected to see you last night at The Kid . . ."

(Letters III 53). It is in fact the only specific film Joyce ever mentions in his extant letters. He later writes (again to Larbaud) of an article his daughter Lucia wrote on Chaplin (Letters III 88). Ezra Pound also wrote of Chaplin's popularity and aesthetic dexterity explaining that "he, Chaplin, gets the maximum effect with the minimum effort, minimum expenditure, etc., etc., . . ." (55). This is akin to Pound's poetic theories vis-à-vis the Imagist movement and, later the Vorticist movement. Hart Crane uses Chaplin's influence in his poem "Chaplinesque." And Carl Sandburg writes about Chaplin's acting abilities in his essay, "Carl Sandburg Says Chaplin Could Play Serious Drama" (Authors on Film 263-266).

Another important development in "intraframe narrative" was German Expressionism. This movement sprang from Germany on the world scene between the years of 1919 and 1924. It used set design and camera angles to objectify the inner life of its protagonists, and was exploited by directors such as: F.W. Murnau, Fritz Lang, Paul Wegener, and Robert Weine. The quintessential expressionist film is Weine's The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari (1919). Often gothic and foreboding in tone, expressionist film explored the darker and unconscious areas of cinema. David A. Cook explains: "The nightmarishly distorted decor of German Expressionist films and their creation of *stimmung* ('mood') through shifting chiaroscuro lighting were *expressive* of the disturbed mental and emotional states they sought to portray" (111). He goes on to state the importance of this development: "This was perhaps as radical an innovation for the cinema as Porter's elaboration of the shot, since it added a nonnarrative and poetic dimension to what had been, even in the hands of Griffith, an almost wholly narrative medium" (111). Lotte Eisner in her seminal and exhaustive work on the subject, The Haunted Screen, describes the movement's motivations:

Expressionism, Edschmid declared, is a reaction against the atom-splitting of Impressionism, which reflects the iridescent ambiguities, disquieting

diversity, and ephemeral hues of nature. At the same time Expressionism sets itself against Naturalism with its mania for recording mere facts, and its paltry aim of photographing nature or daily life. The world is there for all to see; it would be absurd to reproduce it purely and simply as it is.

The Expressionists also oppose the effeminacy of neo-Romanticism. (10)

It is easy to see German Expressionism's place in the overall Modernist movement. The above definition, only slightly altered, could easily apply to at least one strand of Modernism. It seems logical that much of this imagery affected T.S. Eliot's mind when composing some of his poems from this time period. The "Circe" episode in Joyce's Ulysses also could have been influenced by films such as Caligari. After all, Joyce was composing that chapter around this time period. Carl Sandburg reviewed the film for The Chicago Daily News, writing: "Cubist, futurist, post-impressionist, characterize it by any name denoting a certain style, it has its elements of power, knowledge, technic, passion, that make it sure to have an influence toward more easy flowing, joyous, original American movies" (Authors on Film 49). He could have just as easily said literature. Perhaps the Modernist writer most greatly influenced by Expressionism was Franz Kafka. The dark, distorted worlds he envisions in stories such as "The Metamorphosis" and "A Hunger artist" or novels like The Trial owe a great debt to the Teutonic mind set of German Expressionism.

Coming back to D. W. Griffith, let us now focus our attention on--and follow the development of--his other major contribution to the cinematic art: what Cook calls "interframe narrative" (62). "Interframe narrative" is simply the composition of individual shots into a coherent narrative order. Cinema's unique way of creating meaning by the juxtaposition of visual elements, or *montage*, is perhaps its greatest contribution to all the narrative arts of this century. We have briefly looked at pre-Griffith montage but, as with so much else, it was Griffith who

consolidated and formulated the grammar of montage into the seed of what it is today.

With montage, and the way it closely adhered form to content, the “tale and the telling of the tale (i.e., the narrative technique) became the vehicles for one another--so that the medium, in effect, became the message” (Cook 66).

Montage, as compositional element, is closer to the way our mind works--Neurological electricity firing through our nervous system across the gaps of synapses, back and forth--than anything that came before. It is the basic element of cinematic construction. Griffith became a master at utilizing the technique, particularly in chase sequences. By cross-cutting between two, three or even four parallel actions, Griffith found he could heighten the psychological implications of these scenes. By altering the tempo of these shot sequences, he could alter the audience’s perception of the subject matter, as Jack Ellis notes:

What he discovered, other film makers have learned and used since:

Rapid cutting, or a succession of short shots, can create excitement; slow cutting, or shots held longer on the screen, will aid calm contemplation.

Both the shifting spatial framing and the temporal alternation of shots give the film maker artistic resources extending well beyond the bare meaning of the action being recorded. (18)

Griffith soon learned that this technique could be employed *sans* a chase sequence, as Cook points out: “In After Many Years, an October 1908 screen version of Tennyson’s narrative poem Enoch Arden, Griffith resorted to parallel editing without benefit of a chase” (64). All of the kernels that would be developed in later editing practices were present in Griffith’s films. He developed what later became known as “motivated point-of-view” shots (i.e. a character is shown in closeup looking at something off screen which is cut to and shown in the next shot) and the flashback technique which he called “switchback” (Cook

65). As pointed out before, Griffith saw individual shots as hieroglyphics; grammatical elements of a cinematic language. Eisenstein would later play off this connotation in his essay which studies Japanese written language, "The Cinematographic Principle and the Ideogram" (28-44). Ezra Pound would also do similar studies on the visual nature, and visual method of communication of the Japanese ideogram. Here we find ourselves returning to the primitive roots of language. Could this be part of the wide appeal of cinema? It seems very likely. Cook notes the way Griffith approached cinema as a visual language: "As Griffith saw it, films were narratives, or stories, which were told through the arrangement not of words but of moving photographic images" (65).

Like other aspects of Griffith's cinematic style, "interframe narrative" too had its roots in his literary tastes as William M. Drew notes in D. W. Griffith's *Intolerance: Its Genesis and Its Vision*: "He even attributed his development of tempo and parallel action in his films to his study of Whitman" (86). But his development of cinematic montage transcended its literary backgrounds, and he was able to use the device in new and unusual ways. In turn cinematic montage would become an influence on its literary forbear; creating a dialectic which produced the fragmented narrative forms of this century.

With Intolerance Griffith reached the apex of his "interframe narrative" experiments. He interweaves stories from four different epochs: a modern story, a Babylonian story, a Judean story (of Christ's life and crucifixion), and a French story (involving the massacre of the Huguenots in 1572). The narratives all revolve, like a ribbon around a may pole, around the thematic idea of "intolerance." He uses a phrase from Whitman, "Out of the cradle endlessly rocking. . ." and a scene of Lilian Gish (as Earth mother?) rocking a cradle with a highly melodramatic shaft of light shining on her from the heavens. His use of

time and space are right in step with the *zeitgeist* of the times as Drew points out:

In addition to serving his didactic purpose, Griffith's novel arrangement of the historical epochs in Intolerance grew out of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century milieu, when writers, philosophers, scientists and filmmakers simultaneously began to speculate on time in ways that represented a dramatic break with traditional linear views of temporal reality as flowing "like a steady stream, independent of our activities." (19)

Of course it was around this time when Einstein's views on space and time were becoming well known, as well as other theoretical work done in the scientific field. Intolerance's four part structure and use of time seems like a forebearer to T. S. Eliot's Four Quartets. Indeed, it could very well have provided a cinematic model for Eliot's structuring of the poem, although he never mentioned it. Drew notes the similarity: "The poet T. S. Eliot, who began his career in the early twentieth century, conveyed his impression of time in the following lines: 'Time present and time past/ Are both perhaps present in time future,/ And time future contained in time past'" (19). If Joyce saw the film, perhaps he noted the idea of cyclical history which stretches back to Giambattista Vico and was the model for his Finnegans Wake. The film most definitely seems to have been an influence on William Faulkner and the narrative structure from multiple points of view he often utilized. Bruce F. Kavin in his book Faulkner and Film points out: "Faulkner used a simpler version of Intolerance's montage in his novel The Wild Palms (where two stories are told in alternating chapters), and a variation on [Abel] Gance's kind of montage in the opening sections of The Sound and the Fury" (8). Ezra Pound's massive historical overhaul The Cantos may also owe something to Griffith's masterpiece. However, one must be careful, as Kavin notes: "It is even

arguable that Faulkner picked up these techniques from film itself, or from writers who were, as Gertrude Stein put it, 'doing what cinema was doing'" (5) So, which came first the chicken or the egg?

One thing that is unquestionable is that Intolerance is an epic Modernist masterpiece that deserves its place with other Modernist epics such as: The Waste Land, The Cantos, John Dos Passos's U.S.A. trilogy, and Ulysses. Pauline Kael sums up the film's epic stature--and the reason it bombed at the box office:

Intolerance is like an enormous, extravagantly printed collection of fairy tales. The book is too thick to handle, too richly imaginative to take in, yet a child who loves stories will know that this is the treasure of treasures.

The movie is the greatest extravaganza and the greatest folly in movie history, an epic celebration of the potentialities of the new medium--lyrical, passionate, and grandiose. (172)

Intolerance's (and Griffith's) far-reaching influences ultimately made it to Russia and the newly formed--and revolutionary minded--Soviet Union, which brings us to the next stage of "interframe narrative" or montage.

After Griffith, the single greatest influence on cinematic narrative structure is the Russian, Sergei Eisenstein. He took Griffith's developments, gave them a theoretical base, and developed a much more complex idea of montage--ideas that shook the "reel" world. Eisenstein came out of a school of thought which was already focusing on montage as the essential element of cinematic form. The Soviet Union of the late teens and twenties, before Stalin had clenched his iron fist, was a fertile hot-bed of revolutionary fervor both politically and aesthetically.

Eisenstein came from a background in theater (with Stanislavsky and his method acting on one side and Meyerhold's "bio-mechanics" on the other) which

quickly fortified the visual elements of narrative structure in his way of thinking. Soon he was faced with the limitations of the proscenium arch stating, "The theater as an independent unit within a revolutionary framework . . . is out of the question. It is absurd to perfect a wooden plough; you must order a tractor" (Cook 144). The cinema began to fulfill his desire for a revolutionary visceral narrative structure. He saw as many films as he could as Cook notes: "Between 1920 and 1924, Eisenstein had seen countless German Expressionist and American Films in Moscow, including the major works of Griffith" (145). Perhaps the most influential experience in his apprenticeship was his work for "the Kuleshov Workshop at the VGIK for three months in the winter of 1922-23" (Cook 145).

Lev Kuleshov was conducting a number of experiments with editing and the ways in which a film could be put together. Heavily influenced by Pavlovian psychology, he was interested in the reactions which could be elicited depending on the order in which shots in a film were arranged. David Cook sums up his most famous experiment:

Kuleshov took unedited footage of a completely expressionless face . . . and intercut it with shots of three highly motivated objects: a bowl of hot soup, a dead woman lying in a coffin, and a little girl playing with a teddy bear. When the film strips were shown to audiences, they invariably responded as though the actor's face had accurately portrayed the emotion appropriate to the intercut object. As Pudovkin recalled: "The public raved about the acting of the artist. They pointed out the heavy pensiveness of his mood over the forgotten soup, were touched and moved by the deep sorrow with which he looked at the dead woman, and admired the light, happy smile with which he surveyed the girl at play. But we knew that in all three cases the face was exactly the same." (137)

Thus the “Kuleshov effect” was born. Cook points out the conclusions Kuleshov derived from these experiments: “that the shot, or cinematic sign, has two distinct values: 1) that which it possesses in itself as a photographic image of reality and 2) that which it acquires when placed in relationship to other shots” (137). These ideas were of monumental importance to Eisenstein, and he shaped the theories of montage he began to develop with his first film Strike (1924).

Eisenstein based his theory of montage on Karl Marx’s dialectical views of history--which in turn stretches all the way back to the Socratic method of dialogue. He took the paradigm of “thesis + antithesis = synthesis” and formulated it into “shot A + shot B = shot C,” and then in turn shot C would become the thesis for the next sequence. Eisenstein (as opposed to Pudovkin, who followed closer in Griffith’s footsteps seeing montage as a linkage of “building blocks”) saw montage as inherently a collision of opposite ideas, and through the dynamism of this collision forming new concepts. Indeed, Eisenstein saw conflict inherent in all art as he points out in his essay “The Cinematographic Principle and the Ideogram”: “As the basis of every art is conflict (an ‘Imagist’ transformation of the dialectical principle). The shot appears as the *cell* of montage. Therefore it also must be considered from the viewpoint of *conflict*” (38). Eisenstein saw this dialectical conflict as innate in the cinema apparatus itself, as Cook makes apparent in a note: “In a very important sense, as Eisenstein realized, the dialectic can also be used to describe the psychoperceptual process of cinema itself: in projection, two (or more) independent still photographs on a film strip collide to produce something different from and greater than them both--the illusion of continuous motion” (170).

The relationship that cinematic structure bore to language was not lost to Eisenstein either. Like Griffith, he saw the cinema as a linguistic structure with the individual shot acting as signifier. He related these cinematic hieroglyphics to language first in his study of the Japanese Ideogram. Cook offers a succinct illustration of how this language system works: "In Japanese character-writing, completely new concepts are formed by combining the symbols for two separate older ones" (171). This was the perfect justification to Eisenstein for his theories of montage. If language works this way, the mind must work this way--so why not the cinema? In his essay "A Dialectic Approach to Film Form," Eisenstein explains why he links cinematic structure with language:

Now why should the cinema follow the forms of theater and painting rather than the methodology of language, which allows wholly new concepts of ideas to arise from the combination of two concrete denotations of two concrete objects? Language is much closer to film than painting is. For example, in painting the form arises from *abstract* elements of line and color, while in cinema the material *concreteness* of the image within the frame presents--as an element--the greatest difficulty in manipulation. So why not rather lean towards the system of language, which is forced to use the same mechanics in inventing words and word-complexes? (60)

Eisenstein began to compile a grammar far more complex than Griffith's, and brought a poetic element to the language of the cinema. The idea of systems being linguistic structures was right in step with the times, as seen in the work of philosophers such as Ferdinand Saussure and Ludwig Wittgenstein. One could say that Eisenstein was the first serious film linguist.

It was in his second film, The Battleship Potemkin (1925) that Eisenstein put all of his theories of montage to the test. Especially in the now legendary "Odessa steps" sequence he used all his experiments to distort the relationship

between time and space. To achieve this Eisenstein composed his film of many shots of short duration. Cook gives an illustration of the amount of shots it took to complete Potemkin: "The completed version of the film ran eighty-six minutes . . . and contained 1,346 shots--a remarkably high number when we consider that the released version of The Birth of a Nation, with a running time of 195 minutes, contained only 1,375 shots . . ." (148). Potemkin, although seen by many as agitprop and confusing, eventually earned the director international fame; although it mainly only appealed to other intellectuals. The fact that films like this were being made was a sign that it was now being treated seriously as an art, not just some cheap entertainment.

When Stalin came to power and chilled the fervor of the Russian avant-garde, Eisenstein found it harder and harder to get his films made. So, he spent much of this time looking back on his earlier films, especially Potemkin, and formulating in writing his theories of montage. He was able (primarily in his essays "A Dialectic Approach to Film Form" and "Methods on Montage") to distill his practices down to five different "methods" of montage: 1) metric 2) rhythmic 3) tonal 4) overtone and 5) intellectual. Cook does an excellent job of paraphrasing Eisenstein's complex theories:

"Metric montage" is concerned solely with the tempo of the cutting, regardless of the content of the shots. . . . "Rhythmic montage" . . . [is] an elaboration of metric montage in which the cutting rate is based upon the rhythm of movement *within* the shots as well as upon predetermined metrical demands. . . . "Tonal montage," represents a stage beyond the rhythmic in which the dominant emotional *tone* of the shots becomes the basis for editing. . . . "Overtone montage" is basically a synthesis of metric, rhythmic, and tonal montage which emerges in projection rather than in the editing process. . . . "Intellectual or ideological montage" . . . [is]

capable of expressing abstract ideas by creating *conceptual* relationships among shots of opposing visual content. (172-3)

Intellectual montage is the cinematic equivalent to the metaphor, simile or sometimes the synecdoche in literature. An example that Eisenstein himself gives in "Methods of Montage" is from his film October in the "gods" sequence. In this sequence beginning, as Cook relates, "with a baroque statue of Christ and concluding with a hideous primitive idol . . ." (174). Eisenstein explains the effects they were to have on audiences through the method of intellectual montage: "These pieces were assembled in accordance with a descending intellectual scale--pulling back the concept of God to its origins, forcing the spectator to perceive this "progress" intellectually" (82).

Through these methods, Eisenstein showed how time "feels" at a moment of crisis, instead of simply relating the action in real time, therefore succeeding in creating a much more subjective (and poetic) grammar for the cinema. These methods were not unlike the stream-of-consciousness technique practiced by many Modernist writers; which is most likely where Eisenstein mined the gold for his cinematic techniques. Eisenstein greatly admired Joyce and the stream-of-consciousness technique. In his essay "A Course in Treatment" he expresses his admiration for Joyce's talent:

Only the film-element commands a means for an adequate presentation of the whole course of thought through a disturbed mind.

Or, if literature can do it, it is only a literature that breaks through the limits of its orthodox enclosure. Literature's most brilliant achievement in this field has been the immortal "inner monologues" of Leopold Bloom in Ulysses. (104)

The two met in a famous meeting and were enamored of each other's techniques. In Gosta Werner's essay, "James Joyce and Sergej [sic] Eisenstein"

we get another example of the influence of Joyce's ideas on Eisenstein: "The Film School established in Moscow in 1931 was an important forum for his ideas. He dealt with Ulysses when lecturing in the fall of 1934, and he made his students "translate" Joyce's texts into "film language" . . . (494). Another essay by William V. Costanzo deals with the two giants of their respective media, as well as their meeting and admiration for one another (Joyce and Eisenstein: Literary Reflections of the Reel World). But as Werner points out, their respect for each other might not have been absolute: "[Eisenstein] regarded [Joyce] as a literary pioneer because of his use of interior monologues . . . but also as a typical bourgeois writer who belonged to the capitalist world" (503). And apparently Joyce's ego might not have allowed him to hold Eisenstein in the greatest respect either, since "as far as is known he never referred to their meeting" (Werner 503).

Even though Eisenstein's techniques derived in part from studying literature and the stream-of-consciousness method, it does not necessarily mean that these Modernist techniques of literary composition did not derive in part from the cinema. In Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man, Marshall McLuhan writes: "The stream of consciousness is really managed by the transfer of film technique to the printed page, where, in a deep sense it really originated" (295). So, the deep structure (as Noam Chomsky might have described it) originated in literature but, through film's manipulation of the technique, it gave back to literature a new--and distinctly modern--way of approaching form. Its popularity among Modernist artists is further described by McLuhan: "Yet film and the stream of consciousness alike seemed to provide a deeply desired release from the mechanical world of increasing standardization and uniformity. Nobody ever felt oppressed by the monotony or uniformity of the Chaplin ballet or by the monotonous, uniform musings of his literary twin, Leopold Bloom" (295-6).

Eisenstein's career slowed (with Stalin's help) then ended with his death in 1948. Although much of his early work is Soviet propaganda, it transcends that stigma. But the cinematic influence had become strongly felt in all areas. It appealed to something buried in the consciousness of mankind. We were emerging from Gorky's "kingdom of shadows" into a new and fragmented understanding of reality. The cinema had made its impression on the literary model. Walter Benjamin sums up cinema's appeal and relevance best: "The camera introduces us to unconscious optics as does psychoanalysis to unconscious impulses" (237). It appeals directly to the unconscious mind.

CHAPTER 3

"AS IF A MAGIC LANTERN THREW THE NERVES IN PATTERNS ON A SCREEN": MODERNIST POETRY AND FILM

The entire history of Western art can be seen as the struggle between content and form. Like the theme of William Blake's poem The Marriage of Heaven and Hell, or Nietzsche's theory of the Apollonian and Dionysian--which can be seen as foreground to Freud's superego and id, respectively--the ideas of order and chaos are central to any discussion on the methods of art and literature. There is an inherent dichotomy between form and content. Naturally, the two terms form two ends of a pole; the closer one can bring them together, the closer to representing objective reality one may come.

Modernism sought to achieve this goal. It sought to rescue art and literature from the quagmire of stilted forms and trite content that much of the overstuffed corpse of Victorian literature had become stuck fast in. The content for Modernist works being whatever was "new," led inevitably to machines, modern psychology, and that eclectic patchwork of stories--the modern city. Form was the subject of much experimentation. The Modernists were in search of a "concretized" form, which could by-pass third-person narration and render the matter as it truly is. We find in many Modernist narratives the death of the omniscient narrator. This led to a heightened sense of self-reflexivity in Modernist works. Robert Kolker sums up this development in his essay "Modernism: An Introduction":

In short, the modernist strain began a self-reflexivity, an awareness that the work of art is first and foremost form, and the forms of each art are unique. If that form in turn created substance (as it must in the narrative arts), that substance could only deal with the decay and collapse of nineteenth-century notions of "truth" that had not been rendered invalid, or with new ideologies rapidly developing after the war. Such discoveries revitalized the imagination. Non-representational painting flourished; Schoenberg and his pupils discovered new possibilities in music; the Bauhaus redefined architecture; surrealism and Dada attempted to supplant the old romanticism in painting and literature; the work of Joyce, Eliot, and Bertolt Brecht, each in very different ways, redefined the function of literature. (3)

Ezra Pound was one of the central "vortices" of the Modernist movement. His sole aim was to bring poetry--and art and literature as a whole--into the twentieth century. His influence can be felt on all frontiers of international Modernism. He helped Yeats modernize his poetry, and through their interest in Asian art they fed off of each other. Pound discovered James Joyce and T. S. Eliot, and acted as their literary agents. His friends from college included William Carlos Williams and H. D. (Hilda Doolittle), and together they founded imagism. He and Wyndham Lewis founded the Vorticist movement, and championed all things modern. Pound was central to the Modernist movement, and without him we might be living in very different times--for better or worse (see Hugh Kenner's The Pound Era for further evidence of Pound's centrality to the Modernist movement).

A revolution of form was born. "To break the pentameter, that was the first heave," says Pound in his epic poem The Cantos (532). This revolution foregrounded language; its ways of conveying meaning and its ordering

principles. The medium became the message: "As Samuel Beckett said of James Joyce, 'His writing is not *about* something; *it is that something itself*.'" (Wynne-Davies 272). In this search for a fresh language that came closer to expressing objective reality at its source, Pound became interested in the pictorial roots of language via hieroglyphics and Chinese ideograms.

These form a point of intersection between two of the great minds of Modernist poetry and Modernist film. Eisenstein explored the ideogram to get at the linguistic roots of cinematic montage. He may have taken his cue from Pound, who much earlier was studying the relationship between language and image (an inherent idea of the *Imagist* movement) to come to an understanding of objective reality and how poetic form might become better at rendering it. Pound was following the lead of "Ernest Fenollosa . . . [who] pointed out that the Chinese language constructed words pictorially" (Richardson 31). Pound and Eisenstein both saw promise in this method of rendering abstract concepts pictorially by juxtaposition. In this way language (whether alphabetically or cinematically) could appeal in a direct way to the unconscious mind. So much of the Modernist movement was devoted to cutting out excesses--to killing the "middle-man."

Pound's poem "In a Station of the Metro" is one of the best examples of this attempt to give the modern poem the same intensity as the Chinese ideogram. In just two lines it presents a powerful image that brings together nature and urbanity through the common presence of humankind. It produces a distinctly modern image in the style of Cezanne. The title sets the place and the poem reveals the image; the idea or "meaning" takes shape solely in the reader's mind. Bruce F. Kavin does an excellent job of describing its debt to the ideogram and the similarity to Eisenstein's method of cinematic montage:

The first line presents an image of "faces in the crowd," and the second

line describes flower petals on a “wet, black bough.” End of poem.

Between the two lines there is only a semicolon, and it is the crucial element. The two images are maintained in balance; they do not equal each other or explain each other, as a colon might have implied. They simply co-exist. It is not so much a simile or a metaphor as a double--or doubled--perception. A and B yield C, but C is not *in* the poem. (9)

“C” is in the reader’s mind. Here we have Eisenstein’s dialectical montage in embryo.

It is possible that the Chinese ideogram was not the only motivation for Pound’s style. By attending early silent films the idea of montage as an organizational principle, and a way to convey concrete reality, may have gelled in his mind. Although Pound rarely mentioned the cinema, it was in the *zeitgeist* at the turn of the century and therefore must have entered his consciousness. As Walter Benjamin states, “During long periods of history, the mode of human sense perception changes with humanity’s entire mode of existence. The manner in which human sense perception is organized, the medium in which it is accomplished, is determined not only by nature but by historical circumstances as well” (222). The historical circumstances were the apex of the industrial age and the rise of cinema. Robert Richardson adds to this: “We must consider it more than an accident that the poetry of the advance guard was discovering and exploiting the ability of words to form pictures and the idea of connecting words by juxtaposition rather than with conventional syntax at the same time that film was doing just that itself” (32).

Pound was definitely no stranger to the cinema and saw it as a medium that might replace the novel in the future as Richardson points out: “As early as 1934 Ezra Pound was moved to declare that ‘the cinema supersedes a great deal of second-rate narrative,’ and that ‘a film may make better use [than other forms] of

60 percent of all narrative dramatic material” (90). This claim seems to bear a great deal of truth, and novelists and playwrights must have felt this imposing threat. Carroll F. Terrell in A Companion to The Cantos of Ezra Pound offers further evidence of Pound's fondness for movies in a note to Canto CXVI; he glosses a reference to Walt Disney and writes, “Pound, a great movie fan, was fond of any Disney movie” (724). In his essay “Mr. James Joyce and the Modern Stage,” Pound writes: “The ‘movie’ is perhaps the best friend of the few people who hope for a really serious stage” (54). He goes on to write about the techniques of the cinema, comparing them to his own ideas of economy of language in poetry:

Moreover, it [the cinema] is . . . developing an art sense. The minute the spectator begins to wonder why Charles Chaplin amuses him, the minute he comes to the conclusion that Chaplin is better than X---, Y--- and Z---, because he, Chaplin, gets the maximum effect with the minimum effort, minimum expenditure, etc., etc., the said spectator is infinitely nearer a conception of art and infinitely more fit to watch creditable drama than when he, or she, is entranced by Mrs. So-and So's gown or the color of Mr. So-and-So's eyes. (55)

We come to the influence of Charlie Chaplin again, one of the earliest practitioner's of cinematic form to be seriously considered an artist. So now I will shift gears to look at--who I believe to be--the only Modernist poet who deals with Chaplin's influence directly--Hart Crane. However Crane isn't the only writer who bears the *evidence* of Chaplin's influence, as Marshall McLuhan points out: “*Prufrock* [T. S. Eliot] uses not only film form but the film theme of Charlie Chaplin, as did James Joyce in *Ulysses*. Joyce's Bloom is a deliberate takeover from Chaplin ('Chorney Choplain' as he called him in *Finnegans Wake*)” (53-4).

In his poem "Chaplinesque," Crane condenses Chaplin's cinematic clowning into the laughter, the hope that existential humanity finds when faced with its inevitable last end (not unlike Beckett will later do in such plays as Waiting for Godot). Right from the first stanza he makes economical use of language to describe the fragmentation of modern life: "Contented with such random consolations/ As the wind deposits/ In slithered and too ample pockets" (Crane 11). In the ash-heaps of modern society, Crane laments, there is little hope to be found--little reason to laugh. In the second stanza he describes how we can still find joy in our modern existence by juxtaposing a kitten with the harsh urban environment: "For we can still love the world, who find/ A famished kitten on the step, and know/ Recesses for it from the fury of the street,/ Or warm torn elbow coverts" (11). He then creates a "Chaplinesque" scene, personifying death as the inevitable cop "That slowly chafes its puckered index toward" Chaplin's tramp, who we--the audience--identify with. But our mirth, our ability to find joy and comfort in the bleakest of settings will save us--as it always does the tramp.

Crane makes excellent use of metonymy, for Chaplin is nowhere to be found in the poem. We are to know his presence by phrases like "sidestep," "smirk" and "pirouettes;" as well as by objects scattered throughout the poem such as "ample pockets" (like Chaplin's perpetually baggy pants) and ultimately the trademark "pliant cane." This technique mimes the very nature of cinema and montage. As Richardson points out, "Not only has Crane here, as in so many other places, used the condensed elliptical style which is similar to the flow of images in a film, but more importantly, it is the visible humanity, the sense of grace, perceived and conveyed in what Lindsay called a 'quietness of light,' that shows how deeply the films had affected Crane" (92). Crane ends his poem reinforcing the optimistic message to modern man, and also touches on another aspect of the cinema:

The game enforces smirks; but we have seen
 The moon in lonely alleys make
 A grail of laughter of an empty ash can,
 And through all sound of gaiety and quest
 Have heard a kitten in the wilderness. (11)

By demonstrating how beauty and reason for comfort can be found in modern society, he uses the method in which the cinema can take common objects and--by fixing its silver gaze upon them--can propel them to "star" status as fetishized objects.¹ This is the cinema as Modernist organizational principle; the cinema is the indifferent god of the poem.

Crane made even more drastic use of cinematic structures in his later long poem The Bridge. He mentions the cinema early in the poem, in the third stanza of the section titled "To Brooklyn Bridge:"

I think of cinemas, panoramic sleights
 With multitudes bent toward some flashing scene
 Never disclosed, but hastened to again,
 Foretold to other eyes on the same screen; (45)

Richardson comments on how Crane must have seen cinematic technique as an organizing principle of the poem: "Crane seems to suggest here that the poem itself will be a series of flashing scenes and panoramic sleights, a poem of film-like images easier to witness than to comprehend. Crane's poetry remains difficult, but if it is thought of as using certain elements of cinema style, it becomes a little easier to make out" (93). An excellent example of Crane's use of cinematic structures, is the section of The Bridge entitled "The River." In this section he uses methods of montage to render the effects of a fast moving train from a standing observer (poets seemed to inherently intuit Einstein's ideas of

relativity). Crane comments on the fast pace of modern American life, and its roots in Capitalism. The second stanza illustrates this method very well:

a Ediford--and whistling down the tracks
 a headlight rushing with the sound--can you
 imagine--while an Express makes time like
 SCIENCE--COMMERCE and the HOLYGHOST
 RADIO ROARS IN EVERY HOME WE HAVE THE NORTHPOLE
 WALLSTREET AND VIRGINBIRTH WITHOUT STONES OR
 WIRES OR EVEN RUNning brooks connecting ears
 and no more sermons windows flashing roar
 breathtaking--as you like it . . . eh? (62)

This is the marriage of form and content at its best. We have here what Seymour Chatman calls *scene*, when story and discourse are of equal duration (i. e. the action that takes place unfolds in roughly the same amount of time it takes to read the words) (72). Perhaps the best example of montage in the stanza is the creation of the word "Ediford," which is a simulation of watching advertisements moving by very quickly on a train. As Joyce was doing at the same time (1930) in Finnegans Wake, Crane fused two words (in this case the proper nouns Edison and Ford) to form a completely new concept. In the one word created by the "collision" (with a nod to Eisenstein) of the names of the great inventor and the originator of assembly line production, he has commented on America's fascination with invention and industry--not to mention the fast pace of the capitalist-industrial society. In this section Crane deals with the main theme of the whole poem, bridging gaps between wide spaces; the distinctly Modernist passion of shortening the distance between disparate places. Crane brings together--through montage--the train, the radio and the river in this section. He comments on how the train and the radio ("RUNning brooks

connecting ears/ and no more sermons . . .”) are the modern and industrial, manmade equivalents to the river. By way of method, Crane implicates the cinema as well. Culturally, it was the bridge between many disparate places.

So, with the aforementioned death of the omniscient narrator--or the bardic voice in poetry--a new organizing principle was needed. Montage became the organizational principal in Modernist texts. It was a way to combine many disparate elements into a whole; meaning would not be explained in the text, but would enter into the reader's mind through the juxtaposition of two or more elements, images or ideas. And since Modernism was utilizing montage as its organizational principle, it focused on visual elements of composition. Susan Sontag in “A Note on Novels and Films,” tells us what literature gained from film: “The cinema presents us with a new language, a way of talking about emotion through the *direct* experience of the language of faces and gestures [italics mine]” (243). This direct dialogue with objective reality is what Modernism sought.

In “Preface to the Film Version of Murder in the Cathedral,” T. S. Eliot says: “In looking at a film we are always under *direction of the eye*” (194). This omniscient eye, cinema as god, became the arranger of these modern fragments in Modernist poetry. Charles Eidsvik, in his essay “Soft Edges: the Art of Literature, the Medium of Film,” discusses the signifying aspects of seeing:

As Rudolph Arnheim makes clear in Visual Thinking, perception involves problem-solving; cognition and perception are inseparable. Vision is a selective process of reaching out for visual objects, separating them from their contexts, and observing their characteristics while watching how they interrelate with their surroundings. Psychology tells us that if vision were not active we literally would not see anything at all because an image fixed on the retina disintegrates. The act of seeing is itself an act of signifying.

And because perception occurs in time, our signifying is modified by accretion, which is to say that vision has syntax. (310)

This “syntax” is montage. A poet who makes an almost “documentary-style” use of this visual selection is William Carlos Williams.

In his long poem Paterson, Williams uses (very much like Joyce in both Ulysses and especially in Finnegans Wake) a city personified and abstracted into a man--a single consciousness--as the organizing principle of the whole poem. Taken strictly this way, the poem falls apart. It is more accurate to say that vision is the unifying element. Like Dziga-Vertov’s “Kino-eye,” the city and consciousness of Paterson are brought together in a documentary like fashion. Richardson places this use of documentary-style as part of the Modernists’ desire to capture and reveal reality objectively: “The tendency of both modern poetry and film to display, disclose, or reveal their subjects rather than to explain or judge them can also be seen clearly in the steadily increasing importance of documentary styles in film and in poetry” (98). Williams intersperses his poetry with personal letters, prose, encyclopedic historical descriptions, newspaper clippings and scientific descriptions seemingly lifted straight off the text-book. At the very beginning of Book I of his long poem Williams writes: “To make a start,/ out of particulars/ and make them general, rolling/ up the sum, by defective means--” (3). He is composing, like montage in the cinema, a sequence of “particulars” and by their juxtaposition making them “general.” This works to varying degrees of success in Williams’s poem.

Strict verisimilitude is not the whole or sole purpose behind the Modernists’ use of montage. Often it is used to build up many layers of meaning and thereby create a certain level of obscurity. Through this juxtaposition of layers--and subsequent obscurity--the Modernist vision strives to appeal to Eliot’s idea of all encompassing and ordering myths, or what Carl Jung would call the “collective

unconscious." P. Adams Sitney, in Modernist Montage: The Obscurity of Vision in Cinema and Literature, describes this almost religious mode of seeing:

I shall call it *the antinomy of vision*. Modernist literary and cinematic works stress vision as a privileged mode of perception, even of revelation, while at the same time cultivating opacity and questioning the primacy of the visible world. Furthermore, the quest for autonomously generated, medium specific works results inversely in a serial pattern of acknowledgments of (a) the ineluctable traces of the picturing process in language and of (b) both the tendency to respond with linguistic and representational reflexes to visual abstraction. (2)

These "ineluctable traces" we have already dealt with by pointing out the Modernists' interest in the pictorial origins of language. Part (b) of the above equation brings the evolution of language full circle. The cinema is the modern embodiment of this visual language, plunging us back to our roots and offering the modern artist a paradigm of order.

How does this obscurity--this fragmentation--offer a more direct approach to the collective unconscious? This fragmentation of form offers much of the difficulty of Modernist works. Rudolf Arnheim offers an explanation of how it appeals directly to the mind: "The destruction of the continuity of time and space is a nightmare when applied to the physical world but it is a sensible order in the realm of the mind. The human mind, in fact, stores the experiences of the past as memory traces, and in a storage vault there are no time sequences or spatial connections, only affinities and associations based on similarity or contrast" (Harrington 115). As stated earlier montage is how the mind works. The loss of order in modern society is one of Modernism's great themes. Which brings us "by a commodius vicus of recirculation" back to T. S. Eliot and environs.

As F. R. Leavis points out in his essay "The Waste Land," "In considering our present plight we have also to take into account of the incessant rapid change that characterizes the Machine Age. The result is a breach of continuity and the uprooting of life" (90). No poet understood this or embodied it better than did Eliot, and mechanical imagery is littered throughout his poetry.

In his poem "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock," Eliot creates a montage of the internal strife of his protagonist using imagery that would make the German Expressionists jealous. He uses juxtaposition in the famous opening lines of the poem to chillingly deliver the final death-blow, like a modern Cervantes, to the Romantic movement in poetry: "Let us go then, you and I,/ When the evening is spread out against the sky/ Like a patient etherised upon a table" (*Poems* 3). The first two lines generate a romantic atmosphere, and one might expect an ode to love to follow, but in the third line Eliot smacks the reader with the consequences of such expectations. We are from that point on thrown headlong into the psychological drama of despair that takes place in Prufrock's mind. The irony in Eliot's title becomes apparent, and we are shown the futility of love in the modern age.

For Eliot's modern poem, he needed a modern idiom--an ordering principal as mechanical as the modern age--and in the fifteenth stanza, seventh line he gives us a clue to his ordering principle: "But as if a magic lantern threw the nerves in patterns on a screen" (6). As McLuhan pointed out earlier: "'The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock gets much of its power from the interpenetration of film form and jazz idiom" (53). "Prufrock" is a cinema of the mind (in Arnheim's sense), and its nervous system is montage. By juxtaposing concrete visual elements and memories, the meaning is conveyed. The comic irony of the poem may also be film influenced--bringing us back to the pervasive influence of Chaplin--as McLuhan notes: "Read as a Chaplin-like comedy, Eliot's Prufrock

makes ready sense. Prufrock is the complete Pierrot, the little puppet of the mechanical civilization that was about to do a flip into its electric phase" (279). But "Prufrock" was only the beginning.

In his epic masterpiece The Waste Land, we have the culmination of Eliot's experiments in film form. In the beginning, the poem was about twice as long and was called "He Do the Police in Different Voices." Sometime during the process of collecting fragments for his long poem, Eliot read Jessie Weston's book on the grail legend, From Ritual to Romance. Compounding Weston's material with Sir James Frazer's anthropological study The Golden Bough, Eliot found the motifs and myths around which to order his poem. However, he still needed an ordering method. Much has been made of the "musical structure" of the poem; I do not mean to repudiate the idea of a musical structure to The Waste Land, but to offer another possible model. Cinema is a kind of visual music (a sort of fugue of images) which might have provided the structure to link together the disparate scenes of Eliot's poem. There is no doubt of the important note that musical structures played on Eliot, Joyce and Pound--not to mention the rest. Film might have been the medium that showed them how musical structure might be applied to another genre.

To help him "set his lands in order," Eliot solicited the help of Pound--*Il miglior fabbro*. Hugh Kenner describes Pound's role as editor in The Mechanic Muse: "Ezra Pound, analogously, had cut The Waste Land by removing the lines in which Eliot could be seen filling out a scheme. Those were also the lines in which energy was not being concentrated" (43). It may have been Pound who imposed the cinematic-like structure, but due to Eliot's earlier forays into the form it was probably a synthesis of the two minds. In any case, Pound excised the superfluous material and cut the poem down to the size it appeared in in 1922. The cinematic structure did more than offer a means of organizing the poem: it

offered a way for Eliot to illustrate, objectively, the psychological emptiness of a generation.

Along with I. A. Richards, Eliot was one of the founders of a new school of criticism--New Criticism. New Criticism looked at the text as an autonomous unit. The biography of the author was irrelevant and unnecessary to its elucidation. A cinematic approach to the external world allows the poet to remove himself from the text, yet still gives the objective elements of the text an ordering principle--without the use of a third-person narrator. In Eliot, Joyce & Company, Stanley Sultan discusses the need of such a unifying element:

The view that the ultimate speaker [in The Waste Land] is a composite is an understandable inference from the apparent absence of a single coherent entity in a poem in which so many I's and we's speak so abruptly and discontinuously. The view is an admissible explanation, but hardly a justification, of what would have been a feeble procedure in a poem--a procedure that would have evinced the very opposite of a controlling strategy. (185).

The "controlling strategy" is the form. Thus, in typical Modernist fashion, the medium becomes the narrator--the overriding consciousness.

Time, as with Crane and with Eliot's earlier poems, is one of the main themes and devices of The Waste Land. In the early part of this century mankind's notions of time and space were changing rapidly. As discussed in the previous chapter, film was no different from the other arts of this time period in dealing with the new theories of time and space. Montage provided a unique and modern way of approaching the relativity of time. The river is an image that has been used to convey the movement, flux and mutability of time dating all the way back to Heraclitus. Eliot uses the image of the river to this end throughout his poetry. The Modernists must have found it a particularly apt metaphor, given the

revolutionary theories that space and time were going through. But they needed a way of modernizing this old image. Hart Crane's section of The Bridge entitled "The River," in which he associates the river with modern means of bridging the gaps between old distances such as the train and radio, is an excellent example of the modernization of the river through the use of mechanical and electrical imagery. Perhaps, however, the best modern equivalent to the metaphor of the river is film. It flows in a seemingly ever-changing and circuitous fashion, and bridges cultural distances by playing to audiences around the world (especially silent film which does not rely on spoken language). This use of cinematic form, compounded with the idea of the river as metaphor for the bend and flux of time, added to the coherence of Eliot's poem, giving him another reason to use montage as the organizing principle of his poem. So, the modern river is one of celluloid.

We have discussed the way in which cinema offers a retrogressive view of language, returning to its pictorial roots in hieroglyphics. This idea might offer another view of how cinematic form served Eliot's needs. The Waste Land can be seen as a cultural journey to our atavistic roots as George Williamson points out in A Reader's Guide to T. S. Eliot: "The latent intention of The Waste Land might be called a reversal of Miss Weston's title--to translate romance back into its meaning as ritual" (118). This cultural regression to aesthetically render the origins of religious belief was similarly used by Eisenstein (as discussed in the previous chapter) in the "gods" episode of October. By the juxtaposition inherent in montage, we have the means that such an abstract journey backwards can be made through the collision of visual elements in a scene.

So, now that we have examined the reasons that Eliot might have decided to use cinematic structures to order his poem, let us examine the structure of the poem itself to see how it all fits together. It is composed of five sections: I. The

Burial of the Dead, II. A Game of Chess, III. The Fire Sermon, IV. Death by Water, and V. What the Thunder Said. Themes and parallels bleed and melt into each other through out these sections and they are all intricately balanced and ordered accordingly. Eliot uses Madame Sosostriis and her "wicked pack of cards" to order the poem in its relation to myth, as Williamson points out:

"Reduced to its simplest terms, The Waste Land is a statement of the experience that drives a character to the fortune-teller, the fortune that is told, and the unfolding of that fortune. But this latent narrative is both universalized and greatly complicated by being set in a framework of the legend in which Miss Weston had seen so many myths" (129-30). The hinge that the poem moves on is the hermaphrodite Tiresias. Eliot addresses his presence himself in a note to the poem: "Tiresias, although a mere spectator and not indeed a 'character,' is yet the most important personage in the poem, uniting all the rest. . . . the two sexes meet in Tiresias. What Tiresias *sees*, in fact, is the substance of the poem" (52). Tiresias sees a scene of empty love in the modern world. Just this side of rape, "the young man carbuncular" takes the typist in an apathetic display of lovemaking. To emphasize the automation of modern life Eliot describes the scene afterwards thus: "She smoothed her hair with automatic hand,/ And puts a record on the gramophone" (44).

The characters that people the Waste Land have mythical and modern parallels (the same way that Joyce used Odysseus as the mythical parallel to Bloom). The central protagonist is the Fisher King--although he melts into many different characters throughout the poem. In keeping with vegetation rites that Eliot had studied in Ms. Weston's book, the Fisher King--as hanged god--must die and be resurrected to bring life back to the land. But this cannot happen, for modern times have strayed from higher meaning and the Waste Land is a dry, sterile place. Sex, to Eliot, has reverted back to pure animalistic instinct, with no

meaning in ritual or religion. George Williamson points the meaning this ultimately leads to: "And death is the ultimate meaning of the Waste Land for a people to whom its explanation is only myth, for whom sex is destructive rather than creative, and in whom the will to believe is frustrated by the fear of life" (129). Eliot needed a modern way to weave this rich tapestry together.

Montage figures as the celluloid thread which ties the visual aspects of the poem together from the very beginning of the poem. In the first four lines, we get the equivalent of a long shot (establishing shot) with "April is the cruellest month . . .," cutting to a medium shot of a field of lilacs, and ultimately cutting to a closeup of roots being mixed with rain. Without transition we come to a scene of Winter, then Summer. We then get the scene with Marie sledding, effectively bringing us back to Winter.

Eliot's use of montage becomes more complex later in the poem. An excellent example of his use of the method is in the scene from lines 139-72. In this scene Eliot intersperses some colloquial British dialogue with the proprietor of a pub exclaiming that it is time for closing: "HURRY UP PLEASE ITS TIME" (41). This gives the dialogue a sense of urgency. It also introduces the concept of time into the metaphorical scheme of the scene.

But montage is best utilized when ordering particularly visual images. Eliot's visual imagery may have been inspired by cinema itself as Hugh Kenner points out in The Mechanic Muse: "Some years ago, too, a BBC documentary on Eliot raised the possibility that The Waste Land's 'falling towers' and 'hooded hordes swarming / Over endless plains / Stumbling in cracked earth' may have been literal impressions of World War I newsreels" (34). To examine more closely the way Eliot uses montage to collect and juxtapose his images, let us look at lines 257-311.

This section of "The Fire Sermon" begins with the music from the gramophone of the previous scene passing through Tiresias's consciousness as he quotes The Tempest, effectively bringing another layer to the text's allusive quality. We follow the music "along the Strand, up Queen Victoria Street" (Poems 45). Eliot then counterpoints the murmuring of working-class fishermen in a pub with the beauty of Magnus Martyr:

And a clatter and a chatter from within
Where fishmen lounge at noon: where the walls
Of Magnus Martyr hold
Inexplicable splendour of Ionian white and gold. (45)

The colon is the key element here, holding these images of "low" and "high" culture in balance. The next stanza begins what Eliot, in a note, calls "The song of the (three) Thames-daughters . . . From line 292 to 306 inclusive they speak in turn" (53).

The song begins with an industrial description of the Thames ("The river sweats/ Oil and tar . . .") with barges moving their cargo down the river. At the end of the stanza we get the odd onomatopoeia, "Weialala leia/ Wallala leialala" which is the aforementioned music which originated in the gramophone of the previous scene. In the next stanza Eliot compresses and connects history with the river. "Elizabeth and Leicester" give us the sterile relationship which kept the Virgin Queen a virgin. Then a beautiful boat is described. Notice the juxtaposition with the previous stanza. A boat with "A gilded shell" is held opposite "The barges." The unfruitful relationship of Elizabeth and Leicester--a political move which kept Elizabeth's political autonomy in tact--held opposite an image of commerce: sex and politics. By contrasting these two stanzas Eliot is able to render an abstract concept and an outside chain of thought in the

reader's mind. The stanza ends again with a snippet of music; music which weaves the parts together.

The next three stanzas give us a personal account of three more instances of the sterility of the sexual relationship in the Waste Land. They seem to descend the social ladder from upper to middle then the lower classes. This is illustrated by mention of place, imagery and tone of dialect. The third stanza of this sequence relates the sterility of all of these relationships: "I can connect/ Nothing with nothing./ The broken fingernails of dirty hands./ My people humble people who expect/ Nothing" (46). Then we get a brief line, isolated in the center of the page: "la la." This is the end of the gramophone's song.

"The Fire Sermon" ends with fragments of both Buddha and St. Augustine. Eliot expects the reader to pick up on this from the most minimal clues. "To Carthage then I came" is quoted from St. Augustine. "Burning burning burning burning" taken in conjunction with the title of this section, gives reference to the Buddha. "O Lord Thou Pluckest me out/ O Lord Thou pluckest" is once again Augustine, followed by a double-space then "burning," once again allusive to Buddha. In just five lines, with the greatest economy and intensity, Eliot is offering the moral solution to the repugnant scenes that have just unfolded. In those five lines, by "a collision of opposites," he brings together Eastern and Western moral philosophy. The montage is even carried on between sections: section III. "The Fire Sermon" is followed by section IV. "Death By Water." Two opposing elements of nature, fire and water, brought together to cancel each other out. This is the poetic equivalent of Eisenstein's theory of "intellectual montage." Eliot uses the ideas of purgatorial fire and the ironical idea of "death by water" to generate the abstract third element: the idea of salvation through destruction. Eisenstein, discussing intellectual montage in "Methods of Montage," relates how this juxtaposition works: "Though, judged as 'phenomena'

(appearances), they seem in fact different, yet from the point of view of 'essence' (process), they are undoubtedly identical" (82). These discrepancies are therefore united in the unconscious to form the abstract idea behind the juxtaposition of opposites.

Eliot uses montage in this manner throughout the poem, bringing together such disparate pieces as various myths, modern scenes of London, foreign phrases, imagery, different dialects, song fragments and literary quotations. His addendum of notes at the end of the poem can be seen as a shooting script. At the end of The Waste Land we find the fisher king fishing and wondering if he shall set his lands in order. We then get a fragment from the song "London Bridge is falling down" followed by three more fragments in foreign languages, culminating in the penultimate line: "These fragments I have shored against my ruins" (The Waste Land 50). Eliot has done so indeed. He shows us a way of interpreting the shattered modern world: the poet as kino-eye. "Shantih shantih shantih" (Poems 50).

CHAPTER 4

"INELUCTABLE MODALITY OF THE VISIBLE": CINEMA, THE MODERNIST NOVEL AND JAMES JOYCE

Cinema is closer in its methods of narrative structure to prose than to poetry. Naturally, the dialogue of influence is much greater between the Modern novel and film than it is between film and the Modern poem. In their attempts to render modern reality with a greater degree of verisimilitude than ever before, modern novelists must have seen in the cinema methods which they needed to assassinate the third-person narrator and treat their subjects in as direct a way as possible. Often, as with modern poetry, this directness sometimes led to an overt discontinuity of time and space vis-à-vis linear logical narrative. Keith Cohen comments on the way discontinuity is used by the Modernists for greater dramatic effects:

The idea that through discontinuity a more dynamic continuity can be achieved is perhaps the cornerstone of twentieth-century art. We see it in the paintings of the cubists and futurists, in the music of Debussy and Stravinsky, in the poetry of the imagists, of Eliot, of Apollinaire, and in all forms of surrealist art. It is also at the very root of the "classic" modern novel (83).

The fragmented modern reality that so easily translated to poetry had to find its exemplars in prose as well.

Prose fiction has a different agenda from that of poetry. It often has a narrative element that communicates a story in an outwardly linear fashion. What, then, are the elements that compose a narrative? Seymour Chatman in Story and Discourse: Narrative Structure in Fiction and Film offers an answer: "Structuralist theory argues that each narrative has two parts: a story (*histoire*), the content or chain of events (actions, happenings), plus what may be called the existents (characters, items of setting); and a discourse (*discours*), that is, the expression, the means by which the content is communicated" (19). The relationship between "story" and "discourse" is what dictates the narrative system. It is the "discourse" that is most influenced by cinematic methods in Modernist fiction.

The American Modernists began to become immersed in the culture of film due to the rise of Hollywood as the capitol of international film-making. Film was very much in the cultural mindset in America, and the writers here were directly confronted with its influence, both as an aesthetic model and as a way to make ends meet financially through their writing. F. Scott Fitzgerald was among the first American authors to utilize cinematic techniques in his prose, and one of the first to journey (many times) to Hollywood to try his hand (rather unsuccessfully) as a screen-writer. Edward Murray in The Cinematic Imagination: Writers and the Motion Pictures, sums up Fitzgerald's relationship with cinema: "No major American novelist was more sensitive to the impact of the movies on society and the writer than F. Scott Fitzgerald. His novels and short stories are filled with references to the film--a medium which seems to have both fascinated and repelled him" (179). Culminating in his unfinished final novel, The Last Tycoon, Fitzgerald dealt directly with the implications of Hollywood by using film-structure in what King Vidor said was "Even unfinished, . . . the best novel of Hollywood" (Murray 205).

Fitzgerald's friend Ernest Hemingway also utilized cinematic form to forge a unique and distinctly modern style. His short, clipped dialogue and relatively objective way of relating the environment to his readers--in essence showing them the action the way a film does--allowed the tension between his characters to develop in the subtext, and therefore placed the burden of elucidation in the reader's mind. Seymour Chatman points to the limitations in Hemingway's style to be able always to succeed at this level: "It is usually necessary to infer [characters'] thinking from what they overtly say and do. Verbal narrative . . . finds such a restriction difficult--even Ernest Hemingway, at such pains to avoid directly stating his characters' thoughts and perceptions, sometimes 'slips'" (30). Hemingway often only used cinematic form when his subject matter gained by it, as Murray points out: "It is interesting to note that Hemingway's 'The Capital of the World,' like Fitzgerald's The Last Tycoon and West's The Day of the Locust, borrows filmic techniques for material that deals with motion pictures" (221).

William Faulkner, another writer who tried his hand at screenwriting and had a little better success at it than did Fitzgerald, made better use of cinematic forms of narration than either Hemingway or Fitzgerald. Many of his novels, such as The Sound and the Fury and As I Lay Dying, made use of multiple points of view, montage, incoherence of time and space, subjectivity and parallel action in a distinctly cinematic way. Bruce F. Kavin describes how Faulkner's structure rejected coherence even more so than other Modernist masterpieces such as "The Waste Land" and Ulysses: ". . . for Faulkner, montage--the dynamic suspension of conflicting elements--can be accepted on its own terms, not as a way-station on the road to synthesis, but as a revelatory and viable state of mind" (11). Ultimately, like so many other writers who tried their hands at writing for the silver screen, Faulkner saw the cinema as an inferior art form (if it could even be called such) to the novel, and saw his sojourn in Hollywood

strictly as a way to earn a living. Kawin does an excellent job of summing up this attitude: "One is struck then, at first glance, by a paradox: Faulkner's novels are cinematic, and his screenplays are novelistic" (13). Faulkner took what he needed from Hollywood, and Hollywood took what it needed from Faulkner.

John Dos Passos was another American writer who made use of cinematic structures in his early novels that called attention to themselves as such. It was in his trilogy U.S.A. that Dos Passos made the greatest use of cinematic technique, as Robert Richardson points out:

The trilogy is fully as ambitious an undertaking as War and Peace or The Dynasts, and one reason for the enormous range and the rich detail of the work is Dos Passos's use of movie-like collages called "Newsreels" which present all sorts of headlines and news items cleverly juxtaposed to create ironic montages. . . . And in sections called "The Camera Eye," Dos Passos shows just how close the literary device known as stream-of-consciousness is to film technique. . . . A third device in U.S.A. is the short biography, the quickly sketched character of a person or an institution.

(82)

U.S.A. made use of montage in a documentary fashion (Dos Passos was greatly influenced by both Dziga-Vertov and Eisenstein) that foreshadowed Williams's use of montage in the poetic medium. And like Williams, Dos Passos ultimately falls short in assimilating these devices into his style. At times the effect is breath-taking, but often the parts just don't hold together as Murray states: "By imitating the structure and style of motion pictures too closely, and by failing to subordinate his borrowings to material that remains essentially literary . . . Dos Passos contributed to that genre which Virginia Woolf contemptuously dismissed as the "movie novel" (178).

None of these writers synthesized the cinematic methods of montage with the art of literature better than did James Joyce (with the possible exception of Faulkner who, in turn, was greatly influenced by Joyce). Perhaps this was because it took some distance from Hollywood, and its approach to the cinema, to evaluate film on its own as an art form. In any case, Joyce's massive masterpiece Ulysses still stands as one of the greatest examples of the fluent use of montage and other cinematic techniques in all of twentieth-century literature.

Joyce saw the artistic merits of cinema very early on. In a letter to his brother Stanislaus, dated March 1, 1907, Joyce has already intuited the relationship of the cinematic method with the way the mind works: "Nothing of my former mind seems to have remained except a heightened emotiveness which satisfies itself in the sixty-miles-an-hour pathos of some cinematograph or before some crude Italian gazette-picture" (Letters II, 217). As mentioned earlier, he opened the first cinema in Dublin (the Volta) on December 20, 1909; although, after a promising start, it fizzled out and was closed down in less than a year (Ellmann 300-4). It has been suggested that Joyce's interest in the venture was purely financial but, although Joyce was looking for a way to sustain himself financially to free up time to write, it is unlikely that financial gain was his sole interest. It is unlikely that Joyce would have backed anything, and subsequently associated his name with anything, in the merits of which he did not believe.

Not everyone agrees on the extent of cinematic influence on Joyce, as evidenced by the well-reasoned and well-argued position taken by Alan Spiegel in his book, Fiction and the Camera Eye: Visual Consciousness in Film and the Modern Novel. His book is among the very best at analyzing the ontological development of what he calls the "cinematographic" form. He places the literary beginnings of this form in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, and traces

the developments of this visual style--independently of the cinema--from writers like Flaubert, James and Conrad through Woolf and Joyce.

In the section (pp. 71-82) that deals directly with the possible influence of the cinema on the evolving mind of the evolving Joyce, Spiegel debunks much of the evidence of Joyce the *cineaste* (i. e., stating that the Volta venture was purely financial) and uses the example of some writings--titled "Silhouettes"--that his brother Stanislaus recalled in his autobiography My Brother's Keeper. Joyce composed these sometime between 1893 and 1898, and they already showed evidence of a cinematic style that was far superior to anything the primitive cinema could possibly have come up with. In addition, he argues, the cinematic style and complexity of later works like Dubliners and A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man could not have been greatly--if at all--influenced by the cinema due to the still primitive nature of its forms. This train of thought leads Spiegel to the following conclusion:

If we conclude, then, that the movies themselves probably did not have any direct influence upon the development of Joyce's literary methods--methods that had obviously evolved out of his own personal cast of mind and temperament as well as out of a whole tradition of concretized novelistic activity--can we also conclude that the medium of film has nothing at all to do with Joyce or his work? I think we would be mistaken to reach such a conclusion . . . Joyce looks to the film because the new medium provides him with new words to describe certain things which are happening in his mind and in his writing, and that he draws upon this medium not as a source of emulation but rather as a mode of precise analogy to define mental and stylistic postures that in all probability had developed independently from it. (78-9)

Spiegel makes an excellent and persuasive case. I agree that the form and style of writing that Joyce developed very early on could already be described as cinematic. However, experiments involving the persistence of vision had already taken place much earlier in the nineteenth century. Joyce may have seen a zoetrope, a “magic lantern” or some such earlier device that prefigured the motion-picture camera. By Joyce’s adolescence the *zeitgeist* of moving pictures was already haunting the whole of Europe. While it is true that Joyce was developing a highly visual, and therefore cinematic, style apparently on his own and early on, this would only make his unique mind more attuned to the developments of cinematic form. Besides, even if we grant that the early prose works came too soon to be much influenced by the cinema, the astonishing amplification and distortion of his style that takes place in Ulysses could still owe a great debt to the advances that Joyce must have been aware of in the cinema of the teens and early twenties. The style of Ulysses can easily be foreseen in the earlier works, but they take a great leap forward in his masterpiece.

Spiegel himself consents to the pervasive influence the cinema has held on creative minds in this century: “It is, I think, one of the inescapable facts of the literary life in this century that the modern novelist often comes to his craft with at least a semiconscious recognition that his own narrative art form can proceed to take formal and textural shapes that find their precise correspondents in another and newer art form, namely, film form” (80). Even without the developed grammar of cinema, the early hand-cranked nickelodeons that the young Joyce might have come across could often produce “tricks” as Austin Briggs points out:

Even without playful showmen, early projection machinery was likely to produce tricks of its own; the English “scenics” he projected with his primitive apparatus, Hepworth said, were often so unsteady that ‘thus the Scriptures were fulfilled, and the mountains skipped about like young

rams.' It is worth noting that the novelty of the medium, the whimsy of the showman, and mechanical problems in filming and projecting all conspired to make early cinema inherently self-reflexive to its audience. (147)

Lest we forget, the internationally popular film--that began a grammar of editing--The Great Train Robbery was released in 1903, and many of Melies "trick" films were from around the same time period.

In any case, it is well established--in both apocryphal legend and in documents such as letters--that Joyce saw the cinema as a valid art form. His earlier prose works already show the beginnings of a cinematic form to his fiction--as Spiegel and others point out--and a method similar to montage. In Dubliners, a collection of at first seemingly unrelated short stories, Joyce uses a montage-like method of linking the stories up thematically; and within the stories by directly dealing with both the external action and the characters' inner lives he creates a literary form of cross-cutting. In A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man he makes even greater use of cinematic devices and begins to forge the style that would later "bloom" in Ulysses. In the former novel, Joyce uses devices like montage to render the developing consciousness of its protagonist Stephen Dedalus. Even that name utilizes montage: by colliding an allusion to St. Stephen with an allusion to Daedalus (the Greek mythic creator of the labyrinth), the reader can determine much of Stephen's character. Stephen is torn between religion and patriotism, and his yearnings to give himself to art and become a free thinking individual, unfettered by the implications of the former. Joyce uses montage to illustrate this struggle with the external and internal worlds of his alter-ego. His most effective use of the device is at the very end of the book, when he simply presents the reader with excerpts from Stephen's journal. One of the levels these "journal entries" work on is through the juxtaposition of opposites, by which the reader might divine the deeper meanings

of the workings in Stephen's mind. As Joyce began to compose Ulysses, he began to practice the methods of montage that he learned in part from the cinema with greater and greater virtuosity.

Joyce began to compose his first awesome masterpiece early in 1915. He compiled exhaustive notes including minutiae of the Dublin environment, parallels to The Odyssey, scientific data dealing with the biology of the human organism, musical references, other literary references, character sketches of his main characters and extras including characters from Dubliners and Portrait. Richard Ellmann, in his exhaustive and definitive biography James Joyce, describes Joyce's method of composition:

"As regards Ulysses I write and think and write and think all day and part of the night. It goes on as it has been going these five or six years. But the ingredients will not fuse until they have reached a certain temperature." His method was to write a series of phrases down, then, as the episode took form, to cross off each one in a different colored pencil to indicate where it might go. Surprisingly little was omitted, but no one looking at the notesheets could have predicted how the fragments would coalesce. (416)

Joyce's technique resembles that of a film editor, who must take all of the separate strands of shots and weave them into a coherent whole. Inez Hedges, in Breaking the Frame: Film Language and the Experience of Limits, calls the controlling consciousness of a novel an "arranger;" continuing: "I don't mean to suggest that the arranger of film is similar to the arranger, say of music . . . rather, I am borrowing this term from David Hayman, who first proposed it to account for the unifying narrative consciousness of James Joyce's Ulysses, a novel whose chapters are written in many different styles" (3). Inevitably, his great novel would take the shape of a film.

Ulysses is the story of Leopold Bloom, his wife Molly and Stephen Dedalus (returned from his self-imposed exile that ended A Portrait). More importantly, it is the story of these characters as microcosm of Dublin, the modern city embodied by the consciousness of its people, which in turn is microcosm for the world which is microcosm for the universe. As William Carlos Williams later did in Paterson, Joyce is making a "start,/ out of particulars/ and make[ing] them general" (3). Stephen is torn by the same dilemmas that he faced in A Portrait, compounded by his guilt over his mother's death and his refusal to pray beside her deathbed. He is in search of a guiding force--a father figure. Enter Leopold Bloom, who is torn by the death of his son 11 years earlier and the absence of a sexual relationship with his wife, which will subsequently lead to his being cuckolded at around 4:00 p. m. on this June 16, 1904. He is the wandering Jew, Odysseus and the father-figure to Stephen's "son". Molly is the patient Penelope, the female element by way of which the twain shall meet. As Bloom is everyman, Molly is the great personification of the Earth-mother; the Modern--albeit masculine--ideal of the feminine essence.

To deal with all of these elements, and the massive number of labyrinthine sub-plots, Joyce needed structures. The predominant structure is that of Homer's Odyssey, which gives classical reference for the whole. Each chapter was given a Homeric title (though later removed) by Joyce to mark which scene from the Odyssey they paralleled. The city of Dublin itself was another organizing principle of the novel. Ruth Perlmutter in her essay "Joyce and Cinema," does an excellent job of explaining how Joyce uses Dublin in this manner:

In Ulysses, the interaction of thoughts and feelings with a city's life manifests 'the bond between subject and others.' Dublin, in all its social stability and spatial integrity, is invaded by poetic musings, chaotic inner

speech, a highly allusive system of cross-references and leitmotifs, and the wrenching of traditional narrative modes. The monumental rhetorical schema is built up through metaphor/metonymy drifts, and through shifts in narrative reflectors (discourse shifts). (483)

Other structures around which the narrative of Ulysses intertwines are the biology of the human body, Dante's Inferno, Sascher-Masoch's Venus in Furs, and Mozart's opera Don Giovanni. Joyce utilized the grammar of the cinema--namely montage--to bring an order to this set of complex allusions, narratives and the concrete visibility of Dublin. Perlmutter describes Joyce's cinematic abilities: "In his ability to visualize verbally, to transcribe outer and inner speech, and to suggest the physical presence of his characters in the world, Joyce was approximating the powers of the cinematic image and the continuous film sequence. The indexical qualities of physical presence are inherent in the cinematic image, since the signifier nearly equals the signified" (482).

This ability to "visualize verbally" was partly what made Joyce's style so attractive to Sergei Eisenstein. In the "Circe" episode of Ulysses Stephen says, "So that gesture, not music not odor, would be a universal language, the gift of tongues rendering visible not the lay sense but the first entelechy, the structural rhythm" (353.105-7). This is the same idea--the root of language being the ideogram--that both Pound and Eisenstein latched onto in order to explore the visceral impact of language in poetry and cinema respectively. In essence, the hieroglyphic or the visual image (along with the musicality of language) was Joyce's instrument of choice.

Analyzing Joyce's work by cinematic means can be a very enlightening undertaking, as is Craig Wallace Barrow's exhaustive structural analysis

Montage in James Joyce's *Ulysses*. However, Barrow also warns of the difficulties of such an undertaking:

In transferring a term like montage from the film to the novel, certain difficulties naturally arise because of the change in medium. Joyce and other novelists may use devices similar to cinematic montage but the equivalencies will never be more than approximate. Basically, the film employs visual images (and sounds) while the novel employs images created through the medium of the written word. Also, the film, unlike the English language, has no tenses. Again true simultaneity, except in the instance of puns, is not a possibility in the novel, although, as I shall indicate further on, Joyce uses something *like* cinematic simultaneous montage. (8)

In his study of *Ulysses*, Barrow goes chapter by chapter to illustrate how Joyce uses primarily both primary and simultaneous montage by attraction. Primary montage simply being the effect of the collision of shot following shot, and simultaneous montage being the montage created in the present moment within the frame and the soundtrack's relationship to the images in sound films: montage that is "simultaneous" with the action. After his warnings of the difficulties of such a study, Barrow goes on to state: "On the other hand, it is probably more useful to analyze Joyce in this way, since Joyce uses literary equivalents to more complex types of montage developed by film directors after Griffith" (9).

Let us now narrow our focus and look at some of the more cinematic episodes in *Ulysses*. In the "Proteus" chapter, Stephen meditates on the very nature of visual reality while trying to place himself within the objective world. The very beginning of the episode sets the tone: "Ineluctable modality of the visible: at least that if no more, thought through my eyes" (31.1-2). Stephen then

begins to conduct experiments to test the protean nature of the visible, particularly the idea of the *Nacheinander* (one thing after another, sequence) and the *Nebeneinander* (things side by side). Unwittingly or not, Joyce is here also describing the ideas behind montage and *mise-en-scene* respectively. He presents Stephen's experiments for the most part directly through interior monologue, and we experience Stephen closing his eyes and walking along Sandymount strand as he does: aurally. Then, when he opens his eyes only to realize the visible world did not vanish without him there to witness it, we experience Stephen's walk through the interplay and juxtaposition of visual, concrete images once again. It is as if Joyce is preparing the reader for the techniques of combining aural and visual experiences that he uses throughout his novel. As Craig Wallace Barrow points out, "What Stephen realizes during the walk is that our whole idea of reality is based on changing, limited modes of the spatial, the temporal, the visible, and the audible" (38). This, too, is what the reader must come to realize to make it through Joyce's shape-shifting novel.

In the first half of *Ulysses* the most overtly cinematic episode is probably "Aeolus." It accentuates the use of montage by interspersing the text with "headlines" in all caps that break the narrative down into smaller sections. The episode also begins cinematically, with the literary equivalent to the establishing shot. We get a view of all of the trolleys huddled around Nelson's Pillar (From which they all begin their circuitous routes around Dublin), then we "zoom" to a closer "shot" of a mailcar being loaded to ultimately end up--in the next section--to an even closer "shot" that locates Bloom in this urban chaos. Each section is an individual scene which can be seen in context of the preceding and succeeding sections: just like shots collide in a film through montage.

It has become standard practice, after Stuart Gilbert pointed it out in his study *James Joyce's Ulysses*, to view the "headlines" in "Aeolus" just as that:

newspaper headlines that parody the language of the news media at the turn of the century. But, Susan Bazargan has offered an enlightening alternative view of these devices in her essay, "The Headings in 'Aeolus': A Cinematographic View." She writes, "I do not wish to quarrel with this interpretation [Gilbert's], supported by the setting, characters, and windy language of 'Aeolus.' However, the explanation does seem inadequate when it comes to the relation between caption and text, the former often having a denotative, introductory function" (345). Bazargan offers the alternative way of seeing the "headlines" in "Aeolus" as literary parallels to the intertitles used to convey dialogue in silent movies. By seeing the "headlines" as title cards she states, "we may then *see* the captions 'gleaming' in interrupting intervals, introducing us to people and locations about to appear; we have entered the world of silent movies with subtitles flickering on the screen" (346). Further evidence for this view is the content of some of the "titles": "IMPROMPTU," "OMINOUS--FOR HIM!," "???", "SAD," and especially "EXIT BLOOM." These titles comment on the action of the scene in some way, and in no way seem to be parodies of newspeak at the turn of the century. Bazargan says that "The paradox is that words--which have only 'semblances' to reality--can become more iconic than pictures" (348). Joyce proves this time and again throughout Ulysses.

At one point in "Aeolus" Bloom leaves the newspaper office and is followed by a crowd of newspaper boys, who are mocking his walk. This is rendered in the text as witnessed by the characters Lenehan and the professor: "Both smiled over the crossblind at the file of capering newsboys in Mr. Bloom's wake, the last zigzagging white on the breeze a mocking kite, a tail of white bowknots" (107.444-6). This is an excellent example of what Eisenstein called "intellectual montage." We see Bloom's entourage as a "mocking kite," tying in the motifs of wind Joyce is using in the episode to satisfy his odyssean parallel, and

accentuating the kids' mocking as a light, playful almost childlike form of what the adults throughout the novel do with less innocence behind Bloom's back. This scene also brings another reminder of one of Bloom's cinematic doubles, as M. J. C. Hodgart illuminates: "Bloom is himself based on the greatest mime of the silent movies, Charlie Chaplin: he has a Chaplinesque walk, which the newsboys imitate" (128). I have already mentioned Bloom's similarity to Chaplin's tramp character in earlier chapters where I have quoted Marshall McLuhan's multiple observations of this character trait in Bloom. Like Chaplin in the movies, Bloom is the perpetual outsider, and in scenes such as this one Joyce drives this point home with great pathos. Since the reader identifies with Bloom, we too are outsiders; forced to view Dublin voyeuristically through Bloom's thoughts and observations.

The "Wandering Rocks" episode has been called, by many critics who call attention to the cinematic qualities of Ulysses, the most cinematic chapter in the novel. Edward Murray explains some reasons why:

Covering less than thirty-six pages, the structure of this part is split up into nineteen scenes. Robert Humphrey regards 'The Wandering Rocks' as a 'superb example of space-montage'; that is, a montage in which time remains fixed while the spatial element changes--or the exact opposite of a 'time-montage,' where space remains fixed and the interior monologue moves freely in time. Though the overall structure of the episode can be described as an instance of space-montage, Joyce occasionally uses time-montage, too. (130).

Joyce used this chapter as what he called an "Entr'acte" between the two halves of Ulysses. He took the opportunity of a pause between acts to take a sweeping, panoramic look at what one could even consider the novel's main character: Dublin.

The way in which Joyce ties all of these narratives together at the *omphalos* of the novel is by a form of parallel montage. Like a D. W. Griffith chase scene or his thematic use of the method in Intolerance, Joyce uses Father Conmee's North-east bound route and the viceregal calvacade's South-west bound route to synchronize all of the action. The following is an example from "Wandering Rocks," in which one can see Joyce's use of "cross-cutting" between parallel action to achieve simultaneity:

And you who wrest old images from the burial earth? The brainsick words of sophists: Antisthenes. A lore of drugs. Orient and immortal wheat standing from everlasting to everlasting.

Two old women fresh from their whiff of the briny trudged through Irishtown along London bridge road, one with a sanded tired umbrella, one with a midwife's bag in which eleven cockles rolled.

The whirr of flapping leathern bands and hum of dynamos from the powerhouse urged Stephen to be on. (199.815-22)

Here we have Stephen's interior monologue being interrupted by a scene of simultaneous action--which also ties into a scene in the "Proteus" episode. As the third paragraph begins, we have a third-person narrator taking over and describing the objective action. This technique, which Joyce very likely borrowed from the cinema, gives the reader some idea of the complexity and labyrinthine structure of the book.

The nineteenth and final section of the "Wandering Rocks" episode is the most cinematic of any of the individual pieces. Joyce's camera-eye follows the progress of the viceregal cavalcade and we are taken on a whirlwind, and highly kinetic, ride past all of the scenes and characters that we have just encountered throughout the episode. The scene has the feeling of a massive and sweeping tracking shot--perhaps moving in fast motion--that captures the whole in the part.

The section gives the feeling of linear time starting up again after it had paused for the entire episode to allow the narrative to progress vertically. This conflict between the horizontal and vertical natures of the text is elucidated by Perlmutter: "The vertical stasis and the horizontal flow almost coincide. On the one hand, the narrative is interrupted by stylistic overdeterminations (linguistic discontinuities, prose rhythm overtones and duplications, allusive or archetypal images, multiple points of view). On the other, a horizontal reading is imposed" (483). Through this conflict of "vertical stasis" and an imposed "horizontal reading," Joyce is forcing us to consider the nature of time and space using the same technique as D. W. Griffith uses in such films as Birth of a Nation and Intolerance.

The montage in "Wandering Rocks" does not only work through the interruptions within each of the individual sections, each of the nineteen sections themselves collides into each other both narratively and thematically. Being the central chapter in the book, it is also where the two halves of Ulysses converge. Through these collisions we come to realize an organic unity growing out of the novel and out of Dublin itself. Dublin is like an extension of the nervous system in this sense, and it ties into McLuhan's idea of the electrical universe as Barrow points out: "This mechanical universe, McLuhan thinks, is being supplanted by an electrical universe, which, with its increasing automation, is an extension of the central nervous system (whereas printing had been an extension of the eye alone) and as such encourages an "organic unity" that will end the mechanical age" (10). Even though Joyce chooses blood as the "organ" of this chapter, one can almost hear the synapses crackle as these sections collide together and Bloom and Stephen (and the reader!) have to navigate through this maze.

"Circe" ranks with "Wandering Rocks" as being highly cinematic in method. Given the fact that the episode is roughly one-fifth of the book's entire length

remarkably little happens outwardly in "Circe." On the page, it is in the form of a drama--complete with stage cues and centered headers to determine who is speaking. But, it is easier to read "Circe" as a film script, as Barrow illuminates: "Written in play form, primary montage in "Circe" more nearly resembles cinematic primary montage than any of the previous episodes. In fact, primary montage involving a character's consciousness becomes in "Circe" what it has threatened to become throughout Ulysses, a mixture of fantasy and reality in the dialogue reading much like a Fellini scenario" (146). The reason this is so is, every time Bloom (or later on Stephen) has a fantasy stemming from some deep-seated unconscious stimulus it springs to life and is dramatized and assimilated directly into the flow of the narrative. The rapid change of setting, costume and--in Bloom's case at one point--sex could best be realized by the power of cinematic montage. Austin Briggs makes note of this fact in his wonderfully enlightening essay "'Roll Away the Reel World, the Reel World': 'Circe' and Cinema": "For all its ingenuity, the stage machinery of traps and flaps and pulleys cannot begin to duplicate the instantaneous appearances, disappearances, and transformations of cinema" (149).

By placing fantasy side by side with "reality" Joyce is forcing the reader to acknowledge the authenticity of these images in the same way that the cinema can. Briggs makes note of this fact as well:

What 'really happens' and what is 'the imagination of some fellow'? The answer, of course, is that everything in 'Circe' must be granted equal authenticity. So, too, cinema claims the same reality for everything it shows . . . The camera, invisible, indifferent paring its fingernails, was to reflect reality with a purity only a machine could boast, yet from the start, the movie camera projected dreams and illusion; like the whores of Nighttown, the cinema promises the real thing but turns tricks. (148, 151)

So, when Bloom's father materializes, his soap--or some other object such as Lynch's cap--speaks, or he changes sex or into a drooling Mongoloid, or his dead son appears, or Stephen's dead mother appears; we must take for granted the validity of these appearances. The episode is full of such phantasmagoria and the cinematic influence is unquestionable.

For instance, note this "stage direction": "(Virag unscrews his head in a trice and holds it under his arm.)" (426.2636). This image smacks of the film "magic" that Melies conjured up in his early films. Melies's films must have been a particular influence on Joyce in this chapter. Briggs gives some examples from Melies's films to illustrate this point:

In The Wrestling Sextette, female Turkish wrestlers become men; in The Brahmin and the Butterfly, a fakir turns a cocoon into a flying butterfly-woman who turns into an Oriental princess who thereupon turns *him* into a caterpillar when he prostrates himself to kiss her foot; in The Famous Box Trick, one boy turns into two boys who fight each other (shades of Shem and Shawn); in One-Man Band, Melies becomes six of himself, playing six different instruments; in the The Temptation of St. Anthony, a man whom Joyce (and Luis Bunuel) would have understood contemplates a skull only to see Jesus materialize and then metamorphose into a half-clad woman. (150)

Any reader familiar with "Circe" can see the seeds of Joyce's technique in these descriptions of Melies's films. Cinema would have given Joyce the visual impetus to pull off such tricks as he does throughout the "Circe" episode.

Another possible influence on Joyce in this episode that Briggs fails to note, is German Expressionism--which would have been at its apex around the time that Joyce was composing the "Circe" chapter. The externalization and objectification of his protagonists' neuroses would have fit right into the

Expressionist aesthetic. Not to mention the way in which Joyce describes the dark and mysterious “nighttown” setting of “Circe.” Note these examples from the opening description of the setting to the episode: “The Mabbot street entrance of nighttown, before which stretches an uncobbled tramsiding set with skeleton tracks, red and green will-o'-the-wisps and danger signals. Rows of grimy houses with gaping doors. Rare lamps with faint rainbow fans” (350.1-4). The feeling of ominous foreboding is right out of Caligari, or maybe a DiChirico painting. Another point of interest is a note Joyce placed in his notebooks under the entry for “Circe”: “cinema fakes, drown, state of sea, tank: steeplejack, steeple on floor, camera above: jumps 10 feet, 1 foot camera in 6 foot pit” (Connolly 119). Keeping this evidence in mind, it is almost impossible not to see a cinematic influence on “Circe.”

Given more space and time, a much longer and more in depth study of cinematic structures in Ulysses could be undertaken. However, there is sufficient evidence here to note the influence and relationship of Joyce’s novel to the cinema. These cinematic devices are utilized by Joyce as part of the great Modernist attempt to bring a greater physical and psychological verisimilitude to the art of the novel. Perlmutter sums up these traits common to both Modernist literature and the cinema: “The romantic double-bind implicit in this desire to force the film and the mental process into a more physical connection with reality returns us full circle to the dual textuality of Joyce--a mirror text that yearns for the myth of totalization and a palimpsest text of formal deconstructions which exposes that error” (499).

In his next novel, Finnegans Wake, Joyce takes his cinematic--and other literary--experiments a step further. Throughout that book, which took him seventeen years to write, Joyce practically creates his own lexicon through puns, homonyms and portmanteau words. This manner, which layers multiple

meanings on each word, is akin to Eisenstein's idea of vertical montage. Eisenstein came up with the idea of vertical montage when he began to consider the way the sound track of sound-films could collide with the images, creating another level of montage. Each word that Joyce creates in Finnegans Wake works in this way, building layer upon layer of meaning in addition to the narrative flow of the text. This is very similar to the idea discussed earlier regarding Ulysses with the idea of "vertical stasis" and the "horizontal movement" of the narrative. In what would be his last novel Joyce took this idea to the next step.

Hints of Joyce's cinematic influence are strewn throughout Finnegans Wake. William V. Costanzo makes note of this:

Finnegans Wake, as every reader knows, is based from "Phall" to "Phoenish" (4.15-17) on the art of punning. Consider these examples related to the art of film. In the Wake, the Wake itself is called an "allnights newseryreel." (489.53) The strange words flicker on the page like unsteady pictures on a screen, apt images for dreams and movies and the reeling course of history. In some passages, the analogy to film is explicit. Chapter XVI is written partly like a film scenario, with references to "Closeup" (559.19), "Footage" (559.31), "moving pictures" (565.6), "Matt" (559.22), and even a leering "Side point of view" of HCE and ALP in bed (559.21). ("Leer," as Tindall notes, is "reel" spelled backwards. (178) Not to mention the "cinemen" (6.18) and the constant allusions to the "reel world." One of the more interesting cinematic references in the pages of Finnegans Wake is: "if you are looking for the bilder deep your ear on the movietone!" (62.8-9). This seems to be a clue from Joyce himself as to the cinematic influence on his work. Roland McHugh in Annotations to Finnegans Wake glosses "bilder" as German for pictures, and "movietone" as a newsreel of

the 1930s (62). Joyce is combining his two great avenues of influence--music and film--in one line. One of the many ways the line can be read is: "If you are looking for the *builder steep* your *eye/ear* on the *movie/tone*!" This use of synesthesia, such as steeping your ear on something you watch, is quintessential Joyce. By reminding us to see what we hear and hear what we see, he is telling the reader where to find the paradigm for the literary structures he has forged and is teaching us how to read his difficult novel. As Richard Ellmann begins his biography, "We are still learning to be James Joyce's contemporaries, to understand our interpreter" (3). This statement still rings true today.

CHAPTER 5

"AN AGONY OF PERCEIVEDNESS": CINEMA, THEATER AND

SAMUEL BECKETT'S *FILM*

Writers in the theater reacted somewhat differently to the rise and pervasive power of the cinema from the authors of prose or poetry. Drama was influenced structurally in the same manner, but only to a certain extent: the shortening of scenes and the rapidity (as far as the limits of the stage would allow) of their change in time and place, a form of acting which reacted against the stilted acting styles prevalent at the turn of the century, and an attempt to render the inner qualities of the subject in the same manner that film is able to do so. But, a large part of the cinema's influence on the theater can be seen as a reaction against the new medium insofar as it posed a threat to the theater's existence, as photography did to painting during an earlier period. The theatricality of pre-Griffith films has already been discussed, as well as the Victorian theatricality of directors such as Porter, Melies and Griffith himself. Early films were usually framed in long shot from a side-angle maintaining the same sense of distance from the action throughout; just as if one were watching a play performed through the confines of the proscenium arch. Those with a vested interest in the theater could take refuge, at first, in the fact that film did not have synchronized sound to its advantage: so language could remain the draw of the theater. However, by 1927 the cinema laid claim to the spoken word as well,

and--as technology improved--so did the cinema's ability to render objective reality with greater and greater verisimilitude.

Film was able to manipulate time and space in a way theater simply could not, making cinema seem more like a revolutionary new art form in keeping with the aesthetic developments of the twentieth century. In spite of this, the theater still held a greater claim to the use of language than did cinema, as Edward Murray points out: "Although the basic requirement in both drama and film is movement, they each move differently. On the stage--because of the limits imposed by point of view, time, place, and action--language is foremost in importance; on the screen--thanks to the camera's mobility--the image remains paramount" (12). Not all of this century's theater practitioners has felt the same way regarding the relationship of language to the theater.

Antonin Artaud, in particular, sought the primal roots of the theater through elements of the non-verbal (i.e. gesture, *mise-en-scene*). Influenced by Surrealism and Jungian psychology, he was searching for mythic archetypes that would appeal directly to an audience's unconscious mind providing a "catharsis" to shake the audience out of their apathy. In Lunatics, Lovers and Poets: The Contemporary Experimental Theatre, Margaret Croyden delineates this aspect of Artaud's dramaturgy:

The non-verbal occupied Artaud's mind incessantly. He maintained that voices alone could create various levels of meaning, that they could be as concrete as decor and lighting, and that random sound could be effectively synchronized with movement. What particularly fascinated him were the possibilities of the fusion of sound, sight, gesture, signs, music, and lights into one inseparable amalgam that might produce a state in which the actor's and the spectator's feelings are transmitted without words. (66)

Artaud's theories inevitably led to such theatrical experiments as: Happenings, the Beck's "Living Theater," Joseph Chaikin's "Open Theater," Environmental theater, and other late twentieth century avant-garde theater experiments. All of these developments utilized non-verbal action, chance and "carnival" (in the Bakhtinian sense) while testing the limits of "theatricality" and what could be defined as such.

The other major strand of development in the theater of the twentieth century is the distinctly didactic, politically motivated theater of Bertolt Brecht. The "epic theater," as he called it distinguishing it from the Aristotelian paradigm, strives towards bridging the gap between audience and stage. He chose historical, almost parable-like subjects for his plays, and took great pains to appeal to the audience's *logos*, rather than their *pathos* as did earlier forms of drama. In his essay "What Is Epic Theater?" Walter Benjamin discusses Brecht's Marxist political motivations for such a theatrical model: "Epic theater appeals to an interest group who 'do not think without reason.' Brecht does not lose sight of the masses, whose limited practice of thinking is probably described by this phrase. In the endeavor to interest the audience in the theater expertly, but definitely not by way of mere cultural involvement, a political will has prevailed" (148).

The cinema had some direct influence on Brecht. For instance, the breaking down of a drama into shorter scenes, or episodes, and rapidly changing locales owes a debt--perhaps--to the montage of the silent cinema. It was Erwin Piscator who tuned Brecht in to many of these aesthetic revolutions, as Frederic Ewen points out:

The motion picture too played a significant part at this time: whether that of the Russian Eisenstein or of Charlie Chaplin. In one way or another these impulses helped shape the imagination of one of the most creative

and revolutionary personalities of the German theatre--Erwin Piscator, originator of the 'epic' theatre, associate of many of the most gifted artists of the nineteen-twenties, and not least, notable for the profound influence he exercised in determining the career and theories of Bertolt Brecht.

(148)

Brecht even dabbled a bit in writing for the screen, but never seems to have taken it as seriously as he did the theater. He also experimented with such "filmic" techniques as multimedia projections during performance and particularly stunning *mise-en-scenes*, which had a cinematic quality. Ultimately, however, Brecht did not see much promise in the new medium (his sojourn in "tinsel town" during World War II probably did not reconcile the art of cinema much to his Marxist tastes) as Roswitha Mueller points out:

Brecht thought that the film had lost its vital potential once it was employed in the fabrication of "art." By that he meant that cinematic technology had been placed in the service of a concept of art that dated back to the previous century. The aesthetic categories pertaining to this concept, such as narrative closure and the centrality of "the individual," were in Brecht's view tantamount to the foreclosure of film's potential to forge new avenues of communication and a wholly new concept of art. (1-2)

One of the areas that Brecht revolutionized was acting. Theatrical acting had been taking a naturalistic turn under the techniques of directors such as Stanislavski. The level of naturalism that acting would eventually be able to achieve was, no doubt, influenced by cinema. Once Griffith and company came along and began employing a wider cinematic grammar (i.e. close-ups, medium shots), the exaggerated acting gestures and styles of "emoting to the back rows" became painfully dated. So, a more minimalistic and psychological approach to acting was called for. This was not entirely because of film; certain "methods" of

acting involving psychological realism were already formulated, but the objectivity that photography and film led to called for a greater realism in other arts as well. Brecht, however, revolted against this naturalism in acting. Perhaps this was in part due to his largely negative reception of the cinema. Jerzy Grotowski has said that "There is only one element of which film and television cannot rob the theatre: the closeness of the living organism" (41). Brecht made the most of this and developed a system of acting that created emotional distance between actor and spectator. He would constantly have actors break the "fourth wall" and address the audience directly, thereby implicating them in the actions that took place on stage. A method which might have come from his exposure to the cinema. In Kid Auto Race In Venice (the 1914 short in which Chaplin introduced the tramp character) Chaplin stares directly at the camera, interrupting the "reality" of the fiction, until he is escorted out of the frame by the filmmakers. There is even a glimpse of one of the cameras to heighten the sense of self-reflexivity. In any case, Brecht called attention to the illusion of theater any chance he got, beginning a tradition of self-reflexivity which continues in the theater--as well as the other arts--to this day.

Focusing on the living corporeality of the theater had greater implications than Brecht's political motivations. In essence, it is what the Artaudian strain of theater was doing in a different manner. And, when "Happenings" came along (and subsequent experiments), it played with the notion of what the "actor" was, and what could be considered a theater space. Erika Fischer-Lichte discusses how theater, partly in reaction to media such as film, focused on the humanity of its art (something that art needed after the inhumanity of World War II):

The simultaneous physical presence of the actors and the spectators in the same room, the *sine qua non* of theatre, thus appears to mark the

special condition of the very possibility of aesthetic perception altogether--theatre becomes the paradigm of aesthetic experience as sensuous, bodily experience. The self-reflection of theatre, its constant recourse to its own special phenomenology, is thus carried out as reflection on the conditions which create the possibility of aesthetic perception and aesthetic experience. (21)

She goes on to discuss what she calls the "aesthetics of disruption," in which the audience is in control of what they look at--they are their own editors if you will (22-3). Whereas--in film--this aspect is predetermined through montage.

There were some who were made uncomfortable by the living presence of the actors, and thought of it as a negative aspect of the theater. One of these was the absurdist playwright Eugene Ionesco, as he relates in his book Notes & Counter Notes: Writings on the Theatre: "I think I realize now what worried me in the theatre was the presence of characters in flesh and blood on the stage. Their physical presence destroyed the imaginative illusion" (17). Ionesco attempted to destroy this aspect in the theater, as Edward Murray points out: "The novel and the film, the playwright contends, are 'pure' forms, but the theater is 'impure.' It was, and remains, Ionesco's task to create a theater in which the fictional element would not be compromised by anything 'foreign' to it" (87). The absurdist attempted to create a new theater as a pure form, partly in reaction to the threat that cinema imposed.

The opposite response is to synthesize the theater with the cinematic in the way that a writer such as Tennessee Williams does. Many of his plays show evidence of a cinematic imagination (he was a great fan of the movies), and many of his later plays seem to have been written specifically with the idea that they would later be filmed. Such as the way he breaks his early plays down into short scenes instead of acts, or the expressionistic use of staging and lighting in

plays like The Glass Menagerie and A Streetcar Named Desire--which in turn could have been influenced by cinematic expressionism. Part of the motivation behind this was financial, since a great deal more money could be made in selling the rights of a play to film studios. Murray relates the dilemma the modern playwright is faced with: "The sane approach for playwrights in the Film Age would seem to be the avoidance of two extremes: the aping of cinematic techniques to the detriment of their own art; and the futile effort to purge from their work every trace of a cinematic imagination" (100-1). Perhaps the playwright who was best able to achieve this balance was Ionesco's absurdist counterpart, Samuel Beckett.

Beckett was definitely influenced by the cinema, evidenced in part by his interest in Eisenstein and avant-garde films of the 20's and 30's. Many of his characters have a "Chaplinesque" quality, and even adopt the appearance of Chaplin's tramp character (such as Vladimir and Estragon in Waiting for Godot). Like Chaplin, Beckett made metonymic use of "bowler" hats and other "stage business" to comment on the personality of his characters. Hugh Kenner makes note of the traditions that Beckett grew out of in his A Reader's Guide to Samuel Beckett:

He proceeded directly from the simplest of twentieth-century folk entertainments, the circus clown's routine, the silent cinema's rituals of stylized ingenuity. Laying hold on these, he had a grasp of a tradition reaching back to *comedia dell' arte* and with cognates in the Japanese *Noh*, but in a form that expects no learning in the audience, only a willingness to accept (to laugh at) the bareness of what is barely offered.

(13)

"Didi" and "Gogo" owe more perhaps to a cinematic duo than they do to Chaplin however, as Kenner goes on to note: "[they] resemble nothing so much as they

do the classic couple of 1930's cinema, Stan Laurel and Oliver Hardy, whose troubles with such things as hats and boots were notorious, and whose dialogue was spoken very slowly on the assumption that the human understanding could not be relied on to work at lightning speed" (24). The influence of vaudevillian and cinematic clowns such as Chaplin, Keaton and Laurel and Hardy can be seen in other Beckett character's as well: from Krapp in the theater to Murphy, Watt and Molloy in his fiction.

Beckett was also one of the few Modern literary stylists to apply his aesthetic directly to the medium of film; in his short film aptly and succinctly titled Film. The title itself is a statement, as Jonathan Kalb points out: "Its very title is generic, like that of Play, indicating that the work will deal with fundamental qualities or principles of its medium rather than simply use film as an unobtrusive story-telling vehicle" (134). This offers a unique opportunity to analyze Beckett's specific perceptions of the medium through his direct approach to it. Beckett came out of a more distinctly "literary" background (i.e. his close friendship and admiration of Joyce) than out of a distinctly "theatrical" background. I realize things are never as cut and dried as this (as Beckett himself says in "Dante . . . Bruno . Vico . . . Joyce," "The danger is in the neatness of identifications" [107]), but Film grew mostly out of his "theatrical" experiments and needs to be treated in the same tradition as the theater's reaction *against* the threat of film. It is no accident that most absurdist plays have not been filmed. They are uniquely theatrical and deal with, and comment on, problems of a distinctly theatrical nature and are conceived with the space of a stage in mind.

Cinema has at least one thing more in common with the theater than with written literature: the presentation of a narrative (or anti-narrative, as the case may be) in a strictly visual manner, usually using actors (the majority of cinema has employed a narrative model, which is the model important to this study,

unlike the avant-garde cinema or documentaries). Linda Ben-Zvi comments on the subtle visual difference of Beckett's film from his plays, "It is important to note that Beckett does not do on film what he does on the stage, that other visual medium. On film he seems less concerned with making animated hieroglyphics than with probing the movements of his characters, through the intermediary position of the intruding eye of the camera" (196). First we shall examine the development of the idea of "vision" and the models employed as paradigms for "vision" and "viewing" in the past which, inevitably, led to the cinematic paradigm--or did it?

In his essay "Modernizing Vision," Jonathan Crary looks at the way the idea of "vision" has evolved throughout the centuries, and places particular emphasis on a rupture in the continuity of Western visual theory that occurs in the early nineteenth century. He discusses the camera obscura as being the ruling paradigm of vision up until the time of this rupture. According to Crary, this model carries with it certain implications. It offers an "observer, who is nominally a free sovereign individual but who is also a privatized isolated subject enclosed in a quasi-domestic space separated from a public exterior world" (Crary 26). The "observer" is free of any implication in the scene that he or she witnesses; therefore this "observer" can objectively and scientifically analyze the world "outside." Crary discusses the almost totalitarian narrowness of this particular gaze:

Monocular, not binocular. A single eye, not two. Until the nineteenth century, binocular disparity, the fact that we see a slightly different image with each eye, was never seriously addressed as a central issue. It was ignored or minimized as a problem, for it implied the inadmissible physiological and anatomical operation of human vision. A monocular model, on the other hand, precluded the difficult problem of having to

reconcile the dissimilar and therefore provisional and tentative images presented to each eye. Monocularity, like perspective and geometrical optics, was one of the Renaissance codes through which a visual world is constructed according to systematized constants, and from which any inconsistencies and irregularities are banished to insure the formation of a homogenous, unified, and fully legible space. (26)

This is an aspect of pre-Modernist thought that Joyce--for one--commented on. In the "Cyclops" episode of Ulysses, we have a character, "the Citizen," and a narrator who are comically "one-eyed" in their views of the world. Joyce uses the inflated interpolations in the chapter, and the ironic counterpoint of their "cyclopean" nature with Bloom's "two-eyed" ability to see all sides to an issue commenting on the problem of "one-eyed" vision (Beckett also comments on this problem in Film).

Crary goes on to relate the demise of this paradigm by "the insertion of a new term into discourses and practices of vision: the human body" (26). He discusses and outlines visual theories that came about in the early nineteenth century--those of Goethe, Fechner and Muller in particular--that developed this new paradigm of vision. By placing vision within the body, these theorists gave vision a sense of uncertainty. Like Heisenberg's "uncertainty principle" in physics, this placement of the viewer within--and as a part of--the system he or she is observing skews the objectivity and casts doubt on the reliability of the senses. But, it also stated that vision was something produced within, not exterior to, the body. This presents a clear break with what had come before, as Crary notes: "Physiology at this moment of the nineteenth century is one of those sciences that stand for the rupture that Foucault poses between the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, in which man emerges as a being in whom the transcendent is mapped onto the empirical" (28). And if the transcendent is

mapped onto the empirical, then everyday experience and objects take on an almost mythic or religious meaning (with a nod once again to Joyce).

This new paradigm of binocular, human vision also served to decenter human beings from their positions above and beyond what they observed and placed them firmly within the same environment as they viewed. Crary writes, "A more mobile, usable, and productive observer was needed in both discourse and practice--to be adequate to new uses of the body and to a vast proliferation of equally mobile and exchangeable signs and images. Modernization entailed a decoding and deterritorialization of vision" (33). The new age which began with the Industrial age then melted into the Information age needed this new model of vision to survive in the growing diversity of the "global village's" inhabitants.

Crary concludes with the following:

But it was this ongoing articulation of vision as nonveridical, as lodged in the body, that was a *condition of possibility* both for the artistic experimentation of modernism and for new forms of domination, for what Foucault calls the 'technology of individuals.' Inseparable from the technologies of domination and of spectacle in the later nineteenth and twentieth century were of course film and photography. Paradoxically, the increasing hegemony of these two techniques helped re-create the myths that vision was incorporeal, veridical, and "realistic." (34)

But Crary claims that modernity had already abolished these "myths," so their return is a moot point. Perhaps it is just taking these relatively new technologies a while to catch up with the new paradigm of vision. In any case, Beckett's Film can be seen, in part at least, as a comment on these modes of vision.

With Film, Beckett critiques what had been implicit in the rise of cinema: that we have become voyeurs, staring in our own windows (TV and the Internet have only accentuated the paranoia surrounding this fact). The circle of perception

closed around us. These images we saw were not somebody “out there,” they were us staring at ourselves; which includes all that this “self-reflection” implies.

In the section marked “General” in the script for Film, Beckett begins by quoting Berkeley’s aphorism: *Esse est percipi* (“To be is to be perceived”). This is to be, as Vincent J. Murphy points out in “Being and Perception: Beckett’s Film,” “the structural principle for his own work” (43). Beckett goes on in this section of Film to describe the “plot” of his film: “Search of non-being in flight from extraneous perception breaking down in inescapability of self-perception” (163). In the two lines directly following this, he writes--in typical Beckett fashion: “No truth value attaches to above, regarded as of merely structural and dramatic convenience” (163). This philosophical “truth” of Berkeley’s is offered only for what it is worth to Beckett: an outline for a drama. But through this structure, Beckett puts forward his own belief system; in existential fashion he distorts the inevitable conclusion to Berkeley’s philosophy, as Murphy notes: “While in Film the search of non-being is frustrated by the inescapability of self-perception, in Berkeley’s philosophy the search of non-being is inevitably frustrated by the inescapability of divine perception” (45). Beckett’s twist on this dictum turns out to be one of the key points of Film.

The actual plot of Film is poetic in its economy and simplicity. Charles C. Hampton, Jr. sums it up very succinctly: “Beckett’s first [and only] film, entitled Film, is the portrayal of a character who has realized the danger of reflection in the eyes of others and so avoids all eyes, animal and divine, as well as human. But in his frenzy to isolate himself from these, he inadvertently abolishes all reflecting others and so sees himself for what he is” (299). Beckett divided the aspect of “vision” into two elements: O (object) and E (Eye), with the latter in hot pursuit of the former.

The film is divided into three parts or scenes: 1) the street, 2) stairs, and 3) the room. In the street, according to the script, we see a crowd flowing in one direction ("I had not thought death had undone so many"), "All going in same direction and all in couples" (Film 164). "We see" means "E" sees, for E is the camera for most of the film; O's point of view is not shown until "the room" scene, and Beckett strongly emphasized that the audience must be able to perceive the difference of their perspectives: "The solution might be in a succession of images of different *quality*" (Film 171). As we (E) observe this street scene, O "come into view hastening *blindly* along sidewalk, hugging the wall on his left, in the opposite direction of the others [*italics mine*]" (Film 164). The film from this point on is E's (the audience's, the camera's) frenzied pursuit of O, who is doing anything he can (i.e. shielding his face) to avoid being perceived when he *knows* he is being perceived. Beckett makes specific note in the "general" section of the script that, "Until end of film O is perceived by E from behind and at an angle not exceeding 45 degrees. Convention: O enters *percipi* = experiences anguish of perceivedness, only when this angle is exceeded" (163). When this angle is not exceeded, O hurries along in pursuit of "non-being" apparently unaware of being watched. As long as O can not see E in the circle of his peripheral vision, E as good as does not exist as far as O is concerned.

E's ubiquitous eye comes into direct confrontation with others in two episodes. The first is a couple with a pet monkey that O, in his blind haste, "jostles." E focuses on them and they eventually notice they are being perceived, and react with "an expression only to be described as corresponding to an agony of perceivedness" (Film 165). However, Beckett does note the "indifference of monkey" (Ibid.). This sets the precedent for the indifference to E that is characteristic of all animals in *Film*, an indifference that points to this "agony of perceivedness" as being a distinctly human condition. Ben-Zvi notes,

"Beckett's early notes for the project indicate, 'Those who look at Eye [on] street stairs turn horrified away.' What they see is themselves as objects" (197). Crary might say that this is the paradigm of the camera obscura, which is objectifying these people.

This episode with the couple has another interesting element: the film's only sound. When the man, who is looking after O scurrying away, is about to "vituperate. She checks him with a gesture and soft 'sssh!'" (*Film* 165). This turns out to be a highly comical touch as Kalb points out: "A woman he jostles 'checks him' with a firm 'sssh!!--the film's only sound--which communicates humorously that the work is silent by conscious choice, perhaps even out of *homage*, not for want of resources" (135). This use of silence is directly opposed to the use of dialogue in most of Beckett's plays (Act without words I and II are two exceptions). His characters talk to exert their existence, but in *Film* remember: "to be is to be perceived." Another example of the possibility of homage to the silent cinema is the casting of Buster Keaton as O in the 1964 production of the film, directed by Alan Schneider. Keaton might not have been ideal however, as Martin Dodsworth points out in "*Film* and the Religion of Art": "Buster Keaton was not first choice for the part of O--understandably. Chaplin was the right person to want because Chaplin's body and in particular his walk are expressive as Keaton's walk and body are not: and this consideration is an important one when the actor is to be seen most of the time from behind" (164).

Ideal choice or not, Buster Keaton was O in the film version. And after "the street" episode we (E) follow O into a building and find ourselves in a stairwell. This is where E's second confrontation with an "other" occurs. E spies O mounting the stairs then, noticing somebody else coming, O hides under the stairs. "A frail old woman appears on bottom landing" carrying a tray of flowers, but when she notices she is being "perceived" by E, she gradually assumes the

"same expression as that of couple in street . . . then sinks to the ground and lies with face in scattered flowers" (*Film* 166). Once again we have that "agony of perceivedness;" Hampton notes the implications of such an agony, "The dramatic point is not that E's gaze is alone painful, but that *seeing the self is painful for any person* [italics mine]" (301). With these precedents of the unbearable nature of E's gaze, we (as always implicated in E's actions) follow O who--in a panic--has hurried up the stairs and into a room.

The episode in the room is the "final act" in every sense of the phrase. Nowhere left to run, O has ducked into this sanctuary of "non-being." Of course the room must first be prepared, and this entails the exorcism of all "eyes." This includes: "occlusion of window and mirror, ejection of dog and cat, destruction of God's image, occlusion of parrot and goldfish" (*Film* 167). Beckett's suggestion for the staging of the ejection of the dog and cat is particularly amusing, and may be yet another homage to the lost art of silent pictures. However, I find the "destruction of God's image" to be of particular interest. "God's image" is a print in the room that is hanging opposite a rocking chair. And, going back to the implications of divinity in Berkeley's quote, Murphy makes a particularly poignant observation:

We might expect that if God, Who was for Berkeley the infinite mind "*in whom we live, move, and have our being*," becomes a disposable print of the face of God the Father, this would have important ramifications for the priorities in such a world. If we posit, in opposition to Berkeley, a world from which this "infinite mind" is absent or extraneous, the remaining perceivers become "like as the gods" in that the boundaries of their perception become the boundaries of existence. In the world of *Film*, then, from which God is absent, E, who is for a good part of the film identical with the camera, becomes not only the observer of existents, but

the giver of existence. (46-7)

This thread is especially interesting to follow. For God is not absent, or at least not completely so. His image is there in the room and his gaze is overwhelming to O, who ultimately destroys “the face of God the Father, the eyes staring at him severely” (*Film* 167). Hampton notes, “The word severe is used three times in the filmscript; once to describe the eyes of God the Father in the print, and twice to describe the eyes of the mother” (303). The “mother” appears when O, sitting in the rocking chair, begins to sort through seven pictures (depicting seven moments from his past). She is in the first two photographs that O sorts through, and--after examining each photograph which makes for a kind of film within a film--he destroys all of the photographs; the end of his ritualistic exorcism of all eyes within the room. So, O destroys both “father” and “mother” in typical oedipal fashion; a futile attempt to free himself from the horror of being--the horror of being seen.

However, there is one eye left: E's--our--the camera's. O begins dozing off in the rocker, thinking himself safe, and E begins to revolve around and position himself face to face with O. This is the cathartic moment; O wakes up and reacts with the same “agony of perceivedness” before sinking his face into his hands. And we, the audience, finally get to see E's face--it is also the face of O. Beckett makes sure to note that “A big nail is visible near left temple” of E, placing him in the same position to O as God, the father was placed (*Film* 169). This (E taking on the role of “God,” and turning out to be one and the same as O) takes on greater significance when considering it in light of some points that P. Adams Sitney makes in a chapter of his book called “Whoever Sees God Dies: Cinematic Epiphanies”: “This sublime scene [Moses' ungranted desire to see Yahweh in Exodus 33], the most powerful metaphor of vision in our tradition, describes the fatality and impossibility of seeing God of the Old Testament. . . .

the refusal of apotheosis constitutes a paradigm for the problem of visibility in modernist art" (189). As when matter meets anti-matter, when O and E perceive each other (self-awareness) they cancel each other out. One is left with negation as Hampton points out, "having removed these threats [O] finds that he has only opened the way to greater threat in self-perception. He 'sees himself' and 'disappears'" (300). Or, as Sitney might point out, "Whoever sees God dies." The absent God in existential drama becomes the horror (as Conrad's "Mistah Kurtz" might say), the horror of self-perception. Because, then, one realizes the solitude, the isolation that is life (or at least the life of the artist, if we remember the couples on the street earlier were moving in the same direction and Beckett says they are "all contentedly in *percipere* and *percipi*" (*Film 164*)).

Another interesting point that comes to light when we see the faces of the dual protagonists is the fact that they are both wearing a patch over their left eye. For one thing, this shows that E is not a mirror image of O because, in that case, E's patch would be over his *right* eye. This recalls Crary's monocular vision, which finds its form in the camera obscura model or Joyce's "Citizen." Beckett seems to be commenting on the narrow rigidity of this paradigm; of the omniscient eye of God (which has, in our time, become the camera). Ben-Zvi sheds some light on this interpretation:

In Beckett's focus on the eye of the perceiver he creates a film about film, depicting the unique property of the form. The audience is not, as in conventional films, lulled into forgetting the manipulation of the controlling camera eye; here audiences become allied with camera since they must see, at this severely restricted angle, what E sees, while all the time in doubt about who or what E is. The final investment, thus becomes a shared one: O unable to avoid self-recognition, the audience unable to avoid the imposition of the camera. (199)

O and E are half-blind, but the impact that the “agony of perceivedness” has on others offers other layers of meaning to the motif of blindness, as Hampton notes: “Further, following each of the three moments of being perceived by E in the film, the victim ‘closes his eyes.’ Blindness, both traditionally (Oedipus, Tiresius) and in the cases of Beckett’s Pozzo, Hamm, and Dan is the badge of those who have ‘seen’ reality for what it truly is” (302). But, as we have determined, whoever sees God dies--and there’s the rub. E is possessed by this Kierkegaardian “fear and trembling” throughout Film, for he understands if one is not perceived, one cannot exist; he has simply forgotten himself, which becomes--through the camera eye--us as well. However, somewhat ironically, this gives a god-like power to the camera eye; here we are back at the camera obscura. Or, does Beckett’s film, by seeing itself for what it is, subsequently destroy itself and destroy once and for all this paradigm of the camera obscura?

Whatever the case, we cannot take these observations too seriously. One must remember that Beckett himself undercut the metaphysical side to his film with the line, “No truth value attaches to above” (Film 163). This is reminiscent of the fragment that ends his earlier novel Watt, which applies to all of Beckett’s work: “no symbols where none intended” (254). This enigmatic irony is ultimately the signature of his work, as Kalb points out while warning critics off of “desolate view[s] that overlook, among other things, the degree to which Beckett’s humour undercuts all definite, and therefore over-serious, identifications, such as E with God” (136). Touché. Beckett’s art always ends up folding back upon itself, like a rose closing its petals, no longer allowing us to view its beauty. Hampton notes the implications of Beckett’s failures: “The failure of these projects, like the ‘failure’ of Beckett’s forms, do demonstrate in passing the limitations of their media, but their primary purpose and impact is the demonstration of the failure of the self to find lasting existence” (304).

So, Beckett has turned the kino-eye back upon itself, bringing a sense of self-reflection from the theater and exposing the limitations of the film medium. Beckett succeeds through his failures. Or as he says in Worstward Ho!, "No matter. Try again. Fail again. Fail better" (Nohow 89). But, he never tried his hand at the cinema again. In his one experiment with film, the medium *is* the message. The message conveyed through this "agony of perceivedness" is just as poignant today as it ever was, but Beckett was among the first to deal with the oppressive nature of the camera. O suffered the "agony of perceivedness" long before Truman Burbank of The Truman Show had. Beckett also explored similar avenues in his television plays, but they will have to wait for another time.

CHAPTER 6

OUTSIDE THE FRAME: NOTES ON POSTMODERNISM AND THE REEL WORLD

Paradigms shift: just like the continental plates of the earth. They cause rumblings, and earthquakes. As Yeats writes in his poem "The Second Coming," "Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;/ Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world,/ The blood-dimmed tide is loosed and everywhere/ The ceremony of innocence is drowned;/ The best lack all conviction, while the worst/ Are full of passionate intensity" (187). So, we shore the fragments against our ruins, survey the damage and readjust. Sometime between the great wars Modernism began to give way and, with the end of the Second World War, its fate was sealed--sort of. A word, "Postmodernism," began to gain sway over its predecessor. Yeats, probably more prophetic than even he knew, was right: "the centre" could not hold.

But, what is Postmodernism? A loaded question if there ever was one; however, now that we reach the end of this turbulent century, parameters and definitions are beginning to become more and more clear. Jean-Francois Lyotard, in his essay "Answering the Question: What Is Postmodernism," offers some insight: "The postmodern would be that which, in the modern, puts forward the unrepresentable in presentation itself;" (46). He ends the essay with the now famous war-cry: "Let us wage a war on totality; let us be witnesses to the unrepresentable; let us activate the differences and save the honor of the name"

(46). Totality has become one of the main targets of Postmodernism. The idea of the decentered subject has become the dominant paradigm. In "Dueling Paradigms: Modernist versus Postmodernist Thought," Dragan Milovanovic writes: "Rather than the notion of the individual, the centered subject, the postmodernists were to advocate the notion of the *decentered subject*. . . . The call is for the abandonment of a center, privileged reference points, fixed subjects, first principles, and an origin" (20-1). The focus, then, has effectively shifted to the periphery of society. To paraphrase some of the ideas of Jacques Derrida, the frame--and indeed outside the frame--has attracted more attention than the picture it holds.

Right along with the loss of a center follows the loss of order and rationality. As Milovanovic points out, "Postmodernists begin their analysis with privileging disorder rather than order. Their starting point is *paralogism*: privileging instabilities" (22). Milovanovic goes on to cite Godel's theorem, chaos theory, quantum physics and Heisenberg's uncertainty principle--among others--as grounding for this new emphasis on the unknowable and the limits of human knowledge. In his essay "Toward a Concept of Postmodernism," Ihab Hassan adds to this strand of thought: "as an artistic, philosophical, and social phenomenon, postmodernism veers toward open, playful, optative, provisional (open in time as well as in structure or space), disjunctive, or indeterminate forms, a discourse of ironies and fragments, a 'white ideology' of absences and fractures, a desire of diffractions, an invocation of complex, articulate silences" (154). Indeed, Hassan narrows it down to "two central, constitutive tendencies in postmodernism: one of indeterminacy, the other of immanence" (152-53). So far the Postmodernist individual, as defined above, is this uncertain apparition wandering along the suburbs of culture.

This has led many spectators and critics of Postmodernism to criticize the phenomenon as nihilistic, destructive, and anarchic. To many, Postmodernism is just a coterie of *enfants terrible* intent on tearing down all walls; whatever the repercussions may be. This is a simplified and unthoughtout approach, however, as Hassan points out:

Thus we can not simply rest--as I have sometimes done--on the assumption that postmodernism is antiformal, anarchic, or decreative; for though it is indeed all these, and despite its fanatic will to unmaking, it also contains the need to discover a 'unitary sensibility' (Sontag), to 'cross the border and close the gap' (Fiedler), and to attain, as I have suggested, an immanence of discourse, an expanded noetic intervention, a 'neo-gnostic immediacy of mind'. (150)

Postmodernism, in one sense, is the ability to question without the overpowering need to find immediate answers--or to accept the possibility that a single overriding answer may not even exist. As the shadow of Postmodernist discourse begins to stretch longer and longer, its positive and universal aspects begin to become more clear. Milovanovic writes, "And it [Postmodernism] is neither fatalistic or nihilistic; nor is it without visions of what could be," and--pointing out Postmodernism's resistance to closure writes, "But, unlike the modernist enterprise, there are intrinsic forces that militate against closure and stasis" (40-41). It is this ability to keep an open dialectic that is one of Postmodernism's strongest attributes.

One of the primary characteristics marking the Postmodern aesthetic is self-reflexivity. The questioning and testing of limits of one's chosen medium has become the hallmark of Postmodernist art. The beginnings of this trend are rooted in the works of some artists who reside on the border between the "modern" and the "postmodern," such as Marcel Duchamp, John Cage, James

Joyce and Samuel Beckett. Self-reflexivity keeps the dialogue open between artist and chosen medium, and subsequently between artist and audience. By calling attention to itself, Postmodernist art challenges the viewer/reader/listener out of his or her apathy, and to question the very signifiers by which it presents itself.

This can lead to what Jean Baudrillard has called hyper-reality: a system of empty signifiers which becomes “a gigantic simulacrum--not unreal, but a simulacrum, never again exchanging for what is real, but exchanging in itself, in an uninterrupted circuit without reference or circumference” (Baudrillard 196). The semiotic bank becomes unable to guarantee its loans, and meaning loses all value on the open market of the glossy, fast-paced world of hyper-reality. It appears we have fallen once again into Plato's cave (now subsidized by Disneyland).

Which, of course, winds our discussion back to the cinematic. The Postmodern cinema has become one of these hyper-real “waste lands” of empty images and empty signifiers--at least according Baudrillard. In his essay “The Evil Demon of Images,” he writes:

Simultaneous with this attempt at absolute coincidence with the real, cinema also approaches an absolute coincidence with itself. This is not contradictory: it is the very definition of the hyperreal. . . . Cinema plagiarizes and copies itself, remakes its classics, retroactivates its original myths, remakes silent films more perfect than the originals, etc. All this is logical. *Cinema is fascinated by itself as a lost object just as it (and we) are fascinated by the real as a referential in perdition.* (196)

What other medium so cannibalistically feeds off of itself? No one considers “remaking” Michelangelo's “David,” yet I have heard Psycho is in the process of being “remade.” In essence other media “remake” objects from past tradition,

but only to comment on the notion of art or its limits (i. e. Marcel Duchamp's retouching job on the Mona Lisa, "L.H.O.O.Q"). In the cinema, the "remakes" are made in earnest and often as an attempt to better the original.

So, keeping all this in mind, cinematic influence on Postmodern literature appears to have more of a cultural influence than the predominantly structural influence it had on the Modernists. By the time World War II had come to an end, cinematic structure--such as montage--had already become embedded in modern narrative styles. Certainly there was still--and continues to be--a dialectic between the two forms, but the "newness" of cinema had begun to wear off and its influence on narrative structure also "cooled" down. Also, many of the writers firmly identified within Postmodern style were born in the 1930's and 40's; a time when the movies were "talking" and their mystique was firmly implanted in the collective unconscious. These factors along with a growing interdisciplinary practice in the arts and sciences and the trend of self-reflexivity led to a more cultural influence, calling into question the entire idea of structures, and demanding a greater examination of the ontological levels of "reality."

What, then, distinguishes the Postmodern text? Milovanovic does an excellent job of setting some parameters:

Postmodernists would celebrate the *writerly text* (Barthes 1974; Silverman 1983). This text is seen as being more subversive than a readerly text. Encouraged in the viewer/interpreter is "an infinite play of signification; in it there can be no transcendental signified, only provisional ones which function in turn as signifiers." For the writerly form, deconstruction of the text is celebrated with the purpose of uncovering hidden or repressed voices (consider feminist's celebration of investigating her/story rather than history). This strategy, the postmodernists would say, is particularly important in a contemporary society characterized as

procuring the non-referential and autonomous *hyper-real*, and the new order of *cyberspace*. . . . [and] the idea of *minor literature* which tends toward a deterritorialization, manifest in the carnivalesque genre or other forms expressive of *delire* . . . (30)

Many writers who fall within the Modernist era were sufficiently ahead of their time to meet this criteria, such as Joyce, Kafka, Borges, Nabokov and Beckett. Once again we find ourselves in agreement with Beckett when he says, "The danger is in the neatness of identifications." Borderlines blur and bleed into each other, and classifications lose their weight. Interpretation itself becomes a burdensome problem as Susan Sontag notes in her essay "Against Interpretation," which ends with the powerful line: "In place of a hermeneutics we need an erotics of art" (14). The cinema becomes the perfect paradigm for these explorations of multiple ontological levels of narrative fiction, as Brian McHale points out: "The distinction between literal reality and metaphorical vehicle becomes increasingly indeterminate, until we are left wondering whether the movie reality is only a trope after all, or belongs to the 'real' world of this fiction" (129). We find ourselves wondering about in the world outside the frame.

In America the 1950's saw the rise of the so-called "beat" writers. As Milovanovic points out, "For the postmodernist view, the call is to be a jazz player and poet" (25). Movie stars became the American mythological heroes of the twentieth century, adding weight to the gestalt of tradition the beats incorporated into their vision. In his poem "What's Dead?," Allen Ginsberg announces "Movies dead shadows," and he counts "Jack Kerouac noble poet, Jimmy Dean mystic actor, Boris Karloff the old/ Frankenstein," among these "dead shadows" flickering on the walls of Plato's "hyperreal" cave (689). The beats saw America moving with the panoramic pathos of the 24 frames per second of the cinema reel. Poems such as Ginsberg's "'Have You Seen This

Movie?" and Kerouac's novel On The Road build on this vision of America as movie.

In his poem "To Harpo Marx," Kerouac laments his nostalgia for the past and associates the innocence of Harpo's character with the lost innocence of America. He begins "O Harpo! When did you seem like an angel/ the last time?/ and played the gray harp of gold?" and concludes with "Was your vow of silence an Indian Harp?" (Scattered Poems 59-60). Through film and the myth of the perpetual present Kerouac finds the motifs for this childlike "innocence" that a generation who grew up on the movies can identify with. In his posthumously published novel Visions of Cody, Kerouac recounts a "vision" of the Three Stooges and uses it to justify his own "mad" almost Dadaistic take on reality:

I knew that long ago when the mist was raw Cody saw the Three Stooges, maybe he just stood outside a pawnshop, or hardware store, or in that perennial poolhall door . . . and thought of the Three Stooges, that in 10,000 years--that . . . all the goofs he felt in him were justified in the outside world and he had nothing to reproach himself for, bonk, boing, crash, skittely boom, pow, slam, bang, boom, wham, blam, crack, frap, kerplunk, clatter, clap, blap, fap, slapmap, splat, crunch, crowsh, bong, splat, splat, BONG! (306)

This "vision" he has of the Stooges springing to life right beside the characters in his fiction, blends the ontological reality of the novel with the "reel" world into one metaphorical level. Kerouac's reverie, in true jazz-poet fashion, slips into onomatopoeia and sums up his sprawling view of America.

William Burroughs, occasionally associated with the beats, had his own unique ways of incorporating cinematic influence into his writing. His "cut-up" method of writing brought a chance element into montage. He would write loosely related prose "sketches" and cut parts out of them, then shuffle them

together in a random order. Burroughs would even use cinematic terms such as “cut” and “action” to tie these disparate scenes together. McHale writes, “Reality in Burroughs is a film shot and directed by others; we are actors in the movie, our lives scripted and fixed on celluloid. . . . In other words, the ontological level of the movies, interposed between reality and its textual representation, functions as a global metaphor for Burroughs’s master-theme of *control*” (130).

Another writer, often considered the quintessential Postmodern writer, who uses films to build multiple ontological levels in his fiction is Thomas Pynchon. In novels such as V., The Crying of Lot 49, and Gravity’s Rainbow; Pynchon uses cinematic tropes and metaphors to blur distinctions between the “reel” and the “real” worlds. Brian McHale notes some examples of this cinematic borrowing:

Cinematic discourse pervades the style and imagery of Gravity’s Rainbow from beginning to end. For one transition from a bedroom scene to a conversation over breakfast, “bridge music” is specified; elsewhere, the narrative acquires a voice-over parodying that of an old-fashioned travelogue. In other words, the extended cinematic trope has here been applied *to the text itself*: the text has become the metaphorical tenor, the movies its vehicle; movie metaphors substitute for the language of novelistic narration and description. (129)

Pynchon is an extremely rich and allusive writer and it would take--at least--another chapter devoted only to his writing to develop this thread in much depth.

In fact, it would take another thesis-length project to go into this Postmodern relationship between literature and cinema with any depth at all: to explore the works of Borges and Marquez and other practitioners of the Latin American phenomenon “magic realism,” or the numerous short stories of Donald Barthelme, who once said “Collage is the art form of the twentieth century.”

Taken just one small step further this could read "Montage is the art form of the twentieth century." In his short story "The Indian Uprising," Barthelme writes, "'Who do you want to be?' I asked Kenneth and he said he wanted to be Jean-Luc Godard . . ." (114). Jean-Luc Godard, the French *Nouvelle Vague* director who came to prominence in the 60's, best epitomizes the concept of Postmodernism in film-making. He created a highly self-reflexive vocabulary for cinematic art, and is as influential as Eisenstein in the last third of this century. In literature, there is also Salman Rushdie, who relies heavily on cinematic metaphor as McHale points out: "'Nobody from Bombay should be without a basic film vocabulary,' Salman Rushdie's narrator remarks in Midnight's Children, and accordingly film vocabulary is used in various places throughout this text as a mode of notation for textual strategies" (129).

The list is still building in length as the influence of Postmodernism continues to rise. To go into this paradigm in any depth is for another study. I simply sit on the tip of this Postmodern iceberg, peering into the murky depths, and wonder what could lurk below the dark waves. Maybe, the subject is still too fresh to be probed in much depth for now. We do not have the benefit of hindsight we had with our analysis of Modernism. Perhaps as this century comes to a close and, years from now, when the Postmodern has started to wane, yielding its hold to another school of thought, then one can look back and survey its course with more surety and begin to pick up the pieces.

"Where?" is the last question posed before Leopold Bloom drifts off to sleep towards the end of Ulysses (607.2331). And this seems to be the point at which our inquiries always wind up: "Where are we, and where do we go from here?" As the Internet crawls through its primitive period, one cannot help but think back to the birth of cinema and how primitive those dead shadows once looked. It is almost impossible to imagine the limits of cyberspace and hyperreality. In a

recent issue of Time magazine, Joshua Quittner considers what lies ahead in the aesthetics of this new technology and writes:

Artists too will emerge stronger and better in the 2K Millennium.

Entertainment in this century has been mass-produced and broadcast, rigidly controlled and protected. Media have centralized into the hands of the few; Hollywood studios, television networks and recording companies carefully distribute the stuff, cranking out a relatively modest amount of material that will be seen by everyone on the globe. But in the next century anyone will be able to create a movie, music, literature, a magazine or a video game and distribute it as bits over the network to billions. (214)

Literature will become these labyrinthine hypertexts, spinning off in literally thousands of directions. Quittner tells of one such experiment that has already come to pass: “[Michael] Joyce, an associate professor of English at Vassar College, wrote the ‘classic’ hypertext novel, afternoon, a story. The piece is told one screenful of text at a time; by clicking on adjectives and verbs, readers veer off in far-flung narrative directions” (215). What is more, Joyce’s novel was written in the now distant year 1987. In theory, afternoon, a story sounds suspiciously like the work of another Joyce. Further proof of just how far Finnegans Wake was ahead of its time, as hypertext writers look backwards to it for examples of how to compose the perfect “hypertext.”

Being able to take advantage of new technologies and manipulate them in a manner ahead of one’s time seems to be the hallmark of lasting art, art which remains of interest centuries after its freshness has worn off (As Ezra Pound said, “Literature is news that stays news!). Sometimes, a new technology advances so rapidly that even the artists who excelled in it at one stage, fail to make the transition to the new: like the silent film stars who could not make the

next step into sound films. In other instances, artists are so far ahead of the times that they are able to forecast what the next levels of aesthetic advancement will be far ahead of their own era: as is the case with Joyce. The Modernist artists and writers I have discussed often seem to have more in common with the Postmodernists. For instance, Eisenstein's theories have not been exploited much since his lifetime; maybe the world is not yet ready for a cinema of hieroglyphics, or maybe the Internet will bring about that next step. In the arts at least, there seems to be a continuum from Modernism to Postmodernism: a continuation of experimentation, and of questioning what can be considered art. In any case, it is the artists (such as Griffith, Joyce, Pound, Eisenstein, Eliot, Beckett, Pynchon, etc.) who are able to realize the value of new technologies and new aesthetics; new visions and new discourses, who are able to change the art of their medium and change the way we look at the world. These are the artists who do not simply leave their footprints in the sand of their own times only to fade with the receding tide. These are the artists who build lasting monuments to the eternal human struggle, and leave examples of the endurance of the human spirit.

So, back to Plato's cave; back to the cinema. In our inquiries we always seem to find ourselves questioning the validity of what our eyes see, bringing us back to square one. "In my beginning is my end," writes Eliot (Poems 123). Joyce, who used Vico's cyclical view of history for the structure of Finnegans Wake, whimsically writes, "Finn, again!" (FW 628). Film continues to evolve also, as the shadow of the Millennium looms larger and larger. And, in some ways, it is still catching up with the novel; still building on Griffith's first experiments with narrative form. Susan Sontag notes this fact in her essay "A Note on Novels and Films":

Of course, the cinema does not obey the same schedule of

contemporaneity as the novel; thus, it would appear anachronistic to us if someone wrote a novel like Jane Austen, but it would be very 'advanced' if someone makes a film which is the cinematic equivalent of Jane Austen. This is no doubt because the history of films is so much shorter than the history of narrative fiction; and has emerged under the peculiarly accelerated tempo at which the arts move in our century. (244)

So, as technology keeps these various media on their toes, they all still struggle to catch up with older forms. The old questions get asked in a new way, and visual art will continue to influence literature as the dialogue between cinema and literature becomes more complex and mature. As computer technology continues to advance, so will different aesthetic experiments with the way in which a story can be told. And so we emerge from Plato's cave, our eyes a little dazzled, into the harsh, blinding Technicolor sunlight of "enlightenment."

NOTES

¹ The definition of “fetishism” that is closest to the way that I am using the word here is defined as “commodity fetishism” in Female Fetishism, by Lorraine Gamman and Merja Makinen. They write: “The fetishism of the commodity is more than the attribution of magical powers to an inanimate object; it also involves what we would describe as a disavowal of human labour, *a displacement of value from the people who produce things onto the things themselves* [italics mine]” (28).

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VITA

Jeffrey Scott Longacre was born in Sherman, Texas, on July 3, 1973, the son of Sandra Kaye Longacre and Larry James Longacre. After completing his work at North Garland High School, Garland, Texas, in 1991, he entered Richland Junior College in Dallas, Texas. From the fall of 1993 through the fall of 1994, he studied film at the University of North Texas in Denton, Texas. He received the degree of Bachelor of Arts from Southwest Texas State University in August, 1996. In September, 1996, he entered the Graduate School of Southwest Texas State University, San Marcos, Texas. In 1997 he published a poem in SWTSU's literary journal Persona. He has been a member of Sigma Tau Delta, The English Honor Society since January, 1998.

Permanent address: 1951 Aquarena Springs #3102
San Marcos, Texas 78666