Criticism in New Composition:

*Ulysses* and *The Sound and the Fury*

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Ezra Pound's June 1922 proclamation that "All men should 'Unite to give praise to Ulysses'" did not go unheeded by novelists of the 1920s, who acted in accordance with Pound's belief that "the best criticism of any work, to my mind the only criticism of any work of art that is of any permanent or even moderately durable value, comes from the creative writer or artist who does the next job." Among many others, Sherwood Anderson acknowledged *Ulysses* as a basic influence on *Dark Laughter* (1925), and Conrad Aiken attempted to merge technical aspects of *Ulysses* with Freudian theories in *Blue Voyage* (1927). However, not until William Faulkner's *The Sound and the Fury* in 1929 did a novelist succeed in incorporating Joyce's techniques into his own artistic sensibility. It is true that Joyce was neither a major formative influence on Faulkner, nor a lasting one: echoes in Faulkner's three novels before *The Sound and the Fury* are minor and localized, and after this novel and *As I Lay Dying*, the influence is barely evident. But in *The Sound and the Fury*, especially in Quentin's section, Joyce is a major influence, and Faulkner's use of Joycean techniques contributes significantly to the novel's success.

Since its publication Faulkner's novel has been repeatedly linked to *Ulysses*. Probably to counter the comparisons, Faulkner expended a great deal of energy denying the possible influence of *Ulysses* on his work. Sometimes he claimed that he read *Ulysses* too late in his career to be influenced by Joyce except in minor technical matters; at other times he insisted that he read
Joyce's book only after he wrote *The Sound and the Fury*. Yet his close friends in the 1920s included several Joyce enthusiasts, especially Sherwood Anderson and Phil Stone, and he must have seen at least a significant part of *Ulysses* at the beginning of his career, long before he wrote *The Sound and the Fury*.2 In this novel and *As I Lay Dying* he attempts to narrate his stories with the help of major technical devices that came directly from *Ulysses*.

Joyce's most significant legacy to Faulkner was the interior monologue. With this technique Faulkner discovered a solution to crucial problems in characterization that had plagued him in his first three novels. *Soldier's Pay*, *Mosquitoes*, and *Sartoris* all suffer from his inability to create sufficiently complex characters. *Sartoris* represents an important advance over the first two works in its use of the personal and historical past as a context for the present action. But Bayard Sartoris, upon whom the burden of the past-present conflict rests, is too inarticulate to convey the complex pressures acting on him from both his own and his family's past.

Faulkner's unsuccessful characterization in the early novels is related to his use of an omniscient narrator. It is clear from almost all his novels that he prefers third-person, omniscient narration, but in the first three works the use of omniscience impedes characterization, for it results in exterior views of characters who have little to say. Lacking are inside views, except for occasional inchoate attempts to render the characters' thought processes. Then, in three sections of *The Sound and the Fury* and all of *As I Lay Dying*, Faulkner turned to extreme uses of first-person narration; it is as if he saw the need to purge his work of his undeveloped omniscient instincts by eliminating his own voice entirely. Once he gained the necessary discipline, he returned to omniscient narration with much greater control over the inherent limitations and possibilities.

In *The Sound and the Fury* Faulkner combines the use of first-person narration with the decisive additional improvement provided by stream-of-consciousness techniques. The first-person method forces the character to reveal himself to the reader, thereby eliminating the possibility of inarticulateness, but the interior monologue allows Faulkner at the same time to reveal the character's mind far beyond the character's ability to present his own conscious thought processes.

By the time Faulkner began to write his novel, Joyce and other writers had developed several general narrative methods involving the interior monologue (all of which are used or parodied in *Ulysses*). The technique used by Dorothy Richardson, Virginia Woolf, and Joyce in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, and variously known as indirect interior monologue, *erlebte Rede*, or narrated monologue, is both exemplified and parodied in the "namby-pamby jammy marmalady drawesry (alto là!) style" of the first half of the
"Nausicaä" episode of Ulysses. When Joyce employs this type of narration, he rigidly limits himself to the range of perception and quality of thought processes of one character, but the technique can offer a novelist the flexibility to shift in and out of a character's mind or to render the minds of several characters. Virginia Woolf in Mrs. Dalloway and D. H. Lawrence in Women in Love use narrated monologue in these ways. Faulkner's predilection toward omniscient narration might have led him to the technique as employed by Lawrence and Woolf, but he revealed no significant interest in it.

A much more attractive technique to Faulkner was the interior monologue of Ulysses' "Penelope" episode, with the apparent lack of order in its eight long unpunctuated "sentences." Like most of his contemporaries, Faulkner seems to have read Molly Bloom's soliloquy as a representation of chaos; when he echoes it, his scene is usually a chaotic one, as in this passage from The Sound and the Fury:

Father will be dead in a year they say if he doesn't stop drinking and he won't stop he can't stop since I since last summer and then they'll send Benjy to Jackson I can't cry I can't even cry one minute she was standing in the door the next minute he was pulling at her dress and bellowing his voice hammered back and forth between the walls in waves and she shrinking against the wall getting smaller and smaller with her white face her eyes like thumbs dug into it until he pushed her out of the room his voice hammering back and forth as though its own momentum would not let it stop as though there were no place for it in silence bellowing.

The lack of punctuation, and often capitalization, is significant for Faulkner as he attempts to break through the restrictions of the sentence to reveal the confusion in Quentin's mind. Like Joyce in Molly's monologue, he retains the rhythm of sentences, even as he eliminates punctuation.

This technique appears occasionally in the novels before The Sound and the Fury, especially in Soldier's Pay and Mosquitoes. In the latter it serves primarily to convey emotional agitation, whereas in the former Faulkner uses it for his comic representation of Julian Lowe's ignorant mind. Despite its partial punctuation, Julian's letter to Margaret Powers rhythmically echoes Molly's soliloquy:

I told mother last night and of coarse [sic] she thinks we are too young. But I explained to her how times have changed since the war how the war makes you older than they used to. I see fellows my age that did not serve specially flying which is an education in itself and they seem like kids to me because at last I have found the woman I want and my kid days are over. . . . How can I tell you how much I love you you are so different from them. . . . They are all so silly compared with you talking of jazz and going some place where all the time I have been invited on

267
parties but I refuse because I rather sit in my room thinking of you putting my thoughts down on paper let them have their silly fun. 

In both of these novels the technique remains unassimilated within works that are not stream-of-consciousness novels; it either fully reveals the limitations of a minor character's mind or it serves as a temporary excursion into the mind of a major character within a primarily external presentation.

Only in *The Sound and the Fury* does this monologue technique become one method assimilated with others in a narrative in which the events are indistinguishable from the minds perceiving them. Quentin's section of the novel can be seen as a conflict between two aspects of his mind: his voluntary and involuntary thoughts. Faulkner needs various devices to indicate the degree of Quentin's control over his thoughts, and he often employs the "Penelope" technique to indicate the loss of control. At one point, for example, all the details of a scene rush into his mind at once: "one minute she was standing there the next he was yelling and pulling at her dress they went into the hall and up the stairs yelling and shoving at her up the stairs to the bathroom door and stopped her back against the door and her arm across her face yelling and trying to shove her into the bathroom when she came in to supper T. P. was feeding him he started again just whimpering at first until she touched him then he yelled..." (p. 185)

Besides the representation of mental agitation, Faulkner uses the technique as a means of characterization, particularly of Mrs. Compson. In "Penelope" the method conveys Joyce's idea of the flow of the female mind, the mind of the "perfectly sane full amoral fertilisable untrustworthy engaging shrewd limited prudent indifferent Weib." Faulkner is more specific, as the technique displays the whining, parasitic nature of Quentin's mother:

what have I done to have been given children like these Benjamin was punishment enough and now for her to have no more regard for me her own mother I've suffered for her dreamed and planned and sacrificed I went down into the valley yet never since she opened her eyes has she given me one unselfish thought at times I look at her I wonder if she can be my child except Jason he has never given me one moment's sorrow since I first held him in my arms I knew then that he was to be my joy and my salvation... (pp. 126-27)

As Joyce limits his use of this monologue method to one episode, Faulkner restricts it to a few crucial memories and the words of Mrs. Compson in Quentin's mind. By itself the technique could not sustain the whole of Quentin's section, with Quentin's numerous memories and fluctuations of mood, but it is extremely effective as a special variation within the larger monologue structure.

More important for Faulkner than the "Penelope" monologue is the domi-
nant technique in the first half of *Ulysses*, a method Joyce called his book's “initial style.” Here Joyce combines third-person, past-tense external description with direct first-person, present-tense reporting of his character's thoughts. As in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, though not so consistently, the omniscient descriptions limit themselves either to the character's perceptions (“In Westland row he halted before the window of the Belfast and Oriental Tea Company and read the legends of leadpapered packets: choice blend, finest quality, family tea”) or to the quality of the character’s mind (“In a dream, silently, she had come to him, her wasted body within its loose grave-clothes giving off an odour of wax and rosewood, her breath bent over him with mute secret words, a faint odour of wetted ashes”). This type of narration avoids several shortcomings inherent in other monologue techniques. The third-person details eliminate the awkwardness of a first-person, present-tense narration of external facts and events (the method of Joyce’s “model,” Édouard Dujardin's *Les lauriers sont coupés*), while the direct reporting of the mind allows Joyce the freedom to distinguish the mind of one character from another stylistically, to develop systems of symbols and motifs, and to gain an immediacy and directness absent in the narrated monologue.

As with the “Penelope” technique, Faulkner's interest in this monologue method is evident in his first novel, *Soldier's Pay*. There the narrative is occasionally broken by an elementary report of a character's thoughts:

> She felt the head board against her head, through her hair, felt the bones of her long shanks against her arms clasping them, nursing them, saw the smug, impersonal room like an appointed tomb (in which how many, many discontents, desires, passions, had died?) high above a world of joy and sorrow and lust for living, high above impervious trees occupied solely with maternity and spring. (Dick, Dick. Dead, ugly Dick. Once you were alive and young and passionate and ugly, after a time you were dead, dear Dick: that flesh, that body, which I loved and did not love; your beautiful, young, ugly body, dear Dick, become now a seething of worms, like new milk. Dear Dick.)

Like Joyce throughout *Ulysses*, Faulkner uses a recurring phrase, in this case “dear ugly Dick,” as a token of the character's mind; however, such a phrase remains a token and assumes none of the symbolic dimensions of analogous phrases in *Ulysses* or *The Sound and the Fury*. Like the uncapsulated and unpunctuated monologue, this interior monologue technique occurs only sporadically in *Soldier's Pay* and is virtually nonexistent in *Mosquitoes* and *Sartoris*.

In Quentin's section of *The Sound and the Fury* the technique dominates, even though Faulkner employs first-person narration. Quentin's past-tense reporting of the external facts functions like Joyce's omniscient, third-person narration. To report his character's thoughts, Faulkner, like Joyce, shifts to a
direct reporting technique based on the present tense. The similarities can be seen in the opening pages of *Ulysses* and Quentin’s section of *The Sound and the Fury*, both of which serve to establish a tone and a set of expectations. Neither “Telemachus” nor Quentin’s section begins directly with an interior monologue. Joyce carefully introduces the external setting of the tower and its inhabitants, and the internal condition of Stephen’s grief over his mother’s death, before he presents the first extended direct report of Stephen’s mind:

> “Stephen bent forward and peered at the mirror held out to him, cleft by a crooked crack, hair on end. As he and others see me. Who chose this face for me? This dogsbody to rid of vermin. It asks me too.” (p. 6)

Throughout the first six episodes of *Ulysses*, the narration consists primarily of this combination of external description (omniscient, but usually limited to Stephen’s or Bloom’s perception) and interior monologue.

A parallel development occurs at the beginning of Quentin’s section of *The Sound and the Fury*. Quentin himself replaces the omniscient narrator; all of the observations are thus limited to his perceptions. As narrator, he attempts to describe objectively the environment and the events around him, even though this objectivity is nullified from the start by his mind’s distortions. The apparent objectivity with which he begins each of the opening paragraphs disintegrates almost immediately into a memory of a conversation with his father. The first five paragraphs work this way, but the fifth becomes more complicated as, inadvertently it seems, Quentin begins to reveal the “stream” of his mind:

> If it had been cloudy I could have looked at the window, thinking what he said about idle habits. Thinking it would be nice for them down at New London if the weather held up like this. Why shouldn’t it? The month of brides, the voice that breathed *She ran right out of the mirror, out of the banked scent. Roses. Roses. Mr and Mrs Jason Richmond Compson announce the marriage of. Roses. Not virgins like dogwood, milkweed. I said I have committed incest, Father I said. Roses. Cunning and serene. If you attend Harvard one year, but dont see the boat-race, there should be a refund. Let Jason have it. Give Jason a year at Harvard. (pp. 94-95)

Before the italicized portion, Quentin functions as narrator. Although the development from phrase to phrase is logical only in terms of Quentin’s own standards (on a cloudy day, there would be no “shadow of the sash” [p. 93], and he could then look out the window without knowing the time), it represents his attempt to narrate a controlled set of thoughts. In the italicized section, the patterns of association become involuntary, as several thoughts rush into his mind at once.

Joyce frequently uses a similar combination of controlled and uncontrolled thought processes. For example, in “Proteus,” as Stephen walks along the strand,
he lets his mind wander, but once he lights on a topic, he consciously plays with it through jokes, ironies, allusions, or directed associations. His abstract considerations of the nebeneinander and nacheinander eventually lead him to think of several priests offering communion:

And at the same instant perhaps a priest round the corner is elevating it. Dringdring! And two streets off another locking it into a pyx. Dringadring! And in a ladychapel another taking house all to his own cheek. Dringdring! Down, up, forward, back. Dan Occam thought of that, invincible doctor. A misty English morning the imp hypostasis tickled his brain. Bringing his host down and kneeling he heard twine with his second bell the first bell in the transept (he is lifting his) and, rising, heard (now I am lifting) their two bells (he is kneeling) twang in diphthong.

Cousin Stephen, you will never be a saint. (p. 40)

Occasionally, though, under the impetus of a powerful emotion, the associations and the directions of his thoughts slip out from Stephen's conscious control:

He saved men from drowning and you shake at a cur's yelping. . . . We don't want any of your medieval abstrusiosities. Would you do what he did? A boat would be near, a lifebuoy. Natürlich, put there for you. Would you or would you not? The man that was drowned nine days ago off Maiden's rock. They are waiting for him now. The truth, spit it out. I would want to. I would try. I am not a strong swimmer. Water cold soft. When I put my face into it in the basin at Clongowes. Can't see! Who's behind me? Out quickly, quickly! Do you see the tide flowing quickly in on all sides, sheeting the lows of sands quickly, shellcocoa-coloured? If I had land under my feet. I want his life still to be his, mine to be mine. A drowning man. His human eyes scream to me out of horror of his death. I . . . With him together down . . . I could not save her. Waters: bitter death: lost. (pp. 45-46)

For both Joyce and Faulkner this technique serves to reveal repressed fears bursting in upon the character's more voluntary thoughts.

Structurally, Quentin's section seems in large measure to be modeled on Bloom's day. First, Quentin's "hour upon the stage," like Bloom's, is obviously and explicitly a day: both the opening date and Quentin's obsession with cocks keep us informed of the date and time throughout. The section has both the range of Bloom's day and many of the same mundane concerns; we follow Quentin waking, dressing, brushing his teeth, buying a roll, thinking about lunch, riding streetcars, and walking the streets of Cambridge and surrounding towns. For Bloom, events like these are part of a normal day. For Quentin, though it is likely that this day is not very different from previous ones (except in its conclusion), the mundane acts take on a ritualistic significance, their
TWENTIETH CENTURY LITERATURE

simple mechanical nature contrasting with the chaos in his mind. Both Bloom and Quentin spend the day wandering around their cities, and both return "home" at the end. Although Quentin leaves his room again some time shortly after his section concludes, Faulkner carefully ends it at its place of origin and on a relatively calm note. Likewise, the crises for both Bloom and Quentin involve suitors. Bloom achieves a victory in his mental ability to "slay" Molly's lovers, real or imagined, with "more abnegation than jealousy, less envy than equanimity" (p. 733). Quentin's inability to cope with reality is largely summarized first by his desire to literally slay his sister's suitor/lovers, specifically Dalton Ames, and then by his failure to understand why he could not do it.

Although Quentin's section exists as a continuous narrative, there are several divisions implicit within it. Like the episodes in Ulysses, these subsections reflect the passage of time during the day and the mind's reaction to the various times of day. For example, at lunch time, Quentin indulges in a Bloom-like joke about the relationship of hunger to state of mind (this is one of the themes of Ulysses' lunch episode, "Lestrygonians"): "Eating the business of eating inside of you space too space and time confused Stomach saying noon brain saying eat oclock" (SF, p. 129). As Quentin's day progresses, so does his inability to live in and to focus his mind on present reality, and the passage of time is accompanied by changing narrative techniques designed to reveal the growing domination of the past over the present in Quentin's mind.

Several of the subdivisions feature a significant amount of present-day external "action." Faulkner's usual technique in these passages resembles that of the opening paragraphs, with their tension between Quentin the narrator and Quentin the subject of the interior monologue. Faulkner refines Joyce's method, since Quentin's "descriptive" statements partake of the pathology of his mind as fully as do the voluntary and involuntary memories:

But why did she The chimes began as I stepped on my shadow, but it was the quarter hour. The Deacon wasn't in sight anywhere. *think I would have could have* (p. 118)

The chimes began again, the half hour. I stood in the belly of my shadow and listened to the strokes spaced and tranquil along the sunlight, among the thin, still little leaves. Spaced and peaceful and serene, with that quality of autumn always in bells even in the month of brides. *Lying on the ground under the window bellowing* He took one look at her and knew. Out of the mouths of babes. *The street lamps* The chimes ceased. I went back to the post-office, treading my shadow into pavement. . . . (p. 124)

As Quentin's section progresses and he becomes more and more immersed in his own thoughts, Faulkner builds upon the basic method and combines it with other Joycean techniques. Both novelists reveal the characters' minds inter-
acting with the outside world by using external incidents to either inspire or cut off an extended memory. In "Circe," the whore Zoe's response to Bloom's admonitions against smoking, "Go on. Make a stump speech out of it" (p. 478), inspires his visions of glory, and the extreme example of an event cutting off a memory is the "Bip" of Bloom's pants' button (p. 552), which startles him out of his trance of female domination. Likewise, Quentin's thoughts stop abruptly when he meets Deacon:

Women are like that they dont acquire knowledge of people we are for that they are just born with a practical fertility of suspicion that makes a crop every so often and usually right they have an affinity for evil for supplying whatever the evil lacks in itself for drawing it about them instinctively as you do bedclothing in slumber fertilising the mind for it until the evil has served its purpose whether it ever existed or no He was coming along between a couple of freshmen. He hadn't quite recovered from the parade, for he gave me a salute, a very superior-officerish kind. (p. 119)

As in "Circe," the interruption is temporary, and another immersion in the past follows almost immediately. Faulkner, however, adopts techniques from Joyce's episode of hallucinations, in which no real action occurs at all, for the presentation of a character whose tormented thoughts are in reality driving him to suicide.

Both authors use external events as a counterpoint to the characters' minds. The main example in The Sound and the Fury is Quentin's meeting with the fishing boys:

"What do you want to go to the Eddy for?" the second boy said. "You can fish at the mill if you want to."

"Ah, let him go," the third said. They looked after the first boy. Sunlight slid patchily across his walking shoulders, glinting along the pole like yellow ants.

"Kenny," the second said. Say it to Father will you I will am my fathers Progenitive I invented him created I him Say it to him it will not be for he will say I was not and then you and I since philoprogenitive

"Ah, come on," the boy said. "They're already in." (pp. 151-52)

A parallel scene occurs in Ulysses when M'Coy interrupts Bloom's ogling of the society woman in Westland Row (pp. 73-74), or in A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man when Stephen watches the wading girl:

His heart trembled; his breath came faster and a wild spirit passed over his limbs as though he were soaring sunward. His heart trembled in an ecstasy of fear and his soul was in flight. His soul was soaring in an air beyond the world and the body he knew was purified in a breath and delivered of incertitude
and made radiant and commingled with the element of the spirit. An ecstasy of flight made radiant his eyes and wild his breath and tremulous and wild and radiant his windswept limbs.

—One! Two! . . . Look out!
—O, cripes, I'm drowned!
—One! Two! Three and away!
—Me next! Me next!
—One! . . . Uk!
—Stephaneforos!

The swimming boys in the Portrait serve several functions: they provide an immediate ironic tempering of Stephen's ecstasy; they represent the "daily bread of experience" with which Stephen will have to deal as an artist; they even comment ironically on Stephen's abhorrence of water. Likewise, the boys in The Sound and the Fury contrast in their simple desires and disagreements with Quentin's overwhelmingly complex problems, and their argument about fishing and swimming sites rather grotesquely parallels Quentin's search for an appropriate suicide bridge.

The external present also counterpoints the remembered past when the two novelists wish to indicate temporal relationships between the characters' minds and the outside world. In "Circe," Joyce reveals the instantaneous nature of Bloom's visions of glory by framing the trance with Zoe's speech, which is uninterrupted in "reality": "Go on. Make a stump speech out of it. . . . Talk away till you're black in the face" (pp. 478, 499). Faulkner uses a similar strategy to indicate a relationship between various levels of thought in Quentin's mind: "What picture of Gerald I to be one of the Dalton Ames oh asbestos Quentin has shot background. Something with girls in it. Women do have always his voice above the gabble voice that breathed an affinity for evil." (p. 130)

Here Quentin's voluntary thoughts (unitalicized) mix with more uncontrolled thoughts and memories. The intruding thought does not break the continuity of the voluntary thought at all. At other times, though, a memory from the past intrudes and does break the directed thought: "I carried the books into the sitting-room and stacked them on the table, the ones I had brought from home and the ones Father said it used to be a gentleman was known by his books; nowadays he is known by the ones he has not returned and locked the trunk and addressed it. The quarter hour sounded. I stopped and listened to it until the chimes ceased." (p. 99)

The climactic scene regarding this past-present relationship is Quentin's fight with Gerald Bland (pp. 185-203), in which a remembered fight with Caddy's "suitor," Dalton Ames, totally subsumes the present, so that we learn that Quentin has indeed fought with Bland only after he has been knocked out and his companions' voices intrude on his reawakening consciousness (p. 203).
Like other long immersions in the past, this extended memory features the lack of punctuation and capitalization which is the hallmark of Molly’s monologue in *Ulysses*.

There is an important difference between Joyce’s and Faulkner’s uses of the exterior-interior monologue technique. Like Quentin, Stephen and Bloom spend large amounts of time recalling or reliving past events, but those events alone do not define the existence of either of Joyce’s characters. Most of the thoughts of each are direct responses to external stimuli, “the now, the here” of June 16, 1904 (U, p. 186). For Stephen, chance events serve several functions: they recall his mental fixations to him, as the student Sargent evokes thoughts on maternal love (p. 27); they inspire serious or playful metaphysical speculation, as do the two women in “Proteus” (pp. 37-38); or they lead him to conclusions that suggest he might be capable of change in his attitudes (“Their blood is in me, their lusts my waves” [p. 45]; “Dublin. I have much, much to learn” [p. 144]). Despite his self-containment, present external events influence his mental life to a great extent. Joyce goes beyond this in his presentation of Bloom: the now and the here become integral parts of the stream of his mind, so much so that there is often no need for a narrator to describe passing events “objectively.” For example, while Bloom wonders if M’Coy is following him, his mind registers the sights around him:

> Mr Bloom stood at the corner, his eyes wandering over the multi-coloured hoardings. Cantrell and Cochrane’s Ginger Ale (Aromatic). Clery’s summer sale. No, he’s going on straight. Hello. Leab tonight: Mrs Bandman Palmer. Like to see her in that again. Hamlet she played last night. Male impersonator. Perhaps he was a woman. Why Ophelia committed suicide? Poor papa! How he used to talk about Kate Bateman in that! Outside the Adelphi in London waited all the afternoon to get in. Year before I was born that was: sixtyfive. (p. 76)

To Quentin, though, the present is nonexistent. The configuration of past events is fixed in his mind, and the present has become only an adjunct to the past. Thus, all of the events of the “stream” of his mind are descriptions of past events or fully remembered conversations. Faulkner employs several of the technical features of Joyce’s interior monologue, but he does so to portray not a character balanced between an external and an internal life but one whose present life is completely and fatally engulfed by the past.

Joycean influence in *The Sound and the Fury* is not limited to Quentin’s section. A great deal also exists in Benjy’s. There Faulkner’s use of Joyce’s techniques is both simpler and more original, more daring. Faulkner strips one aspect of the interior monologue to its radical essentials by using the association method in a mind that can only associate mechanically, that can make no conclusions or deductions. In *Ulysses* the associations link the past and present...
in the characters' minds, but in Benjy's monologue Faulkner eliminates all temporal distinctions. Whereas Quentin is all past, Benjy is all present. The artistic principle in Benjy's section is similar to Joyce's in *Ulysses*: fragments and episodes appear early in the section, without explanation, context, comment, or other aids. Elucidation comes later if the reader remembers well. In both cases, the principle of order lies in the author's design rather than in the character's mind (except to the extent that the chaos of Benjy's mind is itself the controlling order). In the use of Benjy, almost by definition, the result is "spatial," since the character lacks all temporal perspective. The result at the end of the section is a picture of Benjy's mind, a still representation of the nature and contents of his consciousness.

It is this extension of some properties implicit in the stream-of-consciousness methods that constitutes Faulkner's original technical achievement here. Yet Benjy and Quentin are balanced by Jason (who shares properties with the first-person narrator of Joyce's "Cyclops" episode) and the omniscient fourth chapter, and *The Sound and the Fury* must, of course, be seen in terms of all four sections. As critics have suggested, devices such as associationism, recurrent motifs, idiosyncratic phrases and rhythms, unexplained mental images or ideas, and the basic stream-of-consciousness goal of rendering the contents of a mind all force the novelist away from the direction of storytelling and into the depths of character. This suits Joyce perfectly; Stephen and Bloom are isolated individuals within a society that is presented for the most part in a static picture. Faulkner, however, assimilates these techniques, with their restrictions, into his basic storytelling impulse. Benjy's and Quentin's sections reveal states of being, rather than actions, and they are close to the *Ulysses* model. In Benjy the tension between depth of character and the need to progress in the temporal world does not exist because his mind has no relation to the flux of the outside world. Quentin's section exists essentially to reveal why an event is occurring (or, in the context of the entire novel, why an event occurred eighteen years in the past). The remainder of the novel shifts the balance. Jason's section is a monologue, but there are no interior views, no stream-of-consciousness techniques. In the fourth section, events dominate, reported by an omniscient narrator.

It seems fair to say, with Robert Humphrey, that *The Sound and the Fury* represents the point at which the stream-of-consciousness novel entered the "main stream of fiction." The thirty-year tale still exists, and no matter how "spatial" the final image is, we eventually reconstruct the story to some degree. Furthermore, the novel represents Faulkner's own reentry into the "main stream" via the route of modernism. Although Faulkner remained an experimenter throughout his career, after this novel and *As I Lay Dying* he abandoned any attempt to render processes of consciousness directly; his technical experi-
ments became more concerned with sentence formation, point of view, and fictional structure. Outstanding as The Sound and the Fury is in itself, as "criticism in new composition" of the interior monologue techniques of Ulysses it makes possible Faulkner's subsequent great achievements in omniscient narration in his novels of the 1930s and 1940s.


4 William Faulkner, The Sound and the Fury (1929; rpt. New York: Vintage, [1965]), p. 154. Subsequent references are to this edition and are included in parentheses within the text, labeled "SF" when necessary. The italics in this and all other quotations are Faulkner's.


6 Joyce, Letters, I, 170.

7 Ibid., I, 129.

8 James Joyce, Ulysses (New York: Modern Library, 1961), pp. 71, 10. Subsequent references are to this edition and are included in parentheses within the text, labeled "U" when necessary.

9 Soldier's Pay, p. 44.


11 Ibid., p. 221.
