

Bernhard Radloff

Time and Time-Field: The Structure of Anticipation and Recollection in the Quentin-Section of *The Sound and The Fury*

Criticism dealing with the question of time in *The Sound and the Fury* has traditionally tended to take two assumptions for granted. The first of these is that time is "in" the minds of the characters as an idea which they entertain or may fail to entertain (Benjy);¹ the second, that the characters themselves are "in" time, or, as in the case of Benjy, may escape being in time. Inasmuch as time is in the minds of the characters it becomes a theme or motif among others which is used to characterize them. The characters themselves, in turn, are in time as the "stream" which carries them along.²

In the first instance, therefore, time is understood as something with which a character may be concerned.³ Quentin, for example, is said to have an "obsession" with time. This obsession has to be interpreted out of "the complex neurotic configuration within which it occurs and from which it derives its meaning."⁴ As the function of a neurosis time is "in" Quentin's mind as an idea with which he is obsessed and by which he is overwhelmed. Dilsey, on the other hand, has been successful "in finding a meaningful cognitive pattern in time."⁵ Time, in other words, is to be understood as the focus of an attitude. As such, some attitudes may be judged correct, others incorrect.⁶ Whereas some characters are "obsessed" with time others may escape or forget it: "and whereas Benjy is saved by being outside time, Quentin is destroyed by his excessive awareness of it."⁷ Time is in Quentin's mind as his awareness of it.

The question arises, however, whether it is commensurate to the centrality of time in the novel to treat it as one idea among others which the characters may entertain, or one theme—even if perhaps the most important of these—which the novel may modulate. More than a theme or means of characterization, time functions as a structural principle to determine those particular aspects of the narrative we call "characters."

The stream-concept seems to provide a structural model of the reality of time over and beyond any ideas the characters may have about time. Yet to what extent does this model succeed in illuminating the structure of the narrative? When we consider the stream-of-time metaphor more precisely it becomes evident that when we say characters are "in time," we mean they are *in*—pass through—a succession of presents, or nows. Fundamental to the idea of time which criticism holds is the image of time as a continuous, irreversible flow.⁸ Time flows out of the future, through the moment of the present and disappears into the past. Since the future is "not yet" and the past is "no longer," the stream-concept gives primacy to the present, to the moment which is right now.⁹ When we say characters are "in time," we indicate, in effect, that they are *in the present*. This conception of time is at least as old as St. Augustine, who wrote as follows: "For if there are times past and future . . . I still know that wherever they are, they are not there as future or past, but as present."¹⁰

Yet the pure present is a vacuous concept. In terms of the stream model of time the present is continually passing away into the past. In order to be intelligible, the present, the moment of the now, must have an inherent relation to past and future. As Faulkner notes, "there is only the present moment, *in which I include both the past and the future*."¹¹ The instant of the now, therefore, does not refer only to what is present: it has an articulated structure which includes past and future. Speaking of the long sentence which is characteristic of his style, Faulkner calls it "an attempt to get [the character's] past and possibly his future into the instant in which he does something."¹² The unified structure of past, present and future in the now, which is articulated in different ways in each section of the novel needs to be worked out in its concrete detail.

For rather than recounting a simple succession of presents, the text captures the relation of present to past and future times in the structured now, or moment. As opposed to representing the passing of a series of moments, the text holds many moments in unity and in tension. The temporal complexity of the text encourages us to look for a model of time which reflects the structure of the text more truly.

Thus we are led to propose that it is more commensurate to the structured unity of time in the narrative to think of time *as an openness, or clearing, in which past, present, and future are gathered in a single field*.¹³

As opposed to the notion of time as a destructive stream external to the individual character, the concept of the time-field reveals time as the gathering and illuminating power by virtue of which the inscription of a character in a text becomes possible. Whereas the stream meta-

phor is unable to approach time except in terms of that which is passing away, the model of the field is able to express the relation of the three directions of time in a fashion which recognizes the simultaneous yet highly differentiated presence of past, present and future. The intermodulation of the three dimensions of time in the time-field gives a narrative world its intelligible structure. Articulated in its three directions, the field differentiates events in terms of their temporal character and gives the text its basic structure, even as it unifies the experience of a character into the field of a single life-time.

In effect, Quentin is not "in" time—*he is an individual articulation of time*: the ways in which he grasps, or fails to grasp his past, present and future, determine the fashion in which the time-field of his existence is illuminated and obscured. The extended duration of Quentin's last day, which the text recounts and which constitutes the relative present of the narrative, arises out of the future Quentin anticipates and the past on which he is thrown by his memories. Past and future mutually determine each other through a reciprocal motion out of which the present arises as it does, with the particular quality it has. The open, structured field of intelligibility which arises out of the intermodulation of the three dimensions of time constitutes Quentin's "world"; the "character" of "Quentin," in turn, is no other than the particular temporal structure which the narrative enunciates.

Quentin's future is defined by his anticipation, in effect, by the character of the suicide he imagines. His past, in turn, is articulated through his moods. The moods which dominate Quentin anticipate the future even as they express the presence of the past on which he is thrown. At the same time, the suicide he foresees reflects his governing moods in its structure. In this fashion, as we shall see, Quentin's moods (the past) and his anticipations (the future), mutually determine each other and the relative present of the narrative.

The general consensus of criticism holds that Quentin's suicide is a flight from death rather than a genuine encounter with death. For Quentin "death is never a possibility, but a faked certitude."¹⁴ He intends his death to preserve an idea of himself he values above life itself. The possibility of transcending death is something Quentin foresees; seeing it, Quentin throws himself toward this possibility and grasps his being out of it.

Brooks has noted that Quentin attempts to freeze "into permanence one fleeting moment of the past."¹⁵ But Quentin's memory of the past is drawn out of his understanding of the future he foresees:

And maybe when He says Rise the eyes will come floating up too, out of the deep quiet and the sleep, to look on glory *If it could just be a hell beyond that: the clean flame the two of us more than dead. Then you*

will have only me then only me then the two of us amid the pointing and the horror beyond the clean flame.¹⁶

Quentin's understanding of himself is not a residue of the past he once lived, as if he himself were a residue of his former existence. "Fore-seeing" himself dead, and "the two of us more than dead," Quentin understands himself in terms of possibility he will act out. This possibility-for-being, precisely as a *possibility*, is inherently futural.

Brooks goes on to observe that "Quentin's obsession with the past is in fact a repudiation of the future."¹⁷ Yet Quentin does not so much repudiate the future *as such*, as those possibilities (e.g., earning a degree at Harvard) which are concretely available to him. As opposed to any number of realizable futures which he rejects, Quentin projects himself toward an impossibility. Yet the impossibility he projects, his vision of a disembodied existence with Caddy, safe with her beyond death, is nevertheless the future in terms of which Quentin understands his life. In effect, Quentin *has* chosen a future for himself, but this future is an impossibility.

Quentin's vision of a transcendent existence, therefore, is not simply a reproduction of his memories, for the voices he hears take their significance from the possibility out of which Quentin understands himself. Quentin recalls his past and remembers Caddy in the particular way he does because he is already ahead of himself in the clean flame, in the future: "And I will look down and see my murmuring bones" (p. 98). The past is understood out of, and is significant in terms of the future Quentin foresees. As such, given that the possibility of transcendence he projects constantly approaches him out of the future, the future, not the past, is the first horizon of time in terms of which Quentin becomes intelligible.

This is not to say, however, that the character of Quentin's moods is determined by the structure of his anticipated suicide and projected back into the past. As we shall see below, Quentin's projected ideal gives his memories their intelligibility. At the same time, however, the ideal itself is nothing other than the consummation of those moods which have hitherto pervaded Quentin's life-time. In this fashion, and in a sense which still needs to be defined more precisely, past and future mutually reflect and determine each other.

It has often been noted that Quentin's attachment to the "purity" of the ideal is a reflection of his "revulsion against the physical, the sexual, the limited" and the temporal; in short, it is "a romantic repudiation of the immediate realities of human life."¹⁸ Caught in the web of time and sexuality, even castration seems desirable to Quentin. Yet "it's not not having them. It's never to have had them" (p. 143). In short, what Quentin wants is never to have been "in time," and failing

that, to sunder himself out of time into the eternal. Like the boys discussing the fish they haven't caught, Quentin makes

of unreality a possibility, then a probability, then an incontrovertable fact, as people will when their desires become words. (p. 145)

The unreality Quentin has made the fact of his life—and his death—is to think that after annihilating his existence in this world he could take up a god-like existence beyond space and time, be it for all that in his own private hell.

Quentin's ideal world signifies a "transcendent state of arrested motion."¹⁹ The movement Quentin wants to arrest is the endless motion of the stream of time, symbolized by the fleeting "nows" of the defaced watch. Conceived in these terms, time marks everything, even grief, as "temporary," and doomed. In reaction to the infinite stream of time Quentin's ideal takes on a infinity of its own as the eternalization of the moment he wants to preserve.

In terms of his ideal Quentin takes a stand against the fleeting stream of time and brings it to a standstill. In effect, the eternity of his ideal is the essence of the infinity of time conceived as a sequence: whereas the sequence is composed of an endless series of moments which go to make up eternity, the eternity of the ideal is the endlessness of *one* moment.²⁰ Through the ideal Quentin can "lose time" and free himself from the "mechanical progression of it" (p. 102).

As such, the origin of Quentin's ideal in the sequence-concept of time cannot be overlooked. For it is the normal function of a time-piece to refer to and to remind one of one's concrete involvements in the world. When the watch is denuded of its hands, time is denuded of its references and reduced to a series of qualitatively undifferentiated moments. The faceless watch no longer refers to events in the world. In this sense the denuded watch is worldless. Quentin's project concentrates this empty succession into one moment of supreme value, and elevates it into a super-world.

Quentin's obsession with his sister's virginity is a reflection of the ideal he holds for himself. She must be innocent so to be his alone; pure, so to be free of the dissolution and "filth" sexuality brings with it. Most importantly, she must reflect in her purity the cultural values which are the necessary foils of his honour: were these values to cease to exist his honour would have no object. And because these values are understood as eternal and incorruptible, Candace too must be innocent and unchanging. The super-world, therefore, realizes Quentin's highest values: *purity*; the reduction of social complexity into the *simplicity* of a relationship in which two people are mutually bound to each other;²¹ continuous and unchanging *self-possession*. The last

named is the ultimate value for the sake of which all others are held. These three characteristics are united in the formula of "*the clean flame [and] the two of us more than dead*" (p. 144). The flame Quentin imagines purifies and unites, and leaving him "more than dead" it gives him possession of himself in terms of his ideal self-image.

As Quentin passes through his last day his mind is all but filled by the fleeting, inconstant voices of the past. The shifting focus of his thought is admirably captured in the text and characterizes him most directly. This is true to the extent that it has been suggested that the past invades or encroaches upon the present or that Quentin's present is a mere re-enactment of his past.²² The past seems to be a kind of alien power which forces the present "underground" and overwhelms it.²³

Yet this line of critical thought is based on a number of misapprehensions. In the first instance the present moment is always tensed to a duration in such a way as to include the significant experiences of the past: these do not "invade" the present, for they help to give the present the only structure it can have. As we have noted, the idea of a "pure present" is an empty concept.

The voices of the past, therefore, are also, and in the first and foremost instance, the voices of the present. These voices hold the present open to the past and, as such, serve to give the extended moment of Quentin's last day the intelligible structure it has. Thus the extended duration of the present is illuminated by the past; the light of the past structures the presence of what is present to Quentin.

The voices Quentin hears, those of his father or mother, or Caddy, are in each case of a highly differentiated character. Not only this, but as voices of the present, they articulate the way Quentin feels on the last day of his life. The voices become present through Quentin and only through him. They are *his* voices in the sense that they show us how the world which he has had still reverberates through him. The voices of the past, in effect, carry the tone and articulate the moods which illuminate Quentin's last day: along with the ideal he projects they disclose the world he has. But whereas the ideal defines the character of Quentin's anticipations the voices articulate the moods which arise out of his recollections.

Quentin's fundamental moods reveal the *whole* of his being in the world.²⁴ We generally tend to think of mood as a condition of psyche, a mere colouring which is painted on the "objective world." More fundamentally, however, "to be in a mood" is no less than "to have an understanding." Rather than just giving information about some thing or other, mood in this sense reveals a world in the totality of its significance at any particular time. Thrown back on his past Quentin is thrown up against the moods which have previously disclosed (or

concealed) his world and which still do so.

Bleikasten notes that Quentin "moves through the present like a sleepwalker," because "the hallucinatory reactivation of memory-traces sometimes totally obliterate the present moment."²⁵ In this fashion memory is understood as a trace of the past making itself felt. The voices of the past, however, do not compose a legion of "memory-traces," reactivated or otherwise, but a structure of significant experiences which make up the world Quentin is in. A mood, in turn, is not a trace of the past but the present actuality of the past. Quentin walks through his immediate world like a shadow because the ideal he foresees reduces his world to a shadow of itself. The past, in turn, constitutes Quentin's present through the moods it has bequeathed to him.

We may identify three basic moods which characterize Quentin's state of mind. They are as follows:

- (i) the mood of resignation: this mood arises primarily out of Quentin's relationship to his mother;
- (ii) a mood of grasping possessiveness evoked by his sister;
- (iii) a sense of the all-pervading futility of life bequeathed to him by his father. The mood of nihilism this engenders arises explicitly out of Quentin's acceptance of Mr. Compson's understanding of time.

Quentin is *moved into these moods* by the voices which reverberate through his mind; the voices Quentin hears, each in its own fashion, *throw him back* on what he has been.

Thrown back on himself and the world he already has, Quentin is continually brought up against his life with others; in the first instance he defines himself in terms of these relations:

What have I done to have been given children like these Benjamin was punishment enough. (p. 126)

We instantly recognize Mrs. Compson's voice. Is this just a reactivated memory-trace? Quentin, to be sure, "remembers" his mother's words. But we think of "memory" entirely too superficially if we take it as the mechanical recall of some piece of information. Rather than this, and holding fast to the original meaning of the word, Quentin remembers his mother's words inasmuch as he is "mindful" of someone, and of some things, which are "well known" to him.²⁶ He has taken her words to heart, and not once, but again and again: He does so now, on the last day of his life. Her voice puts him—moves him back—into a mood. This mood acts as a context of his thinking and doing, and helps to define the contours of his world. Listening to his mother Quentin hears

her speak to him—"I can take Jason and go . . . try to forget the others ever were" (p. 128)—in such an unmistakable way as to address his entire being. She denies him, even as she denies Benjy and Caddy a name, and therefore brings him up against the fortuitous contingency of his existence. His helpless dependence on her, which he cannot overcome, is revealed in the circumstance that she alone can be his mother. "If I'd just had a mother," Quentin reflects, "so I could say Mother" (p. 213). Quentin must perforce submit to his lack of a mother and resign himself to it: "*Done in Mother's mind though. Finished. Finished*" (pp. 125-6). Quentin's mood of resignation is *not simply an emotional colouring added to his world, for in resigning himself he resigns the world itself*. In remembering his mother, therefore, Quentin comes back to a particular understanding of himself and his future: he knows himself as a son forever lacking a mother, he submits himself to this and his own contingency, and he resigns himself to it.

Quentin resigns himself to his contingency, and fulfills it by destroying himself. In this way the mood and the world he has are carried through to the end. At the same time, the ideal Quentin projects is his attempt to resign himself *from* his contingency and to abolish it.²⁷ Through the ideal, and with Caddy, Quentin hopes to win the self-identity his mother always denied him.

The voice of his sister has a perhaps more complex character for Quentin than any other. His memories of her are easily distinguishable because they are frequently given a more precise and concrete setting than the free-floating voices of his father or mother (e.g., pp. 185-196). Quentin, moreover, is shown as an active agent and we hear his own voice, pleading, threatening, interrogating, and again almost in despair, more than we hear Caddy's. The underlying thrust of Quentin's own voice as it comes back to him is his desire to possess his sister in spirit. Caddy's response to this is more or less one of passive indifference, and without her initiative Quentin is helpless. This is graphically illustrated in a crucial passage on pp. 188-89 of the novel. Passive and pitying in her response to him, Caddy cannot take her brother seriously. Essentially she has withdrawn from him. Her passive withdrawal draws him out all the more powerfully in a vain attempt to grasp and possess her, to bind her to him by love and sex or violence. Set in this highly complex mood, Quentin's world is fundamentally structured by it, and he is bound to Caddy accordingly.

Quentin's relationship to his father is more decisive for him than any other because his father represents the tradition and values which define Quentin as son and heir. Mr. Compson fails his son as a lawgiver and neglects to transmit the values of the past as a living heritage. Yet however weak he may be as an individual, Compson's

“philosophy” is a dangerous attack on the purposefulness of individual action. Compson’s attitude undermines the meaning of existence as a whole.

The foundations of Mr. Compson’s nihilistic philosophy are laid by his understanding of time. Mr. Compson’s conception of time is not simply one of the nihilistic conclusions to which he has come, for all his other pronouncements derive from this basis:

Father said a man is the sum of his misfortunes. One day you’d think misfortune would get tired, but then time is your misfortune Father said. (p. 129)

The ultimate misfortune of all those that go to make up the “sum” of a man’s life is time itself: this is as much as to say that existence itself is a misfortune. Man is the plaything of time: this is Compson’s deadliest conviction and he holds it with a vengeance. Man is “conceived by accident” and his “every breath is a fresh cast with dice already loaded against him” (p. 220). No value or virtue endures nor may any claim to abiding truth be made because what is important today will soon be forgotten, or become a matter of indifference. According to Compson, Quentin’s secret fear is that even Caddy’s disgrace will “someday” “no longer hurt” (p. 220) him. For this reason, because all things sooner or later sink to the same general, indifferent level “nothing is even worth the changing of it” (p. 96). The “minute clicking of little wheels” (p. 94) inevitably destroys everything we hold dear. To attempt to contest this is an “illusion”; in the final analysis the battles are “not even fought” (p. 93).

With skeptical fervor Mr. Compson attacks every certainty—except one: that time is the destructive measure of human existence. With one exception (see pp. 104-5), which seems to have no practical effect, “time” always means “clock-time” for Mr. Compson. Yet this conception of time should by no means be considered natural and inevitable: it is one way of interpreting, of taking one’s time. As long as time is understood as a sequence of qualitatively indifferent moments it is interpreted as something publicly available in the same way to everyone, something which is personally indifferent. And this, to be sure, is exactly how Compson lives his own life. He doesn’t take his time in terms of the involvements and possibilities which are crucial to him; no, Compson looks at time with a theoretical eye.

Mr. Compson’s time is “theoretical” because he sees it as an abstract measure opposed to everyday life and its possibilities; he overlooks the circumstance that the ways in which he takes time in themselves makes up his way of life. Inasmuch as Mr. Compson flees from involvement in the world to the refuge of making theoretical pronouncements, he

defines his life-time in terms of a qualitatively indifferent and formally empty series of moments. To the degree in which Mr. Compson recognizes that time is the measure of all existence—and therefore of his own life—he flees from this recognition and from himself: the “mausoleum of all hope and desire” (p. 93) he gives Quentin is also his own.

The standpoint Compson takes outside of all involvement—as if it were possible to approach every question “in theory” only—is the understanding in terms of which the world is disclosed to him. Although this standpoint seems to be the antithesis of every mood as we normally think of mood, in fact it possesses a mood of its own: the mood of theoretical non-involvement which is common to every scientific investigation. In Mr. Compson’s case, needless to say, this mood obscures as much of his world as it discloses.

Mr. Compson’s theoretical stance, in fact, is quite inappropriate to everyday life because it alienates him from his own possibilities. The stream-concept of time which he accepts destroys his possibilities because it reduces time to the emptiness of the passing moment. As Mr. Compson sees it, “time is not even time until it was” (p. 222). Instantaneously with its presence the moment is already past, no longer; it is nothing. Mr. Compson’s life becomes a series of formally empty moments passing into nothing. In this fashion the possibility of any kind of significant action is annihilated; quite consistently, therefore, the message he bequeaths to his son is that “nothing is even worth the changing of it” (p. 96).

Quentin accepts the values and the presuppositions of his heritage, with its emphasis on the purity and integrity of the family, without question and is determined to honour his obligations; were this not the case he would never conceive of challenging Caddy’s suitors. No less, however, Quentin acknowledges the authority of his father’s attack on these values. Compson’s philosophy of time uproots individual responsibility and makes it impossible for Quentin to be loyal to his heritage. And because the virtues Quentin holds dear no longer have a place in the historical world, he attempts to ground them in an ideal super-world. In this process, to be sure, the values are inverted: purity becomes incest and salvation through honour becomes damnation. But this follows with a certain logic because the “ideal world” is *already* the inversion of the historical world: the real has already become an insubstantial shadow in the face of the overpowering reality of the ideal, and of death.

As we have already noted, the ideal Quentin projects gathers the supreme values of purity, simplicity, and self-possession (enduring presence). But not only this: projecting these values through his suicide,

Quentin is thrown back on recollections of his past, which is defined by the moods we have noted. Precisely because his anticipated suicide consummates and closes out *all* his possibilities, it throws him back on those moods from which it takes its origin. Anticipation takes its origin in recollection and consummates the recollected past by throwing Quentin back on his moods. *The confused agitation of Quentin's narrative arises out of the motion of being-thrown-back.*

Quentin's moods, in turn, are reflected in the projection. Just as Quentin's desires (future) throw him back on what he has been (past), so his life-long state of mind is gathered and mirrored in the future he projects. Each of the three fundamental moods we have discussed, in effect, has a relation to the ideal. The mood of resignation marks Quentin's resignation from the world (from time) to the super-world (the a-temporal). His desire to possess his sister is satisfied in the image of brother and sister united in their private eternal hell. Finally, to the degree in which earthly time is qualitatively empty and valueless, superworldly time becomes a single endless moment of supreme value.

The future Quentin foresees is a realization of the possibilities inherent in his past; but because the projected ideal tends to complete, in a radical way, possibilities which are essentially illusions, the future throws Quentin back on what he has been. The present, which arises out of this movement of being-thrown-back, is not, however, a kind of epiphenomenon of the past:²⁸ at every moment it is the site in which the entire time-field is gathered. The quality of this site—which is to say the way in which Quentin experiences his last day's "being there"—may be illustrated by the mood in which he encounters everyday things.

The last paragraph of the section indicates the kind of awareness Quentin has of his immediate physical surroundings:

Then I remembered I hadn't brushed my teeth, so I had to open the bag again. I found my toothbrush and got some of Shreve's paste and went out and brushed my teeth. I squeezed the brush as dry as I could and put it back in the bag and shut it, and went to the door again. Before I snapped the light out I looked around to see if there was anything else, then I saw I had forgotten my hat . . . I had forgotten to brush it too, but Shreve had a brush, so I didn't have to open the bag any more. (p. 222)

What we immediately notice in this passage, is that Quentin is still trying to remember *things* to the extent that he has already forgotten himself. In a different situation, for another writer with other priorities (e.g., Hemingway), this kind of narrow attention to the detail of what is immediately present would be considered a virtue.

In this passage, however, we recognize Quentin's studied concern with the common implements of his environment as a flight from the

future he foresees, as a flight from his past to the things within his immediate grasp. The present arises in the peculiar way it does out of the governing context of past and future. In terms of this context Quentin turns toward things, moves on them, and loses himself to them.

In its own way this shows that as much as Quentin was thrown into the past he was still thrown back onto himself; in moving toward what is immediately there, however, he loses himself to it. This movement is expressed in the curious lack of a mood, as if Quentin himself were left out of account. Having become a burden to himself he tries to overlook himself in favour of everyday things and to tranquilize himself with them. Quentin's lack of a mood, his a-pathy, is an attempt to forget what he has been, thus to relieve himself of an existence which has become too burdensome. Even so, because the rapidly approaching future bespeaks his own annihilation, a plunge, so to speak, in which everything is torn away from him, Quentin's turn to what is present is an attempt to hold on to himself by grasping what is immediate. Rather than allowing the present to "sink away"²⁹ into the past Quentin desperately clings to it. This desperation is a kind of last gasp: it arises out of the future to which Quentin has already surrendered himself. In this way the present, what is immediately there, takes the quality of its presence from the approach of the future Quentin foresees. Quentin takes his time with and from these common implements because it is the only time he has left in the world. The care he lavishes on the inconsequential is a reflection of the fact he has already delivered up his (life-) time, and in such a way as to carelessly throw it away.

The model of the time-field allows us to see how the structure of the text arises out of the interplay of the three dimensions of time. In terms of the time sequence, the present is a qualitatively empty instant between the not-yet of the future and the no-longer of the past. This notion of time is unable to account for the temporal complexity of a text in which many instants are united in the tension of a single duration. For this reason the dimension of the present is more fruitfully understood as the site, or field, into which past and future are gathered and in which they are unified. The present takes the quality of its presence from the way in which the past is consummated in Quentin's ideal and this projected future, in turn, throws him back on his moods. The present arises out of the oscillation between anticipation and recollection. This oscillation opens up the time-field of that particular text we call "Quentin" and gives it its illumination and "character." Quentin's last day is the articulated unity of this text, and in the

this sense it is both "wedding" (the arrival of the future) and "wake" (a gathering of the past).

NOTES

1. This approach is reflected in critics as various as the following: Olga W. Vickery, *The Novels of William Faulkner* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1964), pp. 36-8; Michael Millgate, *The Achievement of William Faulkner* (New York: Random House, 1966), p. 96; Cleanth Brooks, *The Yoknapatawpha Country* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1963), pp. 327-31; and Donald M. Kartiganer, *The Fragile Thread: The Meaning of Form in Faulkner's Novels* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1979), p. 12. See also Sartre, cited below.
2. It is fair to say that the notion that time is fundamentally streamlike is a commonplace of criticism. The stream-concept (being in time) frequently goes hand in hand with some idea of eternity (being out of time), understood as liberation from the stream. See Vickery, pp. 38-40, and 255f.; Brooks, pp. 330-1; and Douglas Messerli, "The Problem of Time in *The Sound and the Fury*: A Critical Reassessment and Reinterpretation," *Southern Literary Journal*, VI (1974), 34ff.
3. See Vickery, p. 39.
4. André Bleikasten, *The Most Splendid Failure: Faulkner's *The Sound and the Fury** (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1976), p. 122.
5. Fran Polek, "Tick-Tocks, Whirs, and Broken Gears: Time and Identity in Faulkner," *Renascence*, XXIX (1967), 196. See also Messerli, p. 35.
6. See Vickery, p. 48.
7. See Vickery, p. 36.
8. Hans Meyerhoff, *Time in Literature* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1955), pp. 1-2, 14, 37. Meyerhoff offers a general review of the conception of the "time-stream" in literature. Upon close examination this conceptual metaphor is far from self-evident. See especially Paul Ricoeur, "Narrative Time," *Critical Inquiry*, 7, No. 1 (1980), 169-191. Ricoeur's work, as well as my own discussion, is largely based on Martin Heidegger's analysis of time in *Being and Time*, trans. John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson (London: SCM Press, 1962). See especially pp. 458-80; in the German edition, *Sein und Zeit*, 12th ed. (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer, 1972), see pp. 406-28.
9. Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, pp. 458-72 (*Sein und Zeit*, pp. 406-20).
10. St. Aurelius Augustine, *Confessions*, trans. by E.B. Pusey (New York: Modern Library, 1949), XI, XVIII.
11. James B. Meriwether and Michael Millgate, eds. *Lion in the Garden: Interviews with William Faulkner, 1926-1962* (New York: Random House, 1968), p. 70. Hereafter *Lion in the Garden*. My italics.
12. *Lion in the Garden*, p. 85.
13. This conception is based on Heidegger's analysis of human being as an inherently temporal and therefore intelligible structure. See *Being and Time*, pp. 235-40, 370-80 (*Sein und Zeit*, pp. 191-96, 323-31), as well as Heidegger's *Die Grundprobleme der Phänomenologie*, Vol. 24 of Section II of the *Gesamtausgabe* (Frankfurt: Klostermann, 1975), pp. 374-79.
14. Bleikasten, p. 141. Robert M. Slabey, "Quentin as Romantic," in Michael H. Cowan, *Twentieth Century Interpretations of *The Sound and the Fury** (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1968), p. 82, notes that for Quentin death becomes "an encounter with eternity in the present moment, the eternal imprisonment of a temporary ecstasy."
15. Brooks, p. 331.
16. William Faulkner, *The Sound and the Fury* (New York: Random House, 1929, 1956), p. 144. Subsequent references given in the text.
17. Brooks, p. 329.
18. Slabey, "Quentin as Romantic," in Cowan, p. 82.
19. Gary Lee Stonum, *Faulkner's Career: An Internal Literary History* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1979), p. 45.

20. In the pre-modern period eternity was conceived as essentially *timeless*: St Aquinas calls it "entire all at once without any successiveness." *Summa Theologica*, trans. (Cambridge: English Blackfriars, 1964), Ia, X.I. The seventeenth century saw this conception overturned and eternity became no more than an "endless succession" of moments. See Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, (New York: Collier Books, 1973), Part 4, chapter 18.
21. See Millgate, p. 96. On the incestuous implications of this relationship Richard H. King, *A Southern Renaissance: The Cultural Awakening of the American South, 1930-1955* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980), p. 114, notes that Quentin does not want sex as such with Caddy; "he wants to stop time, a desire of which incest is the symbolic expression."
22. See Brooks, p. 329.
23. See Jean-Paul Sartre, "À propos de 'Le Bruit et la Fureur': La temporalité chez Faulkner," in *Situations I* (Paris: Gallimard, 1977), p. 74.
24. See *Being and Time*. Section 29, for an analysis of mood (*Stimmung*) as the ontic expression of "state-of-mind" (*Befindlichkeit*). For Heidegger mood is not just a subjective "feeling"; it has an ontological priority over reason: "the possibilities of disclosure which belong to cognition reach far too short a way compared with the primordial disclosure belonging to moods, in which *Dasein* is brought before its Being as 'there'." *Being and Time*, p. 173; *Sein und Zeit*, p. 134. For an analysis of the importance of mood for literary criticism see Stanley Corngold, "*Sein und Zeit*: Implications for Poetics," *boundary 2*, IV (1976), 439-455.
25. Bleikasten, p. 129.
26. See *The Oxford English Dictionary* (Oxford: At The Clarendon Press, 1970), VIII, pp. 255-6.
27. See Lewis P. Simpson, "Sex and History: Origins of Faulkner's Apocrypha," in *The Maker and the Myth: Faulkner and Yoknapatawpha 1977*, eds. Evans Harrington and Ann J. Abadie (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1978), pp. 43-71. Simpson proposes that Quentin identifies himself with "the historical death of the Compson family and the South" (p. 64) by means of his "psychic incest."
28. See Sartre, *Situations I*, p. 72, and Bleikasten, pp. 128-9.
29. Sartre, *Situations I*, p. 72.