Proust wrote at length in order to create within the frame of his novel an interval of *oubli*, the forgetting which would allow the reader a true experience of remembering and recognizing.

—ROGER SHATTUCK

Le plus troublant de la métalepse est bien dans cette hypothèse inacceptable et insistante, que l'extradiégétique est peut-être toujours déjà diégétique, et que le narrateur et ses narrateurs, c'est-à-dire vous et moi, appartenons peut-être encore à quelque récit.

(The most disturbing thing about metalepsis really lies in that unacceptable but insistent hypothesis, that the extradiegetic is maybe always already diegetic, and that the narrator and his narratees, that is to say you and I, are perhaps a part of some still other récit.)

—GÉRARD GENETTE

Causal analysis of *A la recherche du temps perdu* reveals little new meaning in Proust's monumental novel that has not already been uncovered by the thousands of extant analyses, but it yields insight into Proustian strategies involving causation to relate the reader to the text. We have already seen how gaps in causal chains can condition reader reactions, allowing readers' needs for expicability and predictability to cause us to pose questions on other levels of the narrative; with Proust, we can observe strategies at work tending to cause reader reaction directly. Nearly all stories employ to this end the well-catalogued techniques of otherness, which set the reader up in competition with the text: curiosity, suspense, surprise, seduction. Proust chooses techniques of similarity, which reveal the dynamic, narrative, causal substratum of metaphor itself.
At first glance, Proust's magnum opus seems to offer a brachiate, plot-and-episode structure: a linear temporal existence with occasional escape into "epiphanic" involuntary memories. Like des Esseintes, the narrator (who might as well be called "Marcel") suffers from a "disease," the inexorable progression of which forms the causal main line of the text: the biological and psychological aging process. We follow the narrator from childhood in the 1870s well into middle age. Just as maturation is programmed in the child, so physical deterioration inheres in the adult. Furthermore, with every mental change we undergo—new experiences, changing health, transient states of mind—the being that we were before slips away from us, so that a series of psychological "deaths" marks our relentless pathway to the physical tomb. That the narrator perceives these elements of his story as forming a causal chain is apparent in his references to the genetic and psychological "laws" of death (III, 850). By remaining youthful in appearance and attitude, Odette de Crécy strikes the narrator as having defied miraculously the "laws of chronology" (III, 984). It is of course against the ineluctable series of changes that lead to death that the narrator's text, with its astounding branching structures, is arrayed in battle.

The frequent recurrence of the words "law" and "laws" in the novel emphasizes the causal constraints that channel the irreversible course of characters' lives. Proustian "laws" tend to be more organic than mechanistic, allowing for some individual variation (Odette's apparent defiance of the aging process), functioning more nearly like laws of probability than like mechanical constraints. Yet they constitute codifiable tendencies, operative for the majority, aphoristic principles of the type: "Chacun voit en plus beau ce qu'il voit à distance, ce qu'il voit chez les autres" (II, 235); "What we see at a distance, what we see in others, looks more beautiful." Sexual orientation is a primary and influential example of such constraints, according to Marcel, although he finds homosexual and heterosexual attractions to follow the same "general laws of love" (III, 820): the tendency to select successive sexual partners who resemble one another, for example, or the predisposition, on the part of nervous, intense lovers, to pass from the search for love as pleasure to the addiction to love for the avoidance of pain. Marcel is acutely aware that no lover can ever possess the beloved (though that is the lover's desire), but only a perception thereof, a creation of the mind. This causal limit, and the inevitable "intermittences of the heart" (II, 756 ff.) which arise from it, influence both Swann (I, 300, for example) and the narrator (II, 831). Stupid people, Marcel suggests, are less apt to
evade the organic laws that tend to govern their lives because they are unaware of them, although they reveal them in their gestures and their actions, where intelligent authors observe them at work (III, 901). Thus, without being crudely deterministic, the narrator creates a causal chain to be the central track of the novel, moving inexorably from life to death, from joy to pain (to joy again), each new emotional period owing its life only to the death of the preceding one.

The branching structures of the involuntary memories are obviously parallel, each beginning from a precise, physical occurrence on the central track and expanding into a mental representation, complete with emotions, of an earlier period on the chronological main track. The parallelism suggests that there is a "law" at work here too, and the récit provides a causal paradigm:

Je trouve très raisonnable la croyance celtique que les âmes de ceux que nous avons perdus sont captives dans quelque être inférieur, dans une bête, un végétal, une chose inanimée, perdues en effet pour nous jusqu'au jour, qui pour beaucoup ne vient jamais, où nous nous trouvons passer près de l'arbre, entrer en possession de l'objet qui est leur prison. Alors elles tressaillent, nous appellent, et sitôt que nous les avons reconnues, l'enchantement est brisé. Délivrées par nous, elles ont vaincu la mort et reviennent vivre avec nous. (I, 44)

(The Celtic belief seems very reasonable to me whereby the souls of those we have lost are captive in some inferior being—an animal, a plant, an inanimate object—lost indeed to us until that day, which for many people never comes, when we happen to pass near the tree, gain possession of the object, which is their prison. Then they tremble, call out to us; and as soon as we have recognized them, the enchantment is broken. Freed by us, they have conquered death and return to live with us.)

In relating this myth to involuntary memories, the narrator is not comparing objects or states of being, but rather movements. The passage is verb-like, transitive, and causal. The "effect" is that the souls of the departed return to live with us; the "cause" is a twofold condition: physical proximity to the enchanted object, and recognition therein of the imprisoned soul. This is not a specific incident, but a general rule of Celtic belief and of involuntary memory as well ("Il en est ainsi de notre passé," [I, 44]; "So it is with our past"): if AB, then always C. The double cause (make contact with
an object; recognize its relationship to the past) is inevitably followed by its effect: the past is resurrected.

The magical quality of causation in the legend (this is an example of causation making an event predictable though unexplainable) reflects the mystery of psychological association in the novel. The movement from recognized object to memory touches the chronological, unidirectional timeline of the main track in two places (the moment of recognition and the period remembered), but at each of these junctures it is disjoined from the irreversible linearity of causation. On the one hand, the contact-recognition event is consistently presented as fortuitous ("qui pour beaucoup ne vient jamais," "nous nous trouvons passer," etc., here), the recognition phase being sometimes arduous, as with the madeleine, even when one has the good fortune of random contact with the object. On the other hand, Marcel provides no explanation why, in the first place, the psyche selected a particular mental representation—image, odor, savor, position—as symbolic of the particular context, with all its emotional and sensory richness, in which it was first experienced. Why the taste of a petite madeleine dipped in linden tea should have become the effective synecdoche for all the summers at Combray is unexplained. Perhaps other sensations of the period were stored up in the memory as potential triggers for the same involuntary memories, but random contact was never made with those. The triggering sensation must be a rare one, for oft-repeated experiences quickly lose their association with the context. But the mystery of association remains. The triggering of Marcel's involuntary memories represents a particular kind of mental causation, not unrelated to certain of des Esseintes's experiences, but it remains apart, through chance and unexplained selection, from the central track's causal chain.

What lives in memory, of course, is not the object, nor even a mental representation thereof, but the experience of earlier contact with it: the self that the narrator was when he experienced it. The branches therefore all coexist in potential, running together in parallel to the central track, waiting for Marcel to find the talisman and become again one of his former selves, to leap out onto a parallel track. Readers' awareness of this temporal parallelism is awakened in Du côté de chez Swann with the description of the childhood walks Marcel took almost daily with his family along two invariable paths: "Swann's way" and "Guermantes' way." Instead of recounting what happens on several individual walks, the récit takes the form of a single outing in each direction. The landmarks are presented in order of their
appearance to those who follow the prescribed routes; as with Aragon’s presentation of a walk in the Parc des Buttes-Chaumont, the order of succession has no apparent basis in physical causality. But the single walk, in the linear récit, from landmark to landmark, is composed of multiple promenades coexisting in the narrator’s memory. The reader follows the walk as if it were a staff on a page of music, where each note (landmark) has the power to echo simultaneously on other lines of the staff, to become a chord. The hawthorns, for example, can evoke early childhood, when Marcel, arrayed by his mother in his infantile finery for the return trip to Paris, weeps out beneath their blossoms his despair at the thought of leaving them (I, 145). Or they can call up his pubescent surprise at the discovery of the awe-inspiring female (Gilberte) staring at him through their branches (I, 141—42). These two events did not occur on the same walk, could not have occurred in the same year, yet they are connected in a single narrative segment by a common landmark, the hawthorns of Tansonville. This is the “vertical” causation of association: the madeleine calls up the self-taking-walks; the walks evoke their landmarks; these in turn, contacted, recognized, give birth to other selves: self-weeping, self-seeing-Gilberte-for-the-first-time. All the selves so rediscovered are “horizontal”; they exist through chronological time, continuous and unchanged. Thus through the parallel structures of what Genette calls the “récit itératif,” and the notion of causative association, the inferred author transforms linear prose into an active branching structure.

During the Balbec “epiphany” (II, 756—57), the narrator makes explicit the notion of multiple selves existing in parallel. Bending down to remove his shoes in his hotel room, Marcel rediscovers in a surge of involuntary memory the tenderness and solicitude of his grandmother, now dead, who had comforted him there years before. It is not she herself his memory revives, but a perception of her, another Marcel receiving her love, a Marcel who has since disappeared, replaced for a time by an “ungrateful, selfish, and cruel” young man, who had not suffered too much at her death. Now, bending down, he changes “sans solution de continuité” into the vulnerable and tender receiver of his grandmother’s affection he had been before: it was, he remarks, “as if there were different and parallel series in time” (“comme s’il y avait dans le temps des séries différentes et parallèles”).

But if he is to conquer the unidirectional flow of time, it will be necessary to reverse the one-way movement from cause to effect. In Balbec the vital pivot, which begins turning everything around, becomes most apparent. Just as an event on the central track can project the narrator into
another, extratemporal self, so the rediscovery of the other self can cause
events to happen on the central track, for the narrator can feel, as a result,
present joy or pain, can weep, as he does in the Balbec hotel room, very
material and obviously caused tears. The causal bond between the main
"plot" and the remembered "episode" is thus a two-way street: event trig­
gers memory, which in turn triggers event. The tears themselves are of
short duration and apparently cause nothing further, as des Esseintes's
nightmares caused a merely temporary fear of sleeping. But the sum of these
pivotal experiences—the madeleine, bending down in a Balbec hotel room,
uneven paving stones in Paris, etc.—will become the cause, the creative
origin of the text itself, intended to vanquish time and death. Thus the epi­
sodes will impinge upon and inflect by causation the main line of the plot.

The notion of parallel selves coexisting in time provides a spatialized
vision of life, although one moves about in the space in a caused linear
progression. This is also the vision of itself the text encourages the reader to
adopt. The simplified graph in diagram 7.1 does not reveal the inflection of
the central track, for which one would need, as we shall see, an additional
dimension, but it summarizes the rest. A, B, C, D represent lived events in
irreversible time. The branches they generate are extratemporal memories,
constant and unchanging. E is a random event in time stimulating the
reliving of event B, as the parallel self that originally lived it, and the return
influence of track B upon the central track. F is an element of the events
relived on B that triggers a memory of A (like Swann's hawthorns), which in
turn enriches B. That movement in this space is linear, sequential, and
causal there can be little doubt: the narrator must become an anterior self on
A, B, C, or D before he can shed tears about it on the central track. But this
linear movement in space is not only a theme of the novel; it is also a
constituent of its lexical and thematic structure, which seeks to involve the
reader in the game.

Comparable to the physical entities Marcel encounters that trigger his
extratemporal excursions, lexical markers arise in the text capable of evok-
ing readers' memories. In Combray, for example, the narrator notes that, with the exception of the recurring traumas surrounding the ritual of his mother's good-night kiss, he had forgotten nearly everything of his childhood summers in Combray, that this part of his life was dead for him. Then he asks: "Mort à jamais?" (I, 44; "Dead forever?"). The sentence is memorable for several reasons: it is a question in an overwhelmingly declarative text; it is a short sentence in a context of exceptionally long ones; the vehicle of the metaphor (forgotten = dead) may seem at this point to carry an exaggerated emotional charge in relation to the tenor; it is a verbless, elliptical fragment in a text remarkable for rigorous grammatical completeness. Finally, it is so situated that the striking madeleine "epiphany" provides the answer to its question. The brevity, interrogativity, and incompleteness of the phrase impress upon our minds not only the question's meaning but the words used to express it; the glorious answer it receives binds it in our memory to its context. So it is that, when "Mort à jamais?" returns several volumes later in La Prisonnière (III, 187), as a question asked this time about the novelist Bergotte, recently deceased, it can trigger in readers a leap into the other selves that they were when, some 2200 Pléiade pages earlier, they had first encountered the tiny query.

Thus repetition in Proust's text serves a causal function, helping us to move about in our (reading) lives as the narrator does in his life as actant. For repetition belongs at once to the temporal linguistic track that is the physical text (in this sense it is not quite repetition; among other reasons, in the first instance of our example, "mort" was the vehicle of a metaphor, while in the second, it denotes a "real" human demise, Bergotte himself having become metaphorical), and to the extratemporal branches of memory. Memories can, of course, be called "extratemporal" precisely because causation cannot intervene to change the course of events contained in them, nor the mood and predisposition of the self that lived them. But in the Deleuzian sense, repetition is always difference, for the same reason that one never uses the word "same" without having in mind at least two distinct entities. Living consciousness, however, admits no difference: we can only be conscious as one self at a time. So the discovery of repetitions and similarities among parts of this text, or between part and whole, begins by a reader's leap from present self into another, a leap occasioned by linguistico-thematic phenomena. The words of the text function semiotically as an icon of the intent of narration, while they operate semantically in the récit. The interpenetration of levels thus achieved institutes a veritable metalepsis, as
Genette defines the term, a crossing of boundaries between the act of telling and the thing one tells. So readers may begin to discover that they are characters, after all!

Bergotte's death is related not only to the potential death of childhood memories. It recalls for the reader the grandmother's demise as well, for she, like him, had been diagnosed as uremic (II, 318) and, like him, had gone out imprudently (on the advice of a doctor recommended by Bergotte) when she should have stayed in bed. The story of his death and the narrator's perception of it can thus trigger in the reader a number of branching, anterior selves.

Even the model of involuntary memory by association, the "Celtic belief" of souls imprisoned in objects, returns in A l'ombre des jeunes filles en fleurs. Out of friendship for the madam, Marcel had donated some inherited furniture, notably a sofa from Aunt Léonie's bedroom in Combray, to a house of ill repute. Thereafter, he could no longer frequent the establishment, where he would see the use to which these sacred objects of his childhood were put,

\[ \ldots \text{car ils me semblaient vivre et me supplier, comme ces objets en apparence inanimés d'un conte persan, dans lesquels sont enfermées des âmes qui subissent un martyr et implorent leur délivrance.} \]

(I. 578)

(\ldots for they seemed to me to be alive and pleading with me, like the apparently inanimate objects in a Persian tale, which have souls locked up in them suffering martyrdom and begging for their deliverance.)

Here the "Celtic belief" has become a Persian tale, and the retelling has a painful, rather than a joyous, conclusion, reflecting the degeneration characteristic of the main line. But the parallelism of the situation and the return of a complex of lexical items from the earlier passage (âme, inanimé, délivré-délivrance), trigger for the reader in the second instance the pleasure of recognition, the rediscovery of the self reading the earlier passage. Critics may compare the two passages, dispassionately and reflectively, but reading them means experiencing them in turn, and, upon reaching the second passage, undergoing a flash of recognition—not of words per se, but of oneself understanding words. The text, by providing lexical and thematic triggers, performs half of the causal task: creating contact with the enchanted object. The other element of the magic formula (recognition) is up to the reader—to his or her memory, predisposition, and desire.
The notion of the difference between the "critic's" kind of comparison, which is spatial, and the "reader's" kind, which is chronological, serves to explain as well the role of causality in the Proustian conception of metaphor. Proust's narrator, as critic, unites the two, in a well-known passage of Le Temps retrouvé (previously analyzed by Genette) in which he seeks to define the nature of truth in art:

On peut faire se succéder indéfiniment dans une description les objets qui figuraient dans le lieu décrit, la vérité ne commencera qu'au moment où l'écrivain prendra deux objets différents, posera leur rapport, analogue dans le monde de l'art à celui qu'est le rapport unique de la loi causale dans le monde de la science, et les enfermera dans les anneaux nécessaires d'un beau style; même, ainsi que la vie, quand, en rapprochant une qualité commune à deux sensations, il dégagera leur essence commune en les réunissant l'une et l'autre pour les soustraire aux contingences du temps, dans une métaphore. (III, 889)

In the last analysis, of course, it is not the writer who "dégagera leur essence," but the reader, who, discovering the substratum common to two images, will experience that which is neither, but a new mental reality made up of the overlapping semes of both. When Proust writes, for example, "La haie formait comme une suite de chapelles" (I, 138; "The hedge formed, as it were, a succession of chapels"), the initial comparison bears upon a form: the arch formed by branches of aligned shrubs; the curve of gothic arches forming entrances to side-aisle chapels in a cathedral. The common substratum is an ideal curve, a mental image, to be found in no real ogival arch nor in any contiguous shrubs, but which we can imagine belonging to both. It is this ideal image that is here called "truth" (which will only "begin" when the writer "posera leur rapport"—it is up to the reader to complete the creation). The readers' experience of "truth" is triggered by the arrival, in the linear chain of words, of the second term of
the comparison: "beau style" in the passage initiated our discovery of those semes of "anneaux" which signify here, and of the ideal relationship between "anneaux" and "style." In an earlier draft, Proust had ended this sentence, not with "dans une métaphore," but with "dans une alliance de mots" ("in a wedding ring [or "alliance"] of words"), a kind of meta-metaphor in which the wedding band of words (spiritual union) joins the necessary ring-links of a beautiful style to suggest a double band, of significers and signifieds: "anneaux" and "alliance" both denote "ring" and connote "union" (marriage/chain). This third entity, this newly created "truth," is, according to the text, freed from the contingencies of time.

The Proustian sense of "contingencies" is the etymological one, denoting connection—what Chatman calls "the stricter philosophical sense, 'depending for its existence, occurrence, character, etc. on something not yet certain' (The American College Dictionary)." "Time" is precisely the domain of causation, and everything that exists in time appears subject to it, although the precise causes that will come to bear are still uncertain. Yet the general effects of time are wearing away, breaking up, destruction. What is admirable about "the unique relationship of causal law in the world of science" is precisely its character as a "law": the fact that it is eternally true and thus temporally (eternally) repeatable. The law of "contingency" is itself not "contingent."

Both metaphor and involuntary memory, according to the novel, share this characteristic of being both "contingent" in the Proustian sense and non-"contingent." Thus is established a threefold parallel, a metonymic order common to metaphor, to Marcel as character, and to the reader. That order may be described like this: e₁ → e₂ → E. Movement passes from a first "real" event to a second "real" event related to it by association, which triggers the discovery of an extratemporal entity—a "truth" or an extratemporal self in memory. This movement is precisely that of diagram 7.1: from B to E, and out to the extratemporal parallel arising in B. Just as the narrator moves from madeleine-tea in Aunt Léonie's bedroom to madeleine-tea in Paris to the resurrection of his childhood summers in Combray, just as the reader moves from "Mort à jamais?" in Combray to "Mort à jamais?" in La Prisonnière to resurrection of an earlier self, so readers also move in microcosm from first term of metaphor to second term of metaphor to an ideal, extratemporal "truth." Causality and metonymy play the same role in metaphor that they play, as we have observed them, in involuntary memory. Metaphor is a causal strategy, embedded in the linearity of language.

In this sense, Marcel is one term of a metaphor for which the reader is
the other. Yet he is certainly different from most of us. Individualized in his experiences (affluent European childhood, hypersensitivity and neurotic propensities, aristocratic conversations in turn of the century drawing rooms, etc.), he is also limited in his point of view: he can only speculate on others' motivations (whence the famous "soit que . . ." constructions in his prose, offering multiple possible causes for others' actions, and sometimes even for his own). His differentiation makes him a difficult character with whom to identify. Yet the very difference of Marcel's life from ours, the very limited nature of his perspective, are the guarantee (metaphor is founded on the difference of e₁ from e₂) of the universality of his reported experience. Insofar as we understand him, learning to read his text (and eventually our lives) as he reads his life, we demonstrate that the specific differences that separate us from him are without importance. As Camus's Jean-Baptiste Clamence will do years later in La Chute, Proust's narrator reinforces the bonds by gliding imperceptibly from "je" to "nous":

... cette réalité loin de laquelle nous vivons, de laquelle nous nous écartons de plus en plus au fur et à mesure que prend plus d'épaisseur et d'imperméabilité la connaissance conventionnelle que nous lui substituons. . . . (III, 895, emphasis mine)

(. . . that reality far from which we live, and from which we are increasingly separated as the conventional knowledge we substitute for it grows ever thicker and more impermeable. . . .)

Manifestly, this metaphoric/métonymic structure complicates and indeed regenerates for its purposes the simple notions of récit and histoire with which we have been working. While one might compare the "plot" of A la recherche du temps perdu to a voyage of discovery, it would be excessive to suggest there is a traditional quest involved, since random occurrences make the discoveries serendipitous, and intent to discover cannot be given as the initial cause or primary desire which sets the récit in motion: the discovery is already made before word one. Yet the discovery of the narrator's multiple selves, each of which forms a branch of the central track, is not sterile: the branches are not dead ends, like des Esseintes's dreams, hallucinations, and involuntary memories; instead they succeed in inflecting the central track, bending it into a kind of circle. For the final discovery of the "plot"—that a properly constructed narrative endows its readers with atemporal selves, atemporal lives (III, 895–96)—becomes the cause of this novel's composition: its final sentence, in this sense, causes its first
one. Hence its standard classification as a “roman du roman” and, \textit{a fortiori}, as a “roman du (futur) romancier.”

Dällenbach has alluded to three illogicalities supposedly inherent in such circular novels, whose subject is their own composition: (1) \textit{causal}, in that they present themselves as the product of their own product; (2) \textit{temporal}, in that they refer to themselves as coming into existence in the future, whereas they are already completed; (3) \textit{spatial}, in that they refer to themselves as a part of themselves, thus enclosed in what they contain. But the novel seems closed in this infinitely reversible structure, echoing back and forth between “inside” and “outside,” only until it is read.

Even a narrowly logocentric conception of reading, in which progression is seen as movement from sign to sense, from signifier to signified, leads toward openness when applied to this text. For the sense of “mon oeuvre” in the final sentence, its signified, generates for readers the signifiers “Longtemps je me suis couché de bonne heure,” together with all the other lexical building blocks of the text they can individually recall. The inflection of end toward beginning, and the twist in the relationship of signifier to signified in the reader's mind, create a kind of narrative Möbius strip, along which the signifier is now relatively “on top” of the dividing bar, now “underneath” it (S/s). (Readers are invited to reproduce diagram 7.1 above, to extend the parallel lines along both sides of the paper until they join themselves near their beginnings, and to twist it into a Möbius strip, if they wish to see a diagram of the internal causal structure of the text.) The reversibility of the pair S/s does nothing of itself to open the apparently illogical circle, but it “promotes” signs to sense and makes sense a sign for the reader, as in the metaleptic \textit{double emploi} of “Mort à jamais?” or of the complex “âme . . . enfermée . . . délivrance.” The readerly act, which conditions all the reverses of which this text is susceptible (time and the extratemporal, metonymy and metaphor, sign and sense, etc.), transforms the reader into creator: the dichotomy writer/reader is thus reversible too. So that, while the text remains circular, it expands beyond itself in the transformed readers. It functions, as Genette notes, as an optical instrument to help readers read within themselves.

The \textit{récit} here, divested of “initial cause” and “final result,” works a fundamental modification on the concept of \textit{récit} as causal progression, for the \textit{récit} becomes a closed circle. Whether the \textit{histoire} is closed or not is another question. In the standard novel, including the Gidean stories analyzed herein, the \textit{histoire} is a series of events, reconstructed (and re-
ordered, if necessary) by the reader on the basis of data in the *récit*. Under the narrative pact, the *histoire* is presumed to have come first, to have been encoded in language by the narrator, and to be in turn reconstituted as *histoire* in the reader's mind. *A la recherche du temps perdu* can be read in this way, and the term *histoire* can thus have its usual meaning as a mediated and interpreted series of events. But if the reader begins to move about in the space of the text, to set off on antichronological explorations through recognition of such repeated signifiers as "Mort à jamais?" just as the narrator moves about in his memories, then the term *histoire* takes on other meanings. For subjective ordering on the basis of association is valorized at least as strongly in the text as objective chronological sequence: if all of the past coexists in memory, what does "sequence" mean? Yet chronology is essential if we are to create, and then rediscover farther down the line, the associative symbol which, upon re-cognition, liberates us from chronology. Thus there could be, for Proust's text, an *histoire* (1), consisting of an objectively determinable sequence of events, and a series of *histoires* (2 . . . n), each of which is a subjective ordering of events in the mind of a reader.

Once the reader is taken into account, causation is seen to trigger expansion: from single *récit* to plural *histoires*, from single symbol (madeleine) to multiple memories (part II of *Combray*), from individual signifier (second term of metaphor) to expanding signified (first term plus "truth"). In the purely métonymic associations (triggered memories of the narrator or of the reader), there are two caused functions: (1) association of symbol with contiguous context in $e_1$, and (2) production of expansion $E$, of which recognition of the symbol in $e_2$ is the cause. In metonymic/metaphoric association, the inferred author provides the contextual association; readers have only to recognize the ideal substratum of the metaphor, which recognition will yield in $E$ the "expansion des choses infinies": Truth. By associating the narrator and inferred author to the reader, Proust's novel imposes on itself an external causation, impelling expansion outward from the circle.
Notes


3. On this "iterative" structure, see Gérard Genette, *Figures III* (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1972), pp. 145-49. Marcel's post-puberty walks, taken alone in the summer of Aunt Léonie's final illness, are grouped separately (I, 153-65). But, as they deal essentially with the final landmarks on Swann's way, this section simply completes a single parcours for the reader, from Combray to Roussainville dungeon. The terms "Swann's way" and "Guer­mantes' way" are, I believe, inventions of C. K. Scott Moncrieff, from his impressive translation entitled *Remembrance of Things Past* (New York: Random House, [1941]), which includes Blossom's translation of *The Past Recaptured*. I have not consulted any published translation for the few sentences I translate in this chapter, but Scott Moncrieff is worth consulting!


5. Genette, pp. 243-46.


8. Chatman, p. 47.

9. On whether this is a "novel of a novel" or even a "novel of a (future) novelist," see Dallenbach, p. 48, but cf. also Genette, *Figures III*, p. 237.

10. Dallenbach, p. 147. The "illogicalities" seem to me attenuated in Proust by a strict distinction between the fictional time of composition of the récit (as opposed to the author's real time of writing), and the fictional time of the histoire. Marcel's text exists not as itself in the histoire, but as project.