CHAPTER TWO

From Realism to Modernism:
Two Pictures in Joyce's Portrait

FLAUBERT, ZOLA, CONRAD

Dickens created a world alive with visual vitality. Flaubert achieved a new level of visual precision, showing us far more than telling us what happened, and even cutting back and forth between actions occurring at the same time. But he does not engage us fully in the dynamic of seeing. Watch how he introduces Emma into the world of Charles Bovary:

A young woman wearing a blue merino dress with three flounces came to the threshold of the door to receive Monsieur Bovary; she led him to the kitchen where a large fire was blazing. The servants' breakfast was boiling beside it in small pots of all sizes. Some damp clothes were drying inside the chimney-corner. The shovel, tongs, and the nozzle of the bellows, all of colossal size, shone like polished steel, while along the walls hung many pots and pans in which the clear flame of the hearth, mingling with the first rays of the sun coming in through the window, was mirrored fitfully.¹

In his study of Fiction and the Camera Eye, Alan Spiegel points out an important difference between Flaubert and his predecessors. The earlier novelist perceived what was universal and essential about his characters; the senses revealed only what was accidental, secondary, and continually changing. But Flaubert had to see his characters—he had to picture them as inseparable from the time and space through which they moved. Emma Bovary is "one in an almost endless series of modern characters who are seen before they are named, who appear first as this man or that woman and only later as Dick Diver or Horace Benbow or Molly Bloom." Indeed, it is not until two paragraphs after her introduction that we realize "that this 'young woman,' whose emergence
has been so casual and oblique, is, in fact, 'Mademoiselle Emma,' the same Emma whose name appears in the title of the novel."

But Flaubert has achieved another effect, which will become more clear if we look ahead to Zola. L'Assommoir begins with a picture. We see Gervaise at the open window. We see that Gervaise has seen through the window. We see her fling herself across the bed. We see her sitting up. And then we see what she sees from the bed:

She sat unmoving on the edge of the bed under the faded chintz canopy that hung down to the headboard from a string fastened to the ceiling. Her tear-blurred eyes wandered slowly over the wretched furnished room—a walnut bureau with one drawer missing, three cane-bottom chairs, a small grease-stained table on which stood a battered water jug. For the children's use they had crowded in an iron-frame cot that blocked off the bureau and filled up two-thirds of the floor space. In one corner their trunk gaped open and empty, except for a pile of soiled socks and shirts, with a worn-out man's hat shoved underneath. Along the walls and on chair backs hung a ragged shawl, a mud-crusted pair of trousers, odds and ends of old clothes that even old-clothes dealers would spurn. In the middle of the mantlepiece, between two mismated zinc candlesticks, was a bundle of pawn tickets, pink in color. Yet theirs was the best room in the building, on the second floor facing the street.

The two children were still sound asleep, with both their heads on the same pillow.\(^3\)

It is important to note that we see Gervaise's room not through her eyes but from her position. That is, the narrator, though sympathetic with Gervaise and drawing very close to her, does not select the items in the room to reflect Gervaise's perception—any more than Fielding, who described the vista from Allworthy's terrace but not through his eyes. Fielding and Zola, and Sterne as well, pictured their subjects in a manner that would seem most objective: ordered geometrically from side to side or top to bottom. Zola increased the objectivity by minimizing the presence of his narrator. The result is like a moving picture, where the camera establishes Gervaise's position and emotional state, and then pans each object in the room from her position.

Let me transcribe Zola's passage into a film scenario to make this point more graphic—as well as to focus the narrative-pictorial elements, the moving pattern, and the dramatic effect:

1. Establishment shot of Gervaise sitting on the edge of a bed under a faded chintz canopy. *Cut to:*

2. Close-up of her tear-blurred eyes. *Cut to:
3. Narrative eye *panning* a walnut bureau with a missing drawer, three cane-bottomed chairs, a small grease-stained table holding a battered water jug, a large iron-frame cot, an empty trunk beside a pile of soiled socks, shirts, and worn-out man’s hat, a mantelpiece with two mismated zinc candlesticks and, between them, a bundle of pink pawn tickets. *Hold:*

4. Then *pan* to two children sleeping on the iron cot, their heads on the same pillow.

I have transcribed the scene’s major pictorial unit, after the establishment of Gervaise’s location and emotional state, as a pan shot—the regular, horizontal turning of the camera or narrative eye. My choice follows Zola’s cue: “Her tear-blurred eyes wandered slowly over the wretched furnished room”; but it also derives from Zola’s basic regularity—of direction, pace, and attention.

With minor variance due to the conventions of syntax and grammar, Zola’s entire scene is governed by the regular movement of the narrative eye. This movement becomes a dramatic force—all the more dramatic and all the more forceful as the narrator’s voice becomes less personal and his presence is effectively denied. The narrative eye focuses with even attention, in a steady direction, and with a regular pace: on Gervaise sitting on the bed, on her tear-blurred eyes, on each of the many items of the room, and on the two children sleeping with their heads on the same pillow. As a result Gervaise and the children are rendered very much like objects or things in the room. To see people as objects or things is the tacit goal of objectification—and of realism, which derives from the Latin *res*, or “thing.” The source of this objectification in Zola’s novel is the leveling movement of the narrative eye.

*L’Assommoir* is about the leveling of characters; its plot follows the inexorable movement of Gervaise from a lively woman to a witless alcoholic and finally a “bad smell in the corridor,” a corpse “in her cubbyhold already turning green.” We are made to feel the leveling power through the regular movement of the narrative eye. When we look back at *Madame Bovary*, we recall that Emma too was introduced as an object among objects. When we re-examine her introductory picture, we will discover that it too is formed by a panning of the narrative eye. We may also feel its leveling power and understand that it derives as much from the movement of the medium as from the movement of the story. Even
the crosscutting movement of Flaubert's famous county fair scene has the power of leveling, as the narrative eye shifts back and forth between Rodolphe, who is courting Emma, and the official who is announcing the prize for farming and the price of manure.

Reality for the "realist" like Flaubert and Zola can be known only through the senses; therefore the picture becomes more central to his story. The narrative eye begins to compete with the narrative voice. The reader is converted from an auditor to a witness, and we are engaged by the movement of the narrative eye as it becomes a dramatic force in the novel. But although the narrative picture brings us closer to the novel's present and adds to the story's immediacy, we still remain at a remove from what happens—which is one measure of nineteenth-century scientific objectivity. The narrator, though minimizing his presence, nonetheless intrudes into the scene, processes details for us, turns from one to another with mechanical regularity, thereby reducing them to the same level, and arranges them for us geometrically to insure "objective" clarity. That is, he composes, or rearranges, what he has seen.

The more the narrative eye moves, the more we see in a novel—and the more immediate our experience. But the immediacy of our experience depends on the quality even more than the quantity of movement. We do not experience as intense an immediacy in Flaubert and Zola as we do in Smollett and Dickens because the narrative eye moves with such regularity—or, more important, because it is governed by a force other than that of excited perception. The traditional movement of the narrative eye is governed by an a priori purpose and order. Details are selected to advance the action, establish a character, create a mood, focus the symbolism, or, as in Flaubert and Zola, to unobtrusively guide our attention by moving with mechanical regularity. In some sense, of course, every detail will contribute to the narrative and will symbolize or convey more than the fact of its own existence. When details are not patterned to convey a purpose or to organize a scene, they appear random. When the narrative eye leaps from point to point erratically, it destroys our equilibrium and creates a sense of disorder: Matthew Bramble compares Vauxhall to the "precincts of Bedlam," and we come to experience the bedlam of Dickens's London. And when the narrative eye jumps erratically from feature to feature, fragmenting the whole and magnifying the parts, we see a character as grotesque. Pamela's picture of Mrs. Jejukes foreshadows Pip’s nightmare encounter with Miss Bham.
Scenes of bedlam and encounters with the grotesque, though, are only extreme possibilities. More important, the apparently random selection of detail conveys the “rush” of objects on our eyes—or the movement of the eyes as they leap from point to point because their equilibrium has been upset, because they have been aroused and are looking. As E. H. Gombrich points out, “We look when our attention is aroused by some disequilibrium, a difference between our expectation and the incoming message.”  

Studies in eye movement show that fixations are not regular and are concentrated on unpredictable or unusual details. In contrast to traditional picturing, what we might call phenomenal picturing engages us in the act of seeing. In contrast to details selected for some ulterior narrative purpose are details that arouse and attract the narrative eye by their own intrinsic power and interest. In contrast to the regular movement of the narrative eye is a movement aroused by disequilibrium, impelled toward the unexpected.

Joseph Conrad, who pledged himself to the task of making us see in The Nigger of the Narcissus, extends the line running from Smollett through Dickens. The novel opens, not with a traditional setting of the scene, but with the narrative eye flashing from one part of the ship to another, now focusing on the patterns of light, now stopping to focus an image by way of a simile, now cutting in to a close-up of parts of dress and body. Let me emphasize the details that draw the narrative eye:

The main deck was dark aft, but halfway from forward, through the open doors of the forecastle, two streaks of brilliant light cut the shadow. . . . A hum of voices was heard there, while port and starboard, in the illuminated doorways, silhouettes of moving men appeared for a moment, very black, without relief, like figures cut out of sheet tin. The ship was ready for sea. The carpenter had driven in the last wedge of the main-hatch battens, and, throwing down his maul, had wiped his face with great deliberation, just on the stroke of five. The decks had been swept, the windlass oiled . . . the big tow-rope lay in long bights along one side of the main deck, with one end carried up and hung over the bows, in readiness for the tug that would come padding and hissing noisily, hot and smoky, in the limpid, cool quietness of the early morning. . . . The two forecastle lamps were turned up high, and shed an intense hard glare; shore-going round hats were pushed far on the backs of heads, or rolled about on the deck amongst the chain-cables; white collars, undone, stuck out on each side of red faces; big arms in white sleeves gesticulated.

Now let me transcribe the last section of Conrad’s narrative picture into a shot-by-shot scenario, as Eisenstein did to Oliver Twist, to emphasize the movement of the narrative eye as it fragments the scene and continually disrupts our equilibrium:
1. Long shot of two forecastle lamps turned up high, shedding an intense hard glare. Cut to:

2. Extreme close-up of shore-going round hats pushed far on the backs of heads. Cut to:

3. Hand-held traveling shot of hats rolling about on the deck among the chain-cables. Cut to:

4. Extreme close-up of white collars, undone, sticking out on each side of red faces. Cut to:

5. Extreme close-up of big arms in white sleeves gesticulating.

TWO PICTURES IN JOYCE'S *PORTRAIT*

Conrad does not process the details of his narrative picture for us. He makes us see the scene as if we were there, our eyes being drawn from one point to another as our attention is aroused by some new disequilibrium. But the narrative eye still does not function dramatically. The first novel to make dramatic use of such eye movement is James Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, for it focuses on the development of a writer's perception. It is especially interesting because it bridges traditional and phenomenal picturing, and even takes a step toward what might be called modernist picturing. When young Stephen Dedalus is caught in "the whirl of a scrimmage," he bends over to look through his legs. "The fellows were struggling and groaning and their legs were rubbing and kicking and stamping. Then Jack Lawton's yellow boots dodged out the ball and all the other boots and legs ran after." His equilibrium is destroyed. Literally upside down, Stephen's view is captured for us phenomenally. But this is one of the exceptions in the major part of the novel. The others, which are less visual than dramatic, are the three epiphanies ending with Stephen and E— C— waiting for the last tram—and these he "chronicled" after his move to Dublin, which mentally destroyed his equilibrium, "reshaping the world about him" (67).

In the first four chapters, Joyce conveys Stephen's responses as an infant, a young child, an adolescent, and a young man with great skill and immediacy. He renders the stream of consciousness with new plausibility, but his pictures—what Stephen sees—are traditional. With the exception of Father Arnall's sermon (where the images are powered by rhetoric) and Stephen's idealized vision of the wading girl, the pictures are not vivid. Surprisingly, in the fifth chapter, just when Stephen is most introspective
and cerebral, the pictures take on a new quality and his visual experience becomes most intense and kinetic. Stephen does not picture the backside of Venus Praxiteles, where Lynch inscribed his name, or see the basket carried by the butcher boy; he uses them to illustrate his aesthetic theory. Nor is he disturbed by the "long dray laden with old iron" that covers the end of his discourse "with the harsh roar of jangled and rattling metal" (209). Yet this chapter contains the greatest quantity of visual details, which are seen most sharply, often for what seems to be their own intrinsic interest rather than some narrative purpose. And the movement of the narrative eye from point to point within the scene and within Stephen’s consciousness is faster and less regular. Compare, for instance, two passages that focus on Stephen drinking tea—one from the early pages of the novel, when Stephen’s senses are most acute, the other from the opening of chapter five, right after he has not seen but transformed a wading girl into a “strange and beautiful seabird” or “wild angel . . . an envoy from the fair courts of life” (171,172).

A

The bell rang and then the classes began to file out of the rooms and along the corridors towards the refectory. He sat looking at the two prints of butter on his plate but could not eat the damp bread. The tablecloth was damp and limp. But he drank off the hot weak tea which the clumsy scullion, girt with a white apron, poured into his cup. He wondered whether the scullion’s apron was damp too or whether all white things were cold and damp. Nasty Roche and Saurin drank cocoa that their people sent them in tins. They said they could not drink the tea; that it was hogwash. Their fathers were magistrates, the fellows said. (12-13)

B

He drained his third cup of watery tea to the dregs and set to chewing the crusts of fried bread that were scattered near him, staring into the dark pool of the jar. The yellow dripping had been scooped out like a boghole and the pool under it brought back to his memory the dark turfcoloured water of the bath in Clongowes. The box of pawn-tickets at his elbow had just been rifled and he took up idly one after another in his greasy fingers the blue and white dockets, scrawled and sanded and creased and bearing the name of the pledger as Daly or MacEvoy.

1 Pair Buskins.
1 D. Coat.
3 Articles and White.
1 Man’s Pants.

Then he put them aside and gazed thoughtfully at the lid of the box, speckled with louseemarks, and asked vaguely:
—How much is the clock fast now?
His mother straightened the battered alarmclock that was lying on its side in the middle of the kitchen mantlepiece until its dial showed a quarter to twelve and then laid it once more on its side. (174)

Obviously passage B is longer than passage A, but this does not invalidate the comparison. Quite the contrary, for if we search back through the first four chapters of Portrait, we will find no descriptive passage (except for Father Arnall’s rhetorical description of Hell) as long as the passage that opens chapter five. There is more description in chapter five, and each picture contains a greater quantity of detail. There is also a qualitative difference. We see far more when Stephen “drained his third cup of watery tea to the dregs” than when he “drank off the hot weak tea.” We are engaged in the act of seeing when the narrative eye focuses first on his “chewing the crusts of fried bread that were scattered near him” and then on his “staring into the dark pool of the jar.” Moreover, the narrative eye shifts from physical to mental images, from the “pool” of “yellow dripping” to the “turfcoloured water of the bath in Clongowes.” Then it shifts to the pawn tickets—to each separate ticket—then to the box lid “speckled with louse-marks,” then to his mother straightening the alarm clock, showing its face, and laying it back on its side.

Of course, we find some sharp images in the first four chapters. We will also find many general and idealized images in the fifth, for Stephen remains an aestheteian and a self-conscious creator even while developing his new visual capacities. But these passages are exemplary. With the opening of the last chapter, there is a dramatic increase in the number of visual details. They are grasped more sharply by the narrative eye, which reflects Stephen’s consciousness. They often appear irrelevant to what is happening in the narrative or to what Stephen is saying or thinking; and if they are not irrelevant, they are, in comparison with the earlier section, excessive or gratuitous—seen, that is, for their own intrinsic attraction. And the narrative eye moves with palpable swiftness from one to the other, often fragmenting the scene, the action, or the subject being pictured.

Even when Stephen is most introspective and abstract, he passes a man, for the first time, near the canal: “the consumptive man with the doll’s face and the brimless hat coming towards him down the slope of the bridge with little steps, tightly buttoned into his chocolate overcoat, and holding his furled umbrella a span or two from him like a diviningrod” (177). He recollects Cranly, wondering why
he could never raise before his mind the entire image of his body but only the image of the head and face? Even now against the grey curtain of the morning he saw it before him like the phantom of a dream, the face of a severed head or deathmask, crowned on the brows by its stiff black upright hair as by an iron crown. It was a priestlike face, priestlike in its pallor, in the widewinged nose, in the shadowings below the eyes and along the jaws, priestlike in the lips that were long and bloodless and faintly smiling. (178)

Later, after the long and conventional description of the dean of studies lighting a fire and comparison of the priest’s face to an “unlit lamp or a reflector hung in a false focus” (187), Stephen mentally recomposes the “forms of the community” from the “gustblown vestments” with a fragmentary swiftness that approaches the narrative pictures in “Circe”:

the dean of studies, the portly florid bursar with his cap of grey hair, the president, the little priest with feathery hair who wrote devout verses, the squat peasant form of the professor of economics, the tall form of the young professor of mental science discussing on the landing a case of conscience with his class like a giraffe cropping high leafage among a herd of antelopes, the grave troubled prefect of the sodality, the plump roundheaded professor of Italian with his rogue’s eyes. They came ambling and stumbling, tumbling and capering, kilting their gowns for leap frog, holding one another back, shaken with deep fast laughter, smacking one another behind and laughing at their rude malice, calling to one another by familiar nicknames, protesting with sudden dignity at some rough usage, whispering two and two behind their hands. (192)

He glimpses a fellow student’s “wheypale face,” its “oblong skull . . . overgrown with tangled twinecoloured hair” (193) and Cranly’s dark eyes watching him “from under the wide falling leaf of a soft hat” (194). There is a flash of MacCann, with a “silverwrapped tablet of mild chocolate which peeped out of [his] breastpocket,” who smiles broadly and tugs twice “at the strawcoloured goatee which hung from his blunt chin” (196). Again the dean of studies is caught by the flashing narrative eye, “his threadbare soutane gathered about him for the ascent with womanish care. . . . As he spoke he wrinkled a little his freckled brow and bit, between his phrases, at a tiny bone pencil” (199). Then, during Stephen’s aesthetic discourse, he catches Lynch rubbing “both his hands over his groins but without taking them from his pockets”; “his long slender flattened skull beneath the long pointed cap brought before Stephen’s mind the image of a hooded reptile” (205). And a few moments later the discussion is interrupted by a “fat young man wearing a silk neckcloth. . . . His
pallid bloated face expressed benevolent malice and, as he had advanced through his tidings of success, his small fat encircled eyes vanished out of sight and his weak wheezing voice out of hearing” (210).

At the end of the aesthetic discourse and their walk, Stephen and Lynch come upon E— C—, preparing to go off with her companions. In a singular picture the narrative eye captures Stephen’s view of the scene; this is all we see:

The quick light shower had drawn off, tarrying in clusters of diamonds among the shrubs of the quadrangle where an exhalation was breathed forth by the blackened earth. Their trim boots prattled as they stood on the steps of the colonnade, talking quietly and gaily, glancing at the clouds, holding their umbrellas at cunning angles against the few last raindrops, closing them again, holding their skirts demurely. (216)

This narrative picture is singular because we do not see E— C—, whom in the next paragraph Stephen compares to a simple, strange, and willful bird; and who, on the next page, inspires Stephen—his limbs bathed in “pale cool waves of light,” “his soul . . . all dewy wet”—to compose his villanelle (217). It is singular, that is, because of its contrast to the abstract, vague, or idealized pictures that dominate Stephen’s imagination, and because it contrasts with the narrative pictures that dominate the first four chapters. Recall the scene after the Whitsuntide play, where Stephen hopes to encounter E— C— on the steps.

He left the stage quickly and rid himself of his mummery and passed out through the chapel into the college garden. Now that the play was over his nerves cried for some further adventure. He hurried onwards as if to overtake it. The doors of the theatre were all open and the audience had emptied out. On the lines which he had fancied the moorings of an ark a few lanterns swung in the night breeze, flickering cheerlessly. He mounted the steps from the garden in haste, eager that some prey should not elude him, and forced his way through the crowd in the hall and past the two jesuits who stood watching the exodus and bowing and shaking hands with the visitors. He pushed onward nervously, feigning a still greater haste and faintly conscious of the smiles and stares and nudges which his powdered head left in its wake.

When he came out on the steps he saw his family waiting for him at the first lamp. In a glance he noted that every figure of the group was familiar and ran down the steps angrily.

—I have to leave a message down in George’s Street, he said to his father quickly. I’ll be home after you.

Without waiting for his father’s questions he ran across the road and began to walk at breakneck speed down the hill. (85-86)

There is much potential for color, movement, and drama in the
Whitsuntide play and the scenes surrounding it, from Heron's whipping of Stephen's legs to Stephen's humiliating encounter with the "familiar" group on the steps. But the pictures, however skilfully drawn, are all subordinated to the story line, and the most dramatic scenes are hardly visualized. In the climactic scene right after the play, the only items actually pictured—and not pictured very sharply—are the "few lanterns" that "swung in the night breeze, flickering cheerlessly." There is an ulterior narrative reason for their presence: to undercut Stephen's enthusiasm and foreshadow the ordinary, cheerless reality he will soon encounter. But we do not see the stage, the mummery he takes off, the chapel, the garden, the doors of the theater, the empty hall, the two Jesuits (except for a generalized bowing and shaking of hands), the steps—or a single detail of the familiar group. To make the contrast between the two step scenes more graphic, define the visual elements that distinguish the later description, and focus the sharp movements of the narrative eye, let me present it shot by shot with some accompanying commentary:

1. The quick light shower had drawn off, tarrying in clusters of diamonds among the shrubs of the quadrangle where an exhalation was breathed forth by the blackened earth. (Sharp and concrete image of shower, which is there in the narrative even though not there in the scene, followed by literary metaphor and personification held in check by the shrubs of the quadrangle and the blackened earth.) Cut to close-up:

2. Their trim boots prattled as they stood on the steps of the colonnade. (The near idealization of the first shot is cut off sharply by a close-up of prattling trim boots on the colonnade steps; note that we are shown only a fragment of the figures and of the steps.) Cut to:

3. talking quietly and gaily (Another jump-cut, fragmenting the narrative picture, and another close-up fragment focusing on mouths.) Cut to:

4. glancing at the clouds (Camera tracks back slightly and follows the movement of their heads as they turn toward the sky.) Cut to:

5. holding their umbrellas at cunning angles against the few last raindrops (Close-up limited to the pattern of the umbrellas, against which a few raindrops fall.)

6. closing them again (Same as 5, the pattern developing into a new stage.)
7. holding their skirts demurely (Same as 5, the narrative eye tilting slightly to focus on the skirts.)

The narrative eye captures a great amount of detail; note the proportion of italicized words. It moves swiftly from point to point, fragmenting the scene as a whole. It is aroused by details for their own intrinsic value rather than for the sake of the story. And it seizes not only on details but on formal patterns, which become as important as the details that compose them. This singular narrative picture reflects the development of Stephen's mind on a level different from—or in contrast to—the levels upon which he theorizes or self-consciously imagines.

Margaret Church establishes this development as she compares Joyce's concepts of the epiphany to the Viconian ricorso: "a moment—a period—when old things fall apart, disintegrate, and when with eyes burning 'with anguish and anger' one sees the vain illusions of one's life laid bare and there is nowhere to go, except, phoenix-like to be reborn . . . the flash of lightning . . . a kind of electrical shock to process, shattering it and provoking at the same time new process." In the last chapter of Portrait, Stephen is still the self-conscious artist manqué, inhibited by the mask of his wit and the molds of literary fashion, and invoking new illusions as fast as he casts off the old ones. But he does begin to see as the artist should. The "flash of lightning," the "electric shock to process," the "shattering" constitute the dynamics of his epiphany.

In both the early novel, where picturing is subordinate to telling, and the novel where reality is a measure of objective perception, the narrative eye moves with regularity. It either selects details to advance the plot, establish a mood, focus the symbolism; or it turns mechanically from right to left, top to bottom, front to rear. The narrative pictures in the first four chapters of Portrait are in this sense traditional. In the last chapter Stephen begins to see. And the narrator, reflecting the development of his consciousness (although at times ironically), engages us in the act of seeing. The narrative eye does not compose what it has seen before: it is aroused by what it is seeing for the first time. It scans the field, flashing from point to point to discover individuating and meaningful patterns. And the movement of the searching eye begins to compete with the movement of the story—that is, the movement of the protagonist as he goes from one place and one stage of life to another. But unlike the movement of realist panning, it does not level what is seen. Quite the contrary, it discovers
details that are unique—that are intrinsically interesting or subjectively attractive. It brings thought, images of the past, into the present. It fragments wholes to realize the value of parts and forms singular patterns.

The picture of the girls on the library steps is more radical than any other picture in Portrait. The narrative eye moves faster, shifts its position from far to near, changes its angle from wide to narrow, fragments so sharply that details like the trim boots are completely cut off from the girls to whom they belong and become an independent source of interest, and brings into focus kinetic patterns that are purely pictorial. As a result we are engaged in the dynamics of seeing, and also in the dynamics of composition. So in his first novel, Joyce develops from traditional to phenomenal to what we might call modernist picturing—where the medium, our most immediate point of contact, directly stimulates the sensation of movement and calls attention to itself in the process. In Ulysses the movement of the narrative eye and many other elements of the novel's medium will not only engage us directly but take on a dramatic life of their own and become a gratuitous force. But before we turn to the first novel in motion, let us take a chronological leap to a writer whom Joyce influenced. William Faulkner did not go as far as Joyce in imparting motion to all the elements of the medium. But he did develop the movement of the narrative eye with singular range and power as it tries to grasp the senselessness of his world.