

The Parenthetical Function in *A la recherche du temps perdu*

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The Parenthetical Function in *A la recherche du temps perdu**

“. . . the machinery of my work is of a species by itself; two contrary motions are introduced into it, and reconciled, which were thought to be at variance with each other. In a word, my work is digressive, and it is progressive too,—and at the same time.”

Sterne, *Tristram Shandy*

“. . . l'esprit, suivant son cours habituel qui s'avance par digressions . . .”

Proust, *Sodome et Gomorrhe*

METAPHOR AND METONYMY, those noble figures of classical rhetoric, have been justly recognized as the cornerstones of Proust's novel.¹ My purpose in this essay is to focus on a more humble figure of discourse: the parenthesis. Fontanier, in his treatise on rhetoric, classified the parenthesis (“l'insertion d'un sens complet et isolé, au milieu d'un autre dont il interrompt la suite, avec ou sans rapport au sujet”) among the “figures de style par rapprochement.”² That classification alone should alert us to the importance of this figure in *A la recherche*—all the more so since another figure in the same category is the simile (“comparaison”), which Proust often willfully confused with the metaphor.³

Critics have not ignored altogether the role of parentheses in *A la recherche*; with the exception of Spitzer, however, few have accorded this figure the detailed attention it deserves. In his 1928 essay on Proust's style—which he characterized as a “style à parenthèses”—Spitzer devoted several pages to the role of the parenthesis in determining the rhythm of Proust's sentences; he showed that the parenthesis is the principal “retarding element” in the Proustian period, elongating it to occasionally “monstrous” proportions and blocking its progression toward the end, which for that reason appears as a “deliverance.”⁴ Spitzer noted, furthermore, that the parenthesis not only functions as an element of rhythm but also constitutes an essen-

tial aspect of Proust's narrative technique: “Les parenthèses sont les judas par lesquels le romancier regarde son action et ses lecteurs, leur fait des signes, des clins d'œil” (p. 412). Finally, besides this didactic function, which establishes a direct link between author and reader, parentheses possess, according to Spitzer, an important thematic function: “Ces mentions faites ‘en passant,’ c'est un nouvel aspect d'une même technique: rattacher allusivement les faits entre eux, pour restituer la complexité des relations inhérentes à la vie réelle” (p. 416).

Spitzer's explanation of the thematic function of parentheses rests on the traditional, if today increasingly problematic, assumption that literature imitates life. Whether, in fact, the relations whose complexity is restored by parenthetical allusions are those of “real life” is open to question; that they are those of the *text* of *A la recherche* is certain. Paradoxically, the very elements in the text that act as stumbling blocks in the progression of individual sentences are the ones that establish links between diverse, often far-removed events, places, characters—in a word, between various textual segments. Spitzer's own examples serve to prove this point, and it will be useful to consider at least some of them.

First, Spitzer notes that parentheses often contain narrative elements that are not lacking in importance. He cites a passage from the opening pages of the novel, referring to Marcel's grandmother:

. . . elle était retournée elle-même à Jouy-le-Vicomte chez le libraire pour que je ne risquasse pas de ne pas avoir mon cadeau (*c'était un jour brûlant et elle était rentrée si souffrante que le médecin avait averti ma mère de ne pas la laisser se fatiguer ainsi*) et elle s'était rabattue sur les quatre romans champêtres de George Sand.⁵

Spitzer remarks that the opposition, in the parenthesis, between “la teneur” (important)

and “la forme” (secondary, subordinate) produces an “effet saisissant”; he does not sufficiently emphasize, however, the compositional function of the parenthesis, which foreshadows—in formalist terms, motivates—over a thousand pages before the event itself, the illness and death of the grandmother. The relegation of significant details to the status of parenthetical asides is a characteristic feature of Proustian narration.

Spitzer devotes little space to narrative parentheses such as the above, but he provides several examples of other kinds, all of which may be grouped under the general heading of “commentaires en marge du récit” (pp. 412–17). It is the latter that function as “les judas par lesquels le romancier regarde son action et ses lecteurs”; Spitzer finds in all of them “un élément didactique et pédagogique secondaire, sans la moindre théâtralité” (p. 412). We shall see, however, that not all of the didactic parentheses in *A la recherche* are deprived of “théâtralité.” Above all—and Spitzer’s own analysis does not suggest otherwise—Proust’s parentheses are rarely, if ever, really “secondaires.” Consider, for example, the following, cited by Spitzer:

[Mme Verdurin is speaking of Swann, who has become persona non grata in her salon.] Et elle ajouta encore un instant après, avec colère: —Non, mais voyez-vous, cette sale bête! employant sans s’en rendre compte, et peut-être en obéissant au même besoin obscur de se justifier—comme *Françoise à Combray quand le poulet ne voulait pas mourir*—les mots qu’arrachent les derniers sursauts d’un animal inoffensif qui agonise, au paysan qui est en train de l’écraser. (I, 285)

The parenthetical remark about Françoise is an “association rétrospective” in terms of the text (even though, chronologically, Mme Verdurin’s remark precedes Françoise’s scene with the chicken), and Spitzer’s analysis suggests that such associations fulfill two quite contradictory functions in the novel: on the one hand, they distract the reader from the moment being narrated, thus acting not only as retarding elements in the sentence but also as a means of *fragmenting* the text—and the reader’s attention; on the other hand, they establish connections between widely separated sections of the novel, thus constituting “joints” in the composition (p. 412). Even while being technically both secondary and

dispersive (centrifugal) elements in the sentence, Proust’s parentheses play a major cohesive (centripetal) role in the novel as a whole.⁶

II

Spitzer’s analysis, although brilliant, is limited by the fact that it is derived exclusively from the examination of single sentences; his examples, moreover, are restricted to *Du côté de chez Swann*. As Jean Starobinski has pointed out, Spitzer had perhaps too much of a tendency to go from the individual detail to the work as a whole, skipping the intermediate levels.⁷ As far as *A la recherche* is concerned, the jump from detail to whole, or from microstructure to macrostructure, is extremely tempting. The whole middle section of the novel, from *Guermantes* to *Le Temps retrouvé*, can be considered as a vast parenthesis—provoked, as is well known, by the delay in publication due to the war, but also, no doubt, by Proust’s chronic impulse to insert substantial passages between already existing ones. One is naturally led to posit a significant homology between parentheses in individual sentences and parentheses that run to several volumes; as R. A. Sayce has noted, “The basic syntactic pattern of the sentence can be applied to the work as a whole.”⁸ The conclusions one can draw from the existence of such a homology are, however, questionable, unless one can demonstrate that the parenthetical function in *A la recherche* also operates on an intermediate structural level—precisely the one that Spitzer too often neglected. My purpose in what follows is to examine the nature and role of parentheses neither in sentences nor in whole volumes but in the span between them: on the level of individual narrative sequences.

By a narrative sequence, I mean a limited, linear series of events, which can be subsumed under a single label—for example, “la scène du coucher” (*Du côté de chez Swann*), “visit to Elstir’s studio,” “dinner with M. de Norpois” (*A l’ombre des jeunes filles en fleurs*), “dinner with the Guermites” (*Le Côté de Guermites*), “soirée at La Raspelière” (*Sodome et Gomorrhe*), “concert at the Verdurins” (*La Prisonnière*), etc. As these examples show, sequences vary in length and complexity (the final matinée of *Le Temps retrouvé* may also be con-

sidered as a single sequence), and their identification and segmentation depend largely on the choice of the analyst. An element of arbitrary choice is present, however, in every analytical enterprise; we need only agree, in this instance, that every sequence must meet two conditions: that it have an identifiable beginning and end, and that it move forward, in time, from one to the other. This definition will be recognized as a modified version of the one proposed by Roland Barthes in his "Introduction à l'analyse structurale des récits."⁹ According to Barthes, a sequence consists of a series of "operations" or "kernels" (*noyaux*), linked together chronologically and logically, each kernel following and being ostensibly the consequence of the preceding one. Thus the dinner with M. de Norpois could be defined as consisting of the following kernels: *arrival*; *introductions* (in the salon, accompanied by conversation); *meal* (in the dining room, accompanied by conversation); *after-dinner coffee* (in the salon, accompanied by conversation); *departure*. In Barthes's schema, all of the elements I have shown between parentheses would be considered secondary, that is, not essential to the sequence: the conversations would be secondary actions, which Barthes calls "catalyses," and the indications of place, together with any descriptions or comments that might accompany the narration of the sequence, would be "informations" or "indices." For our purposes, however, it is not necessary to make a distinction between primary and secondary actions. In a Proustian sequence, the course of a conversation or the description of a train of thought is as much a part of the action as anything else; the only real determining factors in the sequence are its temporal progression and its closure—that is, its being marked off by an identifiable beginning and end. In what follows I shall consider only what Gérard Genette has called "singulative" sequences—occurring only once and narrated only once.¹⁰ The "iterative" sequences, consisting of the single narration of a series of habitual events (e.g., "every Sunday in Combray," "every afternoon on the Champs-Élysées"), would require a separate discussion.

How do we define—and identify, since we no longer have punctuation marks to help us—a parenthesis on the level of a sequence? Using as a model the definition of parentheses in sen-

tences, we may define a sequence-level parenthesis as an independent textual segment inserted between two contiguous moments in a sequence, interrupting its forward movement and constituting an isolated block within the narrative. Every reader has felt, intuitively, the presence of such blocks in Proust's sequences, and one can point to such famous ones as the fifty-page analysis of "l'esprit de Guermites" in the middle of the Guermites dinner, inserted between the moment the guests enter the dining room and the moment they sit down (II, 435–83), or the account of the negotiations between M. de Norpois and the prince Von Faffenheim, which takes up six pages in the middle of the "matinée Villeparisis" (II, 257–63). Critics have used the term parenthesis to refer to such blocks, and some—notably J.-Y. Tadié¹¹—have emphasized their importance in the narrative. No one, however, has examined such parentheses systematically in a given sequence, in order to see what kind of material is inside them, how they relate to the sequence that surrounds them, and what kinds of functions they fulfill.

Just as not every retarding element in the sentence is a parenthesis, so not every retarding element in the sequence is a sequence-level parenthesis. The minimum requirement of the latter is that it be a grammatically independent segment; that is, that it consist of at least one independent sentence, which could be removed from the text without altering the forward movement of the action. We must remember that the action includes not only what is said or done but also what is thought, felt, seen, etc., as long as the thoughts or feelings unfold *in the time of* ("during") the sequence. I introduce this point in order to emphasize that a sequence-level parenthesis is an *interruption* of the action in a sequence, and that many of the reflections or descriptions one finds in Proustian sequences are consequently not parenthetical. Genette has shown that some of the most famous descriptive passages in *A la recherche*—the Hubert Robert fountain in the garden of the prince de Guermites, for example—are not descriptive pauses such as one finds in Balzac, for they are rendered narratively, as something observed by Marcel during the soirée (*Figures III*, pp. 133–38). His observation is part of the action of the sequence, not an interruption of it. A

genuine sequence-level parenthesis, on the contrary, always brings with it some kind of temporal perturbation: a jump forward or backward in the story, a jump into the present of narration, or a jump into the generalizing, atemporal present.

Parentheses in sequences vary in length, just as parentheses in sentences do, and the longer they are the more strongly they are felt as interruptions. A giant sequence-level parenthesis such as the one devoted to “l’esprit de Guermantes” produces a very different effect, and fulfills a greater variety of functions, than one consisting of a single sentence or a short paragraph. The latter functions as an aside, a brief comment that may add to our understanding or enjoyment, but whose effect may be so fleeting that we hardly register it as an interruption. By far the more interesting cases are the long sequence-level parentheses, occupying more than a page of text. It will be useful to begin our analysis with Proust’s long sequence-level parentheses, which we may call by a less cumbersome and more traditional name: digression.

III

Digressions are not only *longer* but also *stronger* than the short sequence-level parentheses. They have (if one may be forgiven the barbarism) a higher degree of parentheticalness, for they tend wholly to displace the principal sequence and to establish their own foreground in the text. A *short* sequence-level parenthesis, as we noted above, does not necessarily impose itself as an interruption; a digression always does. This explains why digressions may produce a feeling of impatience in the reader wanting to get on with the story, and why one invariably feels a slight shock when a digression is over and the narrative resumes. The shock occurs because the reader suddenly realizes that no time at all has passed between the beginning of the digression and its end, even though the time of reading, as well as the time recounted in the digression, may have been considerable. This is the case, for example, in the flashback digression recounting the negotiations between Norpois and the prince Von Faffenheim: the digression itself narrates a series of events unfolding over a period of several months, but it takes us away

from the time and place of the *matinée* Villeparisis and, in relation to the sequence, occupies no time at all. This kind of digression is, to be sure, not peculiar to Proust: one finds it in its fully developed form—as a lengthy suspension of a present action in favor of a past action that has bearing on the present—in the *Odyssey*,¹² and it is a favorite device of Balzac.

The difference between Proust and Balzac in their handling of explanatory flashbacks is instructive. Balzac introduces them, more often than not, by a “Voici pourquoi” or its equivalent: he is unabashed at the baldness of the transition and makes no attempt to alleviate it. Proust, on the other hand, rarely resorts to a signal as explicit as “Voici pourquoi”—indeed, in *Contre Sainte-Beuve* he reproaches Balzac for precisely that formula.¹³ He attempts, rather, to mask the beginning of a flashback by means of a gradual transition that “slides” into the past almost without one’s noticing it. In the Norpois-Faffenheim flashback, for instance, the transition is effected through a series of sentences in the imperfect tense, describing the prince’s frustrated (and presumably present) ambitions to become a member of the Academy (II, 257). Gradually, the imperfects become iterative (narrative), not descriptive, and, eventually, a *passé simple* appears (“Le cordon de Saint-André est une erreur, *pensa* le prince,” II, 259), situating the narrative firmly in the digressive past.

Flashbacks in the middle of a sequence are among the most traditional kinds of narrative digression,¹⁴ and Proust’s particular handling of them (how he introduces a flashback, how he effects the return to the sequence) deserves detailed study. For our purposes, however, it is sufficient to note that flashbacks are but one of a whole array of digressive techniques in *A la recherche*—and to note, as well, Proust’s awareness of the problem they pose. As Tristram Shandy, that other great digressor, remarked, digressions, although they are “the sunshine, the life, the soul of reading,” are a cause of “pitiable distress” for an author: “For, if he begins a digression,—from that moment, I observe, his whole work stands still;—and if he goes on with his main work,—then there is an end of his digression.”¹⁵ Anyone who has read one of the “scènes monstres” of *A la recherche* will recognize the dilemma.

Although neither Sterne nor his novel is ever mentioned in *A la recherche*, the self-consciousness about digressions (manifested, in Sterne, by an ironic acknowledgment of his addiction to them, and in Proust by an attempt to *mask* them—in psychoanalytic terms, to “negate” them¹⁶) suggests a profound affinity between the two works and helps to explain, incidentally, the fascination of so many modern critics with *Tristram Shandy*. The digressive impulse that dominates Sterne’s novel and that manifests itself, in a different guise, in *A la recherche*, is not merely a stylistic eccentricity; digressions are an emblem of what is no doubt the true subject of every eminently modern work: the irregular movement of an individual mind as it attempts to make sense of—to *narrate*—its own history.

Perhaps the most interesting feature of Proust’s digressions is the multiplicity of functions they fulfill. Whereas Balzac’s digressions, no matter how long, always serve a clearly defined purpose (flashback, presentation of a character, etc.), Proust’s digressions may begin with a specific purpose, but they rarely end once that purpose has been fulfilled; instead, they meander, leading us down byways and side paths until, suddenly, like Marcel on his walks in Combray, we discover, at the very moment we thought we were lost, that we are “back home.”

Let us look at an example. The short sequence of the soirée Villeparisis (II, 370–82), whose only—but essential—“event” is that the duchesse de Guermantes invites Marcel to dinner, begins with straightforward narration: having arrived late, Marcel decides to avoid the crowd of guests and sits down on a *bergère* in an empty salon. Immediately thereafter, the duchess enters; her sight triggers a three-page digression. Notice the “sliding” transition provided by the imperfect tense and the adverb “plus” in the sentence immediately preceding the digression; the // mark is my own insertion, used to indicate the beginning and the end of the digression:

. . . je vis déboucher, majestueuse, ample et haute dans une longue robe de satin jaune . . . , la duchesse. Sa vue ne me causait plus aucun trouble. //Un certain jour, m’imposant les mains sur le front (comme c’était son habitude quand elle avait peur de me faire de la peine), en me disant: “Ne continue pas tes sorties pour rencontrer Mme de Guermantes, tu es la fable de la maison. D’ailleurs, vois

comme to grand’mère est souffrante, tu as vraiment des choses plus sérieuses que de te poster sur le chemin d’une femme qui se moque de toi,” d’un seul coup, . . . ma mère m’avait réveillé d’un trop long songe. La journée qui avait suivi avait été consacrée à dire un dernier adieu à ce mal auquel je renonçais. . . .

Et puis ç’avait été fini. J’avais cessé mes sorties du matin, et si facilement que je tirai alors le pronostic, qu’on verra se trouver faux plus tard, que je m’habituerais aisément, dans le cours de ma vie, à ne plus voir une femme. Et quand ensuite Françoise m’eût raconté que Jupien, désireux de s’agrandir, cherchait une boutique dans le quartier, désireux de lui en trouver une . . . , j’avais pu recommencer ces sorties. . . . (II, 371)

The digression ends long after this, abruptly:

Il y aurait des parvenus, si on enseignait dans ce sens l’art de parvenir.//

Au moment où elle traversait le salon où j’étais assis, . . . Mme de Guermantes m’aperçut sur ma bergère . . . ; elle obliqua, vint à moi. . . .

(II, 373–74)

The only indication of a reprise of the main sequence is the new paragraph, but this is by no means the rule; Proust’s reprises, like his digressions, often occur in the middle of a paragraph, picking up pages later exactly at the moment where the narrative left off.

Examining the digression in detail, we note that its ostensible purpose is to explain why the view of the duchess no longer excited Marcel. This purpose, however, is accomplished after a few lines (“Et puis ç’avait été fini”), after which the digression itself digresses to other matters, its “fil conducteur” being the morning walks Marcel was once again able to undertake after his cure. The whole digression can be considered as a flashback, filling in a part of the story that was not told in its chronological place (while the grandmother was still alive). What makes it peculiarly Proustian is that an event as important as Marcel’s falling out of love with the duchess—whose passionate pursuit by the young man constitutes the whole first part of *Guermantes*—was not related sequentially, but is relegated almost to the status of an afterthought.

Retrospection is not the only narrative function fulfilled by this digression; it is also anticipative, in several respects. First, the narrator announces, somewhat cryptically, that he would

not always find it so easy to be separated from a woman. This “annonce”¹⁷ creates a certain narrative suspense (we wonder who will be the woman in question), but is also thematically important: it inserts, albeit as an exception, Marcel’s love for the duchess into the *series* of loves—Swann’s for Odette, Charlus’s for Morel, Saint-Loup’s for Rachel, Marcel’s for his mother, for Gilberte, for Albertine—that runs from one end of *A la recherche* to the other.

Second, the digression prepares, in an extremely subtle and seemingly innocent way, one of the central episodes in the novel: the meeting between Charlus and Jupien and its witnessing by Marcel. The boutique Jupien needed, we are told on the second page of the digression, soon became available in the courtyard itself: “Car on apprit que l’ébéniste de notre cour, dont les ateliers n’étaient séparés de la boutique de Jupien que par une cloison fort mince, allait recevoir congé du gérant . . .” (II, 372). The “cloison fort mince” will become, more than 200 pages later, the “cloison extrêmement mince” (II, 607) through which Marcel hears, for the first time, the inarticulate sounds of sexual pleasure. The sexual association is itself, furthermore, anticipated by the digression, although this time by means of a false scent or what Barthes calls a “leurre”:¹⁸

Françoise, ayant remarqué que, même après l’heure où on ne visitait pas, le concierge laissait contre la porte de la boutique ‘A louer,’ flaira un piège dressé par le concierge pour attirer la fiancée du valet de pied des Guermantes (*ils y trouveraient une retraite d’amour*) et ensuite les surprendre. (II, 372)

Of course, the “retraite d’amour” will not be the “boutique à louer” but the “boutique à côté,” the lovers will not be a man and a woman, and the witness will not be the concierge. Nevertheless, Jupien’s boutique already carries, by metonymic association, the sign of illicit love, and it is surely not an accident that this sign comes to it in a (sentence-level) parenthesis, itself inserted into a (sequence-level) parenthesis.

If it is the morning walks that lead from the duchess to Jupien, it is also they that eventually lead back to her:

. . . bien que n’ayant plus à chercher une boutique pour Jupien, je continuai à sortir avant le déjeuner. . . . Depuis longtemps déjà dans ces courses du

matin, . . . je choisisais le chemin le plus direct, sans regret s’il était en dehors du parcours habituel de la duchesse. . . . (II, 372–73)

Between the first of the above sentences and the second, the digression captures, in passing, an image of M. de Norpois and a “law” about diplomats (“Souvent, dans ces sorties, je rencontrais M. de Norpois . . . chez ces importants diplomates, regarder d’une certaine manière n’a pas pour but de vous faire savoir qu’ils vous ont vu, mais qu’ils ne vous ont pas vu . . .”—II, 373), and even seems about to start yet another narrative, which it abandons almost immediately: “Une grande femme que je croisais souvent . . . était moins discrète avec moi . . . elle m’attendait . . . , me souriait, faisait le geste de s’abandonner. . . .” This woman, we shall learn with Marcel 350 pages later, was the Comtesse d’Orvillers (II, 721). Here again, the digression has paved the way for a recognition scene, but this time a very minor one with no consequence, unless it be to suggest that in Proust’s novel every road leads somewhere and nothing is absolutely gratuitous.

To get back to the duchess—after the statement that her walks no longer exerted any influence on Marcel’s, the digression moves on to a general reflection about love, and ends with a “law” about the art of social climbing:

Jusqu’à-là les efforts du monde entier ligüés pour me rapprocher d’elle eussent expiré devant le mauvais sort que jette un amour malheureux. Des fées plus puissantes que les hommes ont décrété que, dans ces cas-là, rien ne pourra servir jusqu’au jour où nous aurons dit sincèrement dans notre cœur la parole: ‘Je n’aime plus.’ . . . Mais, même dans les détails d’une affection, une absence, le refus d’un dîner, une rigueur involontaire, inconsciente, servent plus que tous les cosmétiques et les plus beaux habits. Il y aurait des parvenus, si on enseignait dans ce sens l’art de parvenir. (II, 373)

Thus, a digression that began as a simple explanatory flashback ends—after what detours!—with a generalizing coda that links the permanent theme of love to the specific theme of *Guermantes*: worldly success. However far from the salon and its hero on his *bergère* these generalizations seem to take us, we are in fact very close; for, as if to prove the truth of these laws about love and society, the events that immediately follow the digression are: (1) The duchess

comes over to Marcel and sits down close to him; (2) Mme de Villeparisis arrives, invites Marcel to dinner; (3) *he refuses, twice*; (4) the duchess immediately invites him to her house.

The digression thus plays a double, seemingly contradictory, role in relation to the sequence that surrounds it: on the one hand, it is a parasite attached to the trunk of the sequence, diverting its energies by introducing events, characters (Jupien, Norpois), and reflections (“les diplomates”) that appear totally extraneous to the events of the sequence; on the other hand, the digression feeds the sequence by formulating general laws whose illustration will be given by events *in the sequence*, immediately following the digression. The long analysis of “l’esprit de Guermantes,” to cite another example, can be read not only as a distracting element in the dinner sequence but also as a prefiguration, “au général,” of the malicious wit that Oriane displays during the meal. The link is made explicit by the allusions that occur, *during the meal*, to Oriane’s *mot* “Taquin le Superbe,” which was reported in the digression (II, 464–68). These allusions (II, 486, 488) are, as it were, produced by the digression, and serve as a bridge between it and the sequence.

The symbiotic relationship between sequence and digression—an element in the former generating the latter, and an element in the latter generating the continuation of the former—is one of the means whereby Proust, like Sterne, “so complicates the digressive and progressive movements, one wheel within another, that the whole machine, in general, [is] kept going” (*Tristram Shandy*, Bk. I, Ch. xx). The other chief means, noted above, is to make the digressive elements produce not a short-range consequence but a long-range one, affecting not the sequence itself but more distant sections—both forward and backward—of the novel. There exists yet a third means, which we can do no more than touch on here: it consists in *blurring* the distinction between sequence and digression altogether, by making a potentially digressive reflection the very material of the sequence. We have already noted that Proust often made his descriptions into narrations of what his hero saw; in the same way, he often “narrativized” what his hero thought, thus making the thoughts themselves events in the sequence. This is pre-

cisely what happens in the final fifty-page meditation in the library of the prince de Guermantes (III, 868–917): despite a large number of digressive passages in the generalizing present tense, the meditation as a whole produces the effect of being rendered narratively, as a sequence of thoughts unfolding at a specific moment in the hero’s mind. This effect is due not only to the careful delineation of time (while the musicians are playing in the *salon*) and space (the library, an ideal place for meditating) but also to the recurrent use of such expressions as “je pensais,” “je me rendais compte,” “je m’avisai au bout d’un moment,” “je compris enfin,” which serve to underline the temporal progression of thought. The same is true of the meditations on music and art that accompany Marcel’s listening to the Vinteuil septuor (III, 248–52) or his playing the Vinteuil sonata on the piano (III, 158–62); the meditation on literature that follows his reading of the “Goncourt journal” (III, 717–23); the meditation on the self in society that takes place while he is sitting in the carriage taking him to Charlus’s house after the Guermantes dinner (II, 547–52); and so on. In such meditative sequences, Proust manages to incorporate digressive material into the very fabric of the narrative; they belong, therefore—strictly speaking—not in a discussion of Proust’s digressions, but in a discussion of how he avoids or attenuates digressions.

IV

Although digressions, because of their complexities, are evidently the richest domain for investigation, we should recall that they are only a special case of what we have defined as the sequence-level parenthesis. Turning once again to this larger category, we may attempt a systematic description of the kinds of functions it fulfills in Proust’s text. Let us note that, as far as an analysis of the *kinds* of functions served by sequence-level parentheses is concerned, the length of the parenthetical segments is not pertinent. The only significant difference, in this context, between short parenthetical segments and full-fledged digressions such as the one analyzed above is that the latter generally fulfill several functions at the same time, whereas the former may fulfill only one. While this difference

no doubt partially determines the degree of parentheticalness of a given segment, and certainly makes the long segments more interesting to analyze, it in no way affects the theoretical description of the *kinds* of functions involved. Indeed, we could easily extend our discussion to include not only the sequence-level parenthesis but even its homologue, the sentence-level parenthesis. Since this essay is concerned chiefly with the former, we shall limit ourselves to it—drawing our examples, however, both from long sequence-level parentheses (digressions) and from short ones, indifferently.

It need hardly be pointed out that, in discussing the functions of sequence-level parentheses in *A la recherche*, we will necessarily be proposing categories that apply to other works as well. Our claim is obviously not that Proust “invented” the sequence-level parenthesis (he did not invent parentheses in sentences) but that his use of this figure in *A la recherche* is frequent, distinctive, overdetermined—in a word, significant.¹⁹

We can classify the functions of sequence-level parentheses into three major, often overlapping, categories: narrative, interpretive, and associative. The narrative function we have already described: a parenthetical segment may serve to fill in gaps in the story (flashback), announce, prepare, or generate events to come, remind us of events that have already taken place, and generally keep the machinery moving even while having brought it, technically speaking, to a halt. A narrative parenthesis may also have an interpretive function; the flashback about Marcel’s cure, for example, was triggered by an impulse we could call interpretive, since it provided an explanation for Marcel’s indifference upon seeing the duchess. Moreover, the specific explanation soon broadened out into didactic generalizations about love and social success, and even the fleeting allusion to M. de Norpois gave rise to a law about “les regards des diplomates.” This movement from the individual to the general is perhaps the most characteristic manifestation of the intellectual (as opposed to the “poetic”) aspect of Proustian vision—a vision that, we are told in *Le Temps retrouvé*, does not so much “see” reality as “see through” it (III, 719). People, events, the world itself, present themselves to the Proustian narrator as a

vast system of signs that must be “deciphered,” “translated,” “brought to light” (*éclairci*), in a word *intellectualized*: “Là où la vie emmure, l’intelligence perce une issue” (III, 905).

The “openings pierced by the intellect” are a perfect metaphor for the interpretive function of Proust’s parentheses. This function manifests itself in various ways, of which the principal are the following.

1. *Explanation or qualification of a specific fact or situation*: Marcel’s cure is one example; another occurs in the dinner with M. de Norpois, after the latter has expressed surprise at the fact that Odette is a good wife to Swann, even though she was a terrible mistress (I, 467–71). The narrator explains this change and shows that it was not so extraordinary as M. de Norpois thought. A slightly different case is one where the parenthetical segment is triggered by something the narrator himself has just said and is thus autocorrective: “J’ai tort de dire qu’il [a name he was trying to recall] vint, car il ne m’apparut pas, je crois, dans une propulsion de lui-même” (II, 650). This qualification leads to generalizations about the process of memory, which belong in category 4 below. The impulse to correct, to qualify, to introduce nuances of interpretation is one of the chief impulses behind Proust’s sequence-level parentheses.

2. *“Individual” generalization*: here, a specific action or statement by a character serves as a jumping-off point for a general statement about that character, defined in his or her individuality—in Proustian terms, in his or her *habits*. During the Guermantes dinner, for example, the princesse de Parme asks Oriane about the portrait Elstir once painted of her, and Oriane replies: “C’est une horreur . . .” (II, 502). Between her reply and the princess’ rejoinder, there is a paragraph-long parenthetical segment, in which the narrator tells us that Oriane often had occasion to pronounce that sentence, although at other times she expressed a more favorable judgment. The use of the imperfect, as well as the reference to other occasions besides this one, makes this a generalizing parenthesis, but it remains confined to Oriane, whence my designation of it as an individual generalization. In the digression about Odette mentioned above, we find similar generalizations about Odette’s character (I, 468).

3. “*Collective*” generalization: here, the generalization applies not to an individual but to a group: diplomats, aristocrats, snobs, artists, homosexuals, “altesses,” peasants, etc. Collective generalizations often accompany individual ones; thus, in explaining the exquisite manners of the duc de Guermantes as host, the narrator sees in the duke a representative of the aristocracy of the ancien régime, and even Oriane’s highly original “esprit” is presented as but the quintessence of “l’esprit de Guermantes.” If a specific act is but a manifestation of the individual self (more exactly, of one of the many selves that the individual harbors), the individual self is more often than not but a manifestation of one of the many groups to which it belongs.

4. “*Human*” generalization: by this, I mean the famous laws that supposedly apply not only to a specific person or group but to everyone—to “us.” Whereas the individual or collective generalizations seek to define differences that set one individual or group apart from others, the “human” generalizations eliminate differences and aim for the most abstract kind of truth. Time, memory, sleep, love, jealousy, cruelty, the impermanence of the self—these are the themes that elicit “human” generalizations, and rare is the sequence-level parenthesis that does not touch on at least one of them. Even the specific explanatory flashback relating to Odette ends with generalizations about time, causality, and the impermanence of the self (I, 471). A few pages later, Marcel’s tentative gesture to kiss M. de Norpois’s hand leads to a digression that concludes with a law about “les proportions inattendues de distraction et de présence d’esprit, de mémoire et d’oubli dont est fait l’esprit humain” (I, 478).

5. *Esthetic generalization*: Proust’s propensity for theorizing about art needs no demonstration. Interpretive commentaries relating to painting, music, literature, the theater are sprinkled throughout *A la recherche*, often in the midst of parenthetical segments that seem to have nothing to do with art. The parenthetical segment about the duke’s manners, for example, contains reflections about literary works of the past (II, 417–18); the “esprit de Guermantes” digression contains remarks about the criticism of great works (II, 470–71); a digression about Oriane’s voice contains a commentary on the art

of great actresses (II, 495), etc. As we have already noted, however, many of the longest and most famous discussions about art are not, properly speaking, digressive but are, rather, “narrativized.” This is in keeping with the major theme of *A la recherche*, which is the apprenticeship (i.e., the *development*) of its writer-hero.

The interpretive function of the sequence-level parentheses bears out Spitzer’s statement relating to parentheses in sentences; they are “les judas par lesquels l’auteur communique avec le lecteur” (p. 412). We might add: “en échangeant avec lui des signes d’intelligence.” We may recall that Spitzer considered the didacticism of such parentheses incompatible with “théâtralité,” that is, with a dramatic or scenic quality. In Proust’s sequence-level parentheses, however, didacticism and “théâtralité” are not at all incompatible. The major link between them is formed by what Marcel Muller has called *romans abstraits*, illustrative stories with unidentified or abstract protagonists serving to exemplify a didactic generalization.²⁰ These stories are always subordinated to the interpretive function and are by definition parenthetical; they are, however, also dramatic. Muller gives as an example the page-long segment in the middle of the *scène du coucher* (I, 30–31), in which Marcel’s anguish while waiting to hear whether his letter would be delivered is compared to the anguish that Swann felt “pendant de longues années de sa vie,” and his joy after Françoise tells him that it would be delivered is compared first to Swann’s feelings and then to the joy that “we” feel if we meet a friend in front of a hotel or a theater who agrees to carry a message to the woman we love and are anxious to see. The latter comparison is extended to become a veritable drama, having as protagonists “us,” “the friend,” and “the woman.” The law it illustrates is that “les bonnes intentions d’un tiers sont sans pouvoir sur une femme qui s’irrite de se sentir poursuivie jusque dans une fête par quelqu’un qu’elle n’aime pas” (I, 31).

The longest and most striking example of a *roman abstrait* occurs in the twenty-page digression triggered by the encounter between Charlus and Jupien (II, 613–32). Most of this digression is devoted to an analysis of “la race des hommes-femmes,” but the analysis is illustrated by a three-page *roman abstrait* (II, 624–26)

having as its hero “le solitaire,” the homosexual who is ashamed of his vice and is condemned to languish in silence. The drama is complete, with main characters (“le solitaire,” his cousin, the cousin’s wife, the cousin’s wife’s cousin) and mere walk-ons (“un inconnu,” “un certain employé de chemin de fer”). At the same time, it is totally didactic, having the schematicism of an exemplum.²¹

Nor are the *romans abstraits* the only exemplary anecdotes in Proust’s sequence-level parentheses. Often, it is an anecdote from the narrator’s own life that serves to illustrate a law, as is the case in one of the sequence-level parentheses of the Guermantes dinner (II, 498–99): a remark by the princesse de Parme’s stupid lady-in-waiting leads to a didactic generalization, which is then illustrated by an anecdote involving the narrator, a cousin of the Guermantes, and a certain Mme de Chaussegros. The anecdote is not situated in time, and were it not for the names given to the characters, it could figure perfectly as a *roman abstrait*. Similarly, in one of the digressions of the “visit to Elstir” sequence (I, 857–59), we move from reflections about Albertine to general reflections about love, which are then illustrated by an anecdote involving an old “professeur de dessin” of Marcel’s grandmother, his mistress, his daughter, and the grandmother herself.

By means of these illustrative stories, be they “abstract” or “concrete,” Proust’s didactic parentheses are endowed—*pace* Spitzer—with a considerable dose of theatricality. But these anecdotes have another effect as well, one perhaps not foreseen by Proust: they suggest the nonabsolute, arbitrary status of the laws they illustrate. We have no reason to doubt that Proust himself considered these laws to be essential truths, whose validity transcends the circumscribed space of the text. Literature, affirms the mature hero of *A la recherche*, is not divorced from life, it *is* life: “la vraie vie, la vie enfin découverte et éclaircie” (III, 895). If literature allows us to know life, then the illustrative anecdotes in the novel can indeed be seen as schemata for the communication of extratextual truths or, like their ancestor the exemplum, as rhetorical proofs of the validity of certain general laws. Yet, paradoxically, these same anecdotes produce an opposite effect as well. Proof

by means of examples is, after all, the most vulnerable kind of proof; counterexamples are all too easy to find, or rather—for we are concerned here with fictional, not historical, examples—to *invent*. Paul de Man has suggested that a “literary text simultaneously asserts and denies the authority of its own rhetorical mode.”²² The proliferation of illustrative anecdotes in *A la recherche* simultaneously asserts the existence of a link between the text and the world and calls attention to—lays bare—the purely rhetorical, nay fictional, status of that assertion.

Finally, we come to the associative functions of Proust’s sequence-level parentheses. These most often overlap both with the narrative and with the interpretive functions, yet their importance in *A la recherche* is so great that they must be analyzed separately. Let us consider a minor example: the evocation of M. de Norpois, in passing, during the “guérison” digression. The evocation fulfills an interpretive function, since it gives rise to a generalization about diplomats. Its chief function, however, is associative: it serves to keep M. de Norpois circulating in the text, even though he might not make a scenic appearance for quite a while. In other words, it maintains in a *virtual presence* an element in the novel that is absent from a given sequence, but that was present in earlier sequences and may be present in later ones. In a work as long as *A la recherche*, one can see why this kind of evocation is essential; even more important than their role as a kind of mnemonic device, however, is the power of such evocations to bring together seemingly incommunicable parts of the novel: thus it is that Balbec, Marcel’s grandmother, and a whole textual fragment of *A l’ombre des jeunes filles en fleurs* (I, 699–70) are suddenly made to enter the Guermantes salon, by means of a short sequence-level parenthesis that links the amiability of the princesse de Parme to that of the princesse de Luxembourg (“j’avais vu la princesse de Luxembourg acheter des petits pains de seigle sur la plage pour en donner à ma grand’mère, comme à une biche du Jardin d’Acclimatation . . .”—II, 425); thus it is that Combray enters the Guermantes dining room by means of a digression about the duchess’ eyes (II, 494–95); thus it is that Elstir’s unproductive old age enters his studio at the height of his powers, by means of a digression about his—

and every artist's—ideal of beauty (I, 850–52).

One need hardly insist on the thematic significance of communication and separation in *A la recherche*. The importance of parenthetical associations becomes even more evident if we superpose them, structurally, on the metaphor and on the phenomenon of involuntary memory, itself closely linked to the metaphor (see III, 889–90). In all three cases, the essential mechanism is one of *rapprochement*: between two objects in the metaphor, between two moments in involuntary memory, between two textual elements in the parenthesis. The *rapprochement* is in each case a purely mental activity: the metaphor brings together two objects that are in fact different (separate); involuntary memory unites two moments separated by great distance in time; the parenthetical association links two textual fragments that remain, for all that, apart. J.-P. Richard has noted the importance, in the thematics of *A la recherche*, of differential structures: “. . . pour faire naître en somme un sens dans le sensible, il [faut] y découvrir, ou y tracer une figure formée d'un minimum de deux termes, tout à la fois *semblables* et *disjoints*.”²³ Similarity and difference, which preside over the “birth of meaning” in the text, are inscribed in it on multiple levels. The sequence-level parenthesis, seemingly that most unpoetic of figures, turns out to be a sign of the text's overdetermination, of its *literariness*.

This leads us to the last of the associative functions of Proust's sequence-level parentheses: the serialization of themes. Here I have in mind not explicit allusions to, or evocations of, disparate events, places, or characters but rather the *recurrence* of certain privileged themes, such that by the end we can establish a veritable series of parentheses about love, about time, about art, etc. This serialization has two contradictory effects, which we have noted as typical of all of Proust's parentheses. On the one hand, it presents the thematic material of the novel discontinuously, in fragments, thus manifesting what Gilles Deleuze has called, in a different context, Proust's anti-Platonism.²⁴ Deleuze argues, brilliantly, that the unity of *A la recherche* is the very opposite of a Platonic total-ity: there is no unifying first principle in Proust's

novel, no Logos in which all contradictions are resolved, all fragments united. There are only multiples, series, heterogeneous pieces, whose unity is not that of an organic whole but that of a patchwork quilt or a great unfinished cathedral. On the other hand, the serialization of themes establishes a certain continuity in the novel; more exactly, it establishes *connections* between fragments that are unalterably separate but that are nevertheless linked in the text and in the reader's mind.

It would appear, then, that parentheses—whether on the level of sentences, as analyzed by Spitzer, or on the level of sequences, as I have attempted to analyze them here—are a major structural feature of *A la recherche*, one of the means whereby the text creates its unity and its discontinuities, its propulsion forward and its innumerable turnings back, its closure and its perpetual openness. There remains but to give a Proustian name to this paradoxical figure, a name that, by a most suggestive coincidence, we find not only in the text of *A la recherche* but also in Spitzer and in Deleuze. One of the many discoveries of the final matinée of *Le Temps retrouvé* is that, between the “côté de Guermantes” and the “côté de chez Swann,” there exist connecting roads: “Déjà entre ces deux routes, des *transversales* s'établissaient” (III, 1029). Spitzer, in concluding his analysis of parentheses in sentences, wrote: “la ligne claire des périodes, qui traduit la rectitude, la marche en avant des idées, est . . . croisée, minée de *galeries transversales* . . .” (p. 417; italics mine). Deleuze, in describing the fragmented unity of the novel, affirmed: “toute l'œuvre consiste à établir des *transversales*, qui nous font sauter . . . d'un monde à un autre, d'un mot à un autre, . . . affirmant sans les réunir tous ces fragments irréductibles au Tout. La jalousie est la transversale de la multiplicité amoureuse; le voyage, la transversale de la multiplicité des lieux; le sommeil, la transversale de la multiplicité des moments . . .” (*Proust et les signes*, pp. 136–37). Perhaps we could add: “la parenthèse, la transversale de la multiplicité textuelle.”

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Notes

* This is the revised version of a paper discussed at the MLA Marcel Proust Seminar, San Francisco, December 1975. I should like to express my thanks to Marcel Muller and Michael Riffaterre for their careful reading and criticism of the first draft.

¹ It would be a tedious exercise to attempt an exhaustive listing of works dealing with Proust's imagery. We may mention, among standard works, Stephen Ullman's *The Image in the Modern French Novel* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1960), and Victor Graham's *The Imagery of Proust* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1966). More recently, the best writing on this subject has been by Gérard Genette ("Proust palimpseste," *Figures*, Paris: Seuil, 1966, and "Métonymie chez Proust," *Figures III*, Paris: Seuil, 1972); and by Jean-Pierre Richard (*Proust et le monde sensible*, Paris: Seuil, 1974). For a discussion of the epistemological implications of metaphor and metonymy in Proust and others, see Paul de Man, "Semiology and Rhetoric," *Diacritics*, 3, No. 3 (1973), 27–33.

² Pierre Fontanier, *Les Figures du discours* (Paris: Flammarion, 1968), p. 384 (my italics).

³ See Gérard Genette, "Métonymie chez Proust," p. 58.

⁴ Leo Spitzer, "Le Style de Marcel Proust," *Etudes de style* (Paris: Gallimard, 1970), p. 407. Subsequent page references to Spitzer's essay will be given in parentheses in the text.

⁵ *A la recherche du temps perdu*, édition de la Pléiade, 3 vols. (Paris: Gallimard, 1954), I, 39. Subsequent page references to the novel will be given in parentheses in the text, citing volume and page number of the Pléiade edition. Unless otherwise stated, all italics are my own. I should say a word about my referring to the protagonist of the novel as "Marcel." This is in no way meant to suggest that I equate the protagonist with Proust himself; it is simply a convenient way of designating the protagonist, without having recourse, each time, to the longer and more awkward common noun. (I generally avoid the term "hero" because of its cultural connotations.) The use of "Marcel" has become standard practice in the work of several contemporary critics—notably Gérard Genette—who do not equate the protagonist with the author of the novel.

⁶ This paradoxical status of the parenthesis, as well as its extremely frequent occurrence in Proust's sentences, shows how different Proust's use of it is from the classical model. According to the rhetoricians (e.g., Fontanier), the parenthesis must be used with circumspection and sobriety, because it disperses the reader's attention and necessarily produces "l'embarras, l'obscurité, la confusion." When it is used, it must be "courte, vive, rapide," like the fleeting shadow of a bird in sunlight (Fontanier, pp. 385–86). Proust's parentheses are not only frequent but often very long, sometimes longer than the sentence in which they are inserted; furthermore, they may themselves contain

parentheses, like those Russian dolls that enclose ever smaller replicas of themselves. See, for example, I, 59–60, where the description of the stained glass windows of the Combray church is interrupted by a parenthesis ("et dans le reflet oblique et bleu duquel, parfois . . ."), inside which is another parenthesis, set off by dashes. These two pages, incidentally, contain four separate parentheses (counting the double parenthesis as one), ranging in length from one to ten lines.

⁷ "Leo Spitzer et la lecture stylistique," preface to *Etudes de style*, p. 32.

⁸ "Literature and Language," *Essays in Criticism*, 7, No. 2 (1957), 129.

⁹ In *Communications*, 8 (1966), 6–15. An English translation of the article is to be found in *New Literary History*, 6, No. 2 (1975), 237–72.

¹⁰ For the distinction between singulative and iterative sequences, see *Figures III*, pp. 145–46.

¹¹ See his *Proust et le roman* (Paris: Gallimard, 1971), pp. 385–87. Tadié restricts his definition of the parenthesis in this context to that of a "récit dans le récit," however, even though not all sequence-level parentheses are in fact "récits." See also A. Ferré, "La Ponctuation de Marcel Proust," *Bulletin de la Société des Amis de Marcel Proust et de Combray*, 7 (1957). Ferré remarks that for Proust, "La parenthèse est . . . plus qu'un signe graphique: quelque chose comme un symbole du mouvement de pensée et de composition qui lui est propre. Des sections entières de son œuvre peuvent être considérées comme de grandes parenthèses dans la progression de la narration" (p. 324; quoted by Tadié, p. 386).

¹² See Auerbach's brilliant analysis of Homeric flashbacks (and digressions in general) in "The Scar of Odysseus," in *Mimesis: The Representation of Reality in Western Literature* (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1953), pp. 3–7.

¹³ "Quand il a une explication à donner, Balzac n'y met pas de façons; il écrit: 'Voici pourquoi'; suit un chapitre" (*Contre Sainte-Beuve, précédé de Pastiches et mélanges et suivi de Essais et articles*, Paris: Gallimard, 1971, p. 271). His critique of Balzac notwithstanding, Proust himself was not above resorting to "voici pourquoi" even in the early, stylistically "exquisite" sections of *A la recherche*. Cf. I, 208, where the Balzacian formula precedes the first mention of "la petite phrase"; for a later variation, see II, 818, where a narrative digression about Mme de Cambremer is introduced by the sentence: "Mais pour les cousins de Ch'nouville, voilà" (my italics). These are, however, only exceptions that prove the rule; with digressions as with other things, Proust prefers indirection to explicit designation.

¹⁴ Two other traditional kinds are the descriptive pause—which, as we mentioned above, Proust almost never used as such—and the portrait of a character, including at times a complete case history, introduced just as the character has made or is about to make his

appearance on the scene. Proust, despite his celebrated perspectivism, which makes characters appear as they are perceived by a specific observer (see the famous portrait of Charlus at Balbec, I, 751–53), nevertheless presents quite a few traditional portraits in the middle of his sequences. See the presentations of M. de Bréauté (II, 504), of the *ambassadrice de Turquie* (II, 534), of M. and Mme de Vaugobert (II, 642–46), etc.

¹⁵ Laurence Sterne, *Tristram Shandy*, Bk. I, Ch. xxii.

¹⁶ Here again, one finds counterexamples: occasionally, Proust emphasizes his digressions in a manner similar to Sterne's. See, e.g., II, 651–52, where "Monsieur l'auteur" engages in a bantering dialogue with "Monsieur le lecteur" about his digressive tendencies; see also III, 789, where the narrator calls attention to a "parenthesis" (actually a digression) he has just finished, and authorizes himself to begin another, "even longer" one. Negation and emphatic affirmation are, it is true, but two sides of a single coin.

¹⁷ The technical term proposed by Gérard Genette is "prolepse répétitive" (*Figures III*, pp. 111–12). Genette's term for the flashback is "analepse complétive" (*Figures III*, pp. 92–93).

¹⁸ See *S/Z* (Paris: Seuil, 1971), p. 39; see also *Figures III*, p. 114.

¹⁹ A longer, comparative study of sequence-level parentheses might allow us to categorize various kinds of

texts, ranging from those that contain almost no parenthetical material to those, like Proust's, whose distinguishing feature is the presence of frequent, long sequence-level parentheses with a high degree of parentheticalness. In such texts, we might find that the very distinction between sequence and parenthesis breaks down, or, more exactly, that the overriding presence of parentheses makes the notion of sequence itself problematical. This kind of breakdown might be seen as paralleling what Genette has diagnosed as the breakdown, in modern texts, of the distinction between *récit* and *discours* . (See "Frontières du récit," *Figures II*, Paris: Seuil, 1969.)

²⁰ For Muller's discussion of *roman abstraits*, in a context different from ours, see *Les Voix narratives dans "A la recherche du temps perdu"* (Geneva: Droz, 1965), pp. 66–77.

²¹ For an analysis of the functioning of exempla and didactic narratives in general, see Susan Suleiman, "Le Récit exemplaire," *Poétique*, forthcoming in 1977.

²² "Semiology and Rhetoric," *Diacritics* 3, No. 3, 32.

²³ *Proust et le monde sensible* (Paris: Seuil, 1974), p. 164 (my italics).

²⁴ See the chapter entitled "Anti-Logos," in *Proust et les signes*, 2^e éd. augmentée (Paris: PUF, 1970). A similar argument, conducted along different lines, can be found in G. Genette, "Proust palimpseste," *Figures* (Paris: Seuil, 1966).