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ABSTRACT: *Flashback* and *flashforward,* as well as *analepsis* and *prolepsis* in the terminology of Gérard Genette, belong to some of the few almost undisputed concepts in narrative theory. But if we dig deeper into their original definitions, we come to realize that they appear either vague or as an oversimplification of a more complex issue. In order to add precision to narrative theory's efforts to analyze time shifts, I propose a distinction between *dramatized analepsis,* which is synonymous with *flashback,* and *undramatized analepsis,* which is not. Dramatized analepsis and flashback are synonyms because each involves an *enactment* of the past, while undramatized analepsis refers to past events but does not involve a real shift from one space-time to another. After looking at how this distinction can illuminate some paradigmatic cases in film and graphic narrative, I consider how these distinctions apply to verbal narratives. In addition, I discuss "fading effects" in verbal narratives, effects that follow from the progressive transition from one space-time to another. Finally, I suggest how these tools can illuminate the handling of temporality in Guy de Maupassant's *The Signal.* More generally, this essay contributes to narratological understanding of the intersequential organization of narratives by adding greater precision to Genette's discussion of analepsis by means of the distinction between dramatized and undramatized analepsis. Methodologically, the essay shows the value of transmedial comparisons, since my case about verbal narrative follows from work on narrative in visual media.

KEYWORDS: *flashback, analepsis, deictic shift, enactment, cognitivist narratology, transmedial narratology*

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FLASHBACK AND FLASHFORWARD, as well as *analepsis* and *prolepsis* in the terminology of Gérard Genette, belong to some of the few almost undisputed concepts in narrative theory, because, on a descriptive plane, their ontological status seems intuitively consistent, and on a functional plane, their usefulness for narrative interpretation is obviously relevant. But if we dig deeper into their original definitions by Tomashevsky and Genette, and if we look more precisely at how they have been adapted to visual media, we come to realize that they appear either vague or, at the very least, as an oversimplification of a more complex issue. Indeed, the handling of time shifts to the past in visual media invites us to look at whether *flashback* is wholly synonymous with *analepsis*.[1] In order to add precision to narrative theory's efforts to analyze such time shifts, I propose a distinction between *dramatized analepsis,* which is synonymous with *flashback,* and *undramatized analepsis,* which is not. Dramatized analepsis and flashback are synonyms because each involves an *enactment* of the past, that is, a shift from one space-time to another. *Undramatized analepsis* refers to past events, but does not enact a shift from one space-time to another and thus there is no "back" to which the narrative "flashes." After looking at how this distinction can illuminate some paradigmatic cases in film and graphic narrative, I will consider how these distinctions apply to verbal narratives. In addition, I will discuss "fading effects" in verbal narratives, effects that follow from the progressive transition from one space-time to another. Finally, I will suggest how these tools can illuminate the handling of temporality in Guy de Maupassant's *The Signal.* More generally, this essay contributes to narratological understanding of the intersequential organization of narratives by adding greater precision to Genette's discussion of analepsis by means of the distinction between dramatized and undramatized analepsis. Methodologically, the essay shows the value of transmedial comparisons, since my case about verbal narrative follows from work on narrative in visual media.

Linear Narration and Flashbacks in Visual Narratives

In the movie *Le Passé,* Asghar Farhadi stages a story that strictly respects the chronology of the events, from the first scene, with the arrival of Ahmad in Paris, to the last image, where Samir is in a hospital and holds the hand of his wife, who is in a coma after a suicide attempt. Narration is seen as chronological simply because images and sounds always refer to events that unfold one after the other, and yet, despite this strict linear progression, the interest of the audience is to uncover the motive of the suicide attempt of Samir's wife, an event that happened before the opening scene. During the narration, important clues are introduced, using different narrative techniques: some are related to the way we interpret the interactions between the characters; others are revealed through dialogues, sometimes involving embedded narratives; but there are no real flashbacks—namely no *showing* of the narrated past events. In fact, some of the embedded stories appear as misleading interpretations of what truly happened (for example Lucie's version) or even as intentional lies (Naïma's version). In Asghar Farhadi's movie, this purely chronological narration presents time as an irreversible dimension of life, and past as an unchangeable/unreachable perspective. Even if mov-

ies have the power to give the illusion that it could be otherwise, the director consciously chose to avoid any form of the reenactment of the past.

Before addressing the theoretical questions that this movie entails for the analysis of narrative order, I need to mention another visual narrative that offers a meaningful contrast to this first example. We find probably one of the most memorable flashbacks in early classic French comics in the eleventh story of "Les Aventures de Tintin" called *Le Secret de la Licorne*. This story was first published in the newspaper *Le Soir* from June 1942 to January 1943. In the strip of August 8th, 1942, Captain Haddock begins the tale of his ancestor, François Chevalier de Hadoque, a story that he has just read in an old manuscript (Figure 1).

At this point, the story remains a mere dialogue inserted in the course of the chronological narration of the adventures of Tintin, but soon after, in the second panel of the next strip, the embedded narrative becomes a real flashback: the ship, *The Unicorn,* is shown, under the recitative[4] of Captain Haddock (Figure 2).

The flashback continues in the next panels with the shout of a mariner represented using direct speech. The disappearance of the recitative highlights the fact that the narration has now become more autonomous from the discursive act of the teller. Thus, the *immersion*[5] into the past takes an additional step, just as in a movie, when a fading between two scenes leads to the direct showing of actions and dialogues. In the fifth panel, the image even adopts the internal visual point of view[6] of the Chevalier de Hadoque, when he understands that the sail that he sees is from a pirate boat.

During the next twenty five strips, the action unfolds adopting the classical scenario of pirate stories, with canonical boarding of the pirates, followed by a general fight, imprisonment of the hero, night escape, and duel. Eventually, the climax is reached with the fight between Chevalier de Hadoque and his nemesis, the pirate Rackham Le Rouge, with the victory of the hero offering a happy ending to this long flashback.

As we can see in figure 3, this story is told using an original combination of *telling* and *showing* that makes us constantly switch between two different time frames. We notice also that the sequence *shows* that, into the "world" of the teller, Haddock has progressively changed his mode of telling, since he is now performing the duel. In other words, he is now acting, on a mimetic mode, the interactions between the protagonist and his enemies. This mode of presentation emphasizes the parallel between the two levels of the story, and it even shows the blurry line separating them, but it achieves this effect without blocking the progression of the narration, thus producing a fluid, yet highly reflective, narration. Actually, the last panel of the sequence offers a stunning metaleptic intertwining of the two levels, when Captain Haddock accidently pierces the portrait of his ancestor with his own head.[7]

We can draw some important conclusions from these examples. Firstly, the comic strips by Hergé show that we can receive chronological information concerning a story while observing frequent jumps between the space-time of Chevalier de Hadoque and the space-time of Captain Haddock, who is a teller, but also the imitator of a character situated in a higher degree narrative. Secondly, the story told by Captain Haddock underlines the fact that, when confronted with a verbal narrative, some narrators and their audience can experience such a deep immersion into the *story-*

Figure 1. Hergé, "Le Secret de la Licorne," *Le Soir,* August 8, 1942. © Hergé/Moulinsart 2015[2]

"We are in 1698. The UNICORN, a proud ship, third grade of the fleet of Louis XIV, has left the island of Santo Domingo in the Caribbean, and sails for Europe with on board a cargo of . . . of . . . well, it was mostly rum." (m.t.[3])

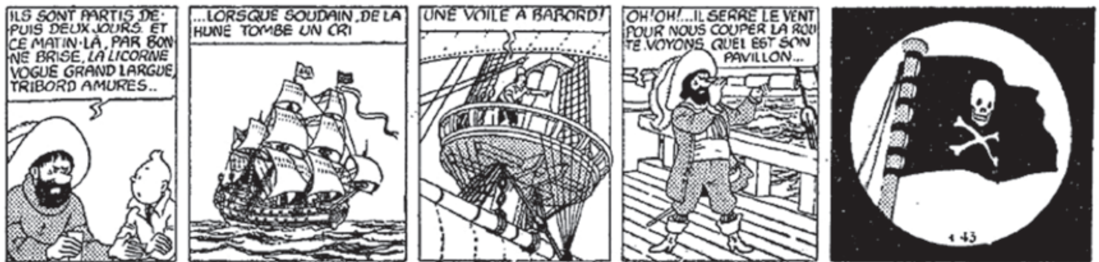

Figure 2. Hergé, "Le Secret de la Licorne," *Le Soir,* August 10, 1942. © Hergé/Moulinsart 2015

"They have left two days ago, and that morning, with a good breeze, UNICORN is sailing full, starboard tack . . . / when suddenly, from the topmast, there is a scream. / 'Sail on the port bow!'" (m.t.)

Figure 3. Hergé, "Le Secret de la Licorne," *Le Soir,* August 19 and 20, 1942. © Hergé/Moulinsart 2015

Figure 4. Hergé, "Le Secret de la Licorne," *Le Soir,* September 5, 1942.
© Hergé/Moulinsart 2015

world that they can feel the dangers threatening the protagonist as if they were threatening them. In addition, we can notice that, in this sequence, the immersed narrator encourages this deictic shift[8] by telling his story using the present tense, pretending that "we *are* in 1698," or that *The Unicorn* "*has left* the island of Santo Domingo in the Caribbean, and *sails* for Europe."

On the other hand, when we look at the narrative organization of *Le Passé,* we see that the information that we need in order to decipher a puzzling past is not necessarily associated with a dechronologized *fabula.* In this case, the mystery is progressively resolved within indirect clues gathered by the audience even if the director never really *shows* the reconstructed past. I will argue now that these phenomena, which are quite obvious in visual narratives, can also be experienced in literary narratives, entailing the necessity to reinvestigate the way we describe the interplay between *fabula* and *sjuzhet.*

From the Interplay Between *Fabula* and *Sjuzhet* to the Definition of Flashbacks in Visual Narratives

The distinction between *fabula* and *sjuzhet* was first introduced by Russian formalist Boris Tomashevsky;[9] these concepts are usually translated in English, for better or for worse, as "story" and "plot":

> [T]he story is the aggregate of motifs in their logical, causal-chronological order; the plot is the aggregate of those same motifs but having the relevance and the order which they had in the original work. The place in the work in which the reader learns of an event, whether the information is given by the

> author, or by a character, or by a series of indirect hints—all this is irrelevant to the story. But the aesthetic function of the plot is precisely this bringing of an arrangement of motifs to the attention of the reader. (65)

If we consider the examples discussed above, we must admit that there is an interesting problem, because according to this definition, we have to decide first what is the story that we care about before being able to decide if the *fabula* is told chronologically or not. In *Le Passé,* the story covering the few days between the arrival of Ahmad in Paris and the last scene with Samir and his wife at the hospital is perfectly chronological, but if we agree that the *story* covers also the mysterious events that were never shown on the screen, those events that happened before the opening scene, then the narrative is not chronological at all. In this case, information is not given by the author/director through a series of flashbacks, but progressively disclosed, to quote Tomashevsky, "by a character, or by a series of indirect hints." We can come to a similar conclusion about the sequence of the comic strip by Hergé. According to the definition given by Tomashevsky, if the *fabula* corresponds to the pirate story, we can argue that the plot is told chronologically, simply because all relevant information concerning this story is given chronologically,[10] sometimes by the author ("showing" the scene) and sometimes by the character ("telling" or "playing" the scene). In both analyses, we see that the elusive way in which Tomashevsky describes the two sequences remains relatively autonomous from the objective description of flashbacks, which relies on past events *shown* on the screen or in the comic strips.

Before examining the specific case of verbal narratives, we must admit that the problem is more obvious in visual narratives than in verbal ones, because, as Christian Metz puts it, the "filmmaker is forced, when he wants to move time, to move space as an additional burden" (71, m.t.). Thereby, since movies are pluri-dimensional, temporal distortions appear more salient in them, and scholars like Seymour Chatman or David Bordwell have drawn interesting conclusions from this semiotic nature of the medium: they have noticed that the distinction introduced by Tomashevsky could not simply overlap what is commonly described as a flashback: "In the cinema, 'flashback' means a narrative passage that 'goes back' but specifically visually, as a scene, in its own autonomy, that is, introduced by some overt mark of transition like a cut or a dissolve" (Chatman 64). Thus, as Chatman states, flashbacks are not simple evocations of past, but constitute some kind of "enactment" (32). In the words of Bordwell, in order to have a flashback, we must "witness and/or hear the syuzhet *dramatizing* the significant fabula episode" (78, my emphasis):

> When the syuzhet presents characters communicating information about prior events by any means (writing, speech, pantomime, tape recording, film clips, etc.), we have *recounting.* When the syuzhet presents prior events as if they were occurring at the moment, in direct representation, we have *enactment.* (A mixed case is the convention of "enacted recounting": a character tells about past events, and the syuzhet then presents the events in a flashback.) This distinction is an essential tool in describing the effects of a

> medium that can transmit fabula information "by report" or "by direct presentation." (77–78)

While, in movies and in comics, narratologists have shown that there is a clear difference between recounting and enactment, such distinction has remained mostly unquestioned for verbal narratives, because some scholars doubt that words are able to tell a story in a mimetic mode beyond the mere imitation of the linguistic aspects of reality. So, for Chatman, it is clear that "flashbacks and -forwards are only media-specific instances of the larger classes of analepsis and prolepsis" (64). As for Genette, he claims that he does not believe in the existence of imitation in verbal narratives:

> because narrative, like almost everything in literature, is a speech act, and therefore we cannot have imitation in narratives in particular as in language in general. A narrative, like any speech act, can only inform, that is to say to convey meanings. Narrative does not "represent" a story (real or fictional), it *tells* it, it signifies it by means of language—except for the already verbal elements of the story (dialogues, monologues). (2007, 321–22, m.t.)

Following this radical separation between verbal and visual narratives, the distinction later introduced by Chatman and Bordwell between *recounting* and *enactment* could not be extended to verbal narratives. Therefore it is no surprise that the definition of analepsis by Genette remains as ambiguous as Tomashevsky's definition of *sjuzhet* when Genette designates analepsis as "any evocation after the fact of an event that took place earlier than the point in the story where we are at any given moment" (1980, 40). The term "evocation" is open to many interpretations, ranging from "dramatized" enactment of a scene to any kind of "indirect hints" disseminated in the text. On this basis, Genette postulates the existence of a continuity between microtextual analysis of recounted events and macrotextual organization of the plot, while neglecting completely what would correspond to a "syuzhet *dramatizing* a significant fabula episode," to use Bordwell's formula. It is particularly revealing to see that, in his microtextual analysis, Genette considers any action expressed in the past perfect or present perfect tenses as some kind of analepsis, like in the following sentence:

> (F) . . . [Swann] wore, (G) a thing he had never done previously, the decoration (H) he had won as a young militiaman, in '70, (I) and added a codicil to his will asking that, (J) contrary to his previous dispositions, (K) he might be buried with the military honours due to his rank as Chevalier of the Legion of Honour. (Genette 1980, 41–42)

In Genette's interpretation, propositions G, H, and J are supposed to be three distinct analepsis, inserted into the chronological unfolding of actions F, I, and K. Yet, this interpretation would probably be in contradiction to what empirical readers would describe as their narrative experience of the time continuity. Genette himself would probably agree that it would be absurd to postulate the existence of *ellipsis* between each sentence of a verbal narrative, because in order to become useful for nar-

rative description, the concept must be narrowed to *meaningful jumps in time.* Using the same argument, we could state that analepsis become salient when the evocation of past goes deeper than in the examples given above.[11] Thus, we need to expand the formalist description of analepsis by taking into account the cognitive experience of the reader elicited by textual configurations, focusing on how the temporal and spatial coordinates of a story are set and how they can be displaced, linearly or not, along the narrative progression.

Cognitivist Insights on Deictic Shifts and Verbal Enactment

Cognitivist theories, some of them building on linguistic hypothesis,[12] have enriched our understanding of how readers can shift from their actual deictic coordinates (based on the *I, here,* and *now*) to project themselves into a different "deictic center," involving a different person (the character of a story) and a different space-time frame situated into the storyworld. Erwin M. Segal summarizes as follows:

> The Deictic Shift Theory (DST) argues that the metaphor of the reader getting inside of a story is cognitively valid. The reader often takes a cognitive stance within the world of the narrative and interprets the text from that perspective. We show that there is much data to support this idea, and we attempt to specify some mechanisms and computational processes that could implement it. DST claims that how a text is interpreted depends on the cognitive stance of the reader. (15)

On this basis, Mary Galbraith has shown that flashbacks are not only a question of lateral displacement on the temporal coordinate of the story, but also involve a vertical "submersion" from one deictic plane to another—an operation that she calls PUSH—usually followed by an "emersion" that brings us back to the first level—defined as POP:

> A story (or a reader) can always potentially change frames in one of two directions. One may emerge from one deictic plane to a higher or more basic-ontological-level deictic plane, as in awakening from a dream or looking up from reading. Borrowing a computer science term, I call this process *POPing.* Conversely, one may submerge from a basic level to a less available deictic plane, such as episodic memory (known as "flashback" in fiction), fictional story world (this may be a fiction within the fiction), or fantasy. I call this submersion a *PUSH,* the term paired with POP in computer science. There is theoretically no limit to the number of POPs and PUSHes possible in a fictional narrative. The most common PUSHes are probably flashbacks and dream sequences, and the most common POPs (other than coming back from flashbacks and dreams) are irony and narrator commentary. (47)

This approach helps to bring closer the problematic of immersion (with PUSH and POP operations) to the description of narrative order, by suggesting that a simple evocation of the past should not be considered a flashback if such immersion is lacking. Thus, the displacement on the horizontal timeline should be combined with the vertical degree of immersion into a storyworld holding its own deictic center. As summarized by Marie-Laure Ryan, the "world metaphor thus entails a referential or 'vertical' conception of meaning that stands in stark contrast to the Saussurian and poststructuralist view of signification as the product of a network of horizontal relations between the terms of a language system. In this vertical conception, language is meant to be traversed toward its referents" (2001, 91–92).

More recent perspectives offered by "second generation" cognitive studies have deepened our understanding of the embodiment of mental processes, allowing us to deal with the way readers may experience a form of mental enactment of a fiction, beyond the mere "representation" of a storyworld. These theories bring to the fore "the enactive, embedded, embodied, and extended qualities of the mind. To this list we may add 'experiential' and 'emotional,' since this new paradigm gives experience and emotional responses a much more important role in cognition than first-wave, computational cognitivism" (Kukkonen and Caracciolo 261). Indeed, research on mirror neurons using "mental imagery" have offered empirical grounds for proving the existence of phenomena of embodiment in the reading experience. Anežka Kuzmičová writes:

> Briefly put, it has been suggested that in the processing of language referring to sensorimotor contents, whether it is an isolated phrase such as "grab the cake" (Raposo et al.) or a full-fledged narrative (Speer et al.), our sensorimotor cortex becomes automatically activated in much the same way as if we were acting out the represented actions and perceptions ourselves. For instance, when a story protagonist is reported to pick up an object, e.g., a textbook, this is reflected not only in the motor but also in the visual area of the brain that would be active if the reader actually picked up the same object. (276)

Kuzmičová offers an interesting typology by distinguishing between three different levels of embodiment, the reader being either an *experiencer,* a *visualizer,* or a *listener.* She shows that these different experiences are linked with typical textual cues and involve different degrees of medium awareness. 1) *Enactment-imagery* refers to a modality that "entails a sense of medium transparency. In the instant of experiencing enactment-imagery, the reader-imager comes as close as one possibly can to forgetting that the experience was in fact mediated by a string of words on a page. The imager is directly situated with regard to the storyworld, experiencing no mediating filter between her embodied mind and the referential text contents" (283). This deepest form of immersion is typically elicited by the direct narration of interactions between the character and the storyworld. 2) *Visual-imagery* refers to a lower degree of immersion, when the reader is confronted only with the description of static objects. In this case, the referential domain "is experienced from an *outer* stance," as if "the

imager's body [was] situated outside the storyworld" (283). 3) *Speech-imagery:* the third category is realized when the reader receives the text "as if it were spoken out loud by an extraneous speaker" (284). In those moments, the reader may "have the impression that there was actual pitch, timbre, volume, pace, and so forth to the narrator's voice" (285). Even if the reader has the illusion of hearing a voice, this form of embodiment involves a higher degree of medium awareness. As noted by Kuzmičová, such experience can be elicited by narratorial interventions, while it is more unlikely to happen when reading Hemingway's behaviorist prose. What Benveniste defines as the formal apparatus of enunciation is probably linked to this effect, since Kuzmičova states that "speech-imagery marks a degree of situatedness often accompanied by referential imagery of the communicative situation" (285).

In the following section, these cognitivist concepts will be used in order to describe, as precisely as possible, how a narrative can progressively displace its deictic center, leading to a progressive immersion into the past of the fabula. In this operation, the highest degree of immersion will be achieved when the reader reaches what is described by Kuzmičová as "enactment-imagery," while "speech-imagery" might function as an opposed force (POP directed), because it highlights the deictic center of the narrator.

Of course, embodiment can be influenced by multiple factors, especially by psychological and contextual parameters; therefore, it is more or less unpredictable in a singular empirical reading. For instance, some readers may have a more vivid imagination than others, and a quiet environment, among other contextual factors, is a necessary ingredient for an optimal immersion into the storyworld. Nevertheless, as Kuzmičová puts it, it is still possible to evaluate "the text factor, i.e., the task of determining the imagery potential of discrete narrative strategies" (280). According to this idea, my focus will be mostly on verbal cues designed to elicit a dramatized, but nevertheless progressive, deictic shift. Thus, the linguistic side of the analysis will help to deal with cognitivist issues because the formalist distinction between dramatized and undramatized analepsis is tied to how embodied cognition works differently in response to different strategies used by the implied author.

Dramatized Time Shifts and Fading Effects in Verbal Narrative

In the comic strips by Hergé, not only have we seen that a verbal narrative can become very mimetic when the teller and his audience are immersed in the story, but also that Captain Haddock has used linguistic tricks, like the use of present tense or the performance of direct speech, to give the illusion of a direct enactment of the scene. All this can be done in a literary text, even though the mimo-gestural imitation of the fight remains, of course, a specificity of oral or dramatic performances. Along this line, a few basic principles can guide us in order to define the prototypical ingredients that can be combined in order to dramatize a shift from one space-time frame to another. For example, as a minimal requirement, we can postulate that past events should not be verbalized using past perfect or present perfect tenses, but rather with simple past or simple present, so they can refer to important actions unfolding in the *actuality* of

the time frame of the character. Secondly, the feeling of a space-time shift would increase dramatically if events are singular instead of iterative, and include some kind of embodiment in a character's experience. Ideally, events must belong to a scene, with some spatial descriptions and direct dialogues. Most importantly, the reader must have the feeling that the events told are leading to some future developments, including multiple virtualities. We can notice that these elements are similar to the basic ingredients that we need for building a prototypical definition of narrativity.[13] So we could simply come to the conclusion that dramatized analepses in verbal narratives must, as a minimal attribute, appear as *embedded narratives,*[14] even if they don't necessarily require the explicit description of an intradiegetic narrator.

A further step would be to consider the possibility of analyzing fading effects in literary narratives, quite similar to those we find in movies or in comics, where the transition from one space-time to another is progressive, using the ephemeral permanence of the "voice" of the teller, combined with the visual enactment of the scene (see, for example, the first three panels in figure 2). This technique of "enacted recounting" has become a convention in filmmaking probably because the voice-over "helps to situate temporally and to measure analepsis" (Jost and Gaudreault 108, m.t.). But progressive transitions can also have a "mimetic" function, in the sense that they imitate the way verbal narratives induce in the audience a progressive immersion into the storyworld, the discourse seeming to slowly fade away, reaching a point where the audience almost "forgets" the verbal nature of the narrative and has the illusion that "no one speaks here, the events seem to narrate themselves" (Benveniste 241, m.t.). Based on our strict definition of dramatized analepsis, we can show that progressive transitions can be observed in many verbal narratives, especially when a story is embedded in a conversation. Short novels by Guy de Maupassant provide many examples of these transitions leading to various degrees of immersion. One striking example is given in the story *The Signal,* where Madame de Grangerie tells a friend, Madame de Rennedon, a dramatic event that recently happened to her.

In the first mention of the event, the protagonist describes the consequences of the event on her actual emotional state. At this stage, she is using the simple present tense to refer to the discursive interaction and the present perfect tense to refer to the past, which indicates clearly that the story is still firmly anchored in the deictic center of the teller:

> Then, when the maid had left the room, Madame de Rennedon went on: "Well, tell me what it is."
>
> Madame de Grangerie began to cry, shedding those pretty, bright tears which make woman more charming, and she stammered without wiping her eyes, so as not to make them red: "Oh! my dear, what has happened to me is abominable, abominable. I have not slept all night, not a minute; do you hear, not a minute. Here, just feel my heart, how it is beating." (128)[15]

At this point, despite the mention of something "abominable" that "has happened," it is very unlikely that any reader would have the feeling that there is a dramatized analepsis of any kind. The indirect reference to a mysterious past functions only

as a teaser. On the first level, the authorial narrator remains hidden, helping us to get immersed into the actuality of the interaction, which is told chronologically as a sequence of events leading to an unpredictable future. On a second level, the immersion into the "abominable" event evoked in the dialogue is impossible, because the virtual narrator only produces evaluative statements in a speech saturated with deictic shifters referring to the actuality of the dialogue. So, at this stage, the reader may only experience a "speech-imagery" of the narrative to come, while "enactment-imagery" in this embedded story is still impossible. Later, the teller begins a longer monologue, introducing many elements helping the narratee (and the authorial audience) to build a new space-time frame.

> It happened to me yesterday during the day . . . at about four o'clock . . . or half-past four. I don't know exactly. You know well my apartments, you know that my little drawing-room, the one where I always sit, looks onto the Rue Saint-Lazare, at the first floor; and that I have a mania for sitting at the window to look at the people passing. The neighborhood of the railway station is very gay; so full of motion and lively. . . . Well, that is just what I like! So, yesterday, I was sitting in the low chair which I have placed in my window recess; the window was open and I was not thinking of anything; I was breathing the fresh air. You remember how fine it was yesterday! (128–29)

Now, we have the definition of a specific moment that took place the day before, a detailed description of the weather, of the situation of the protagonist, and of the animation of the street. Thus, the reader is pushed in a frame distinct from the discursive interaction and is invited to visualize the scene. But at this stage, the embedded narrative is still blended with digressions, deictic shifters, and oral expressions, so it is very difficult to forget completely the discursive interaction. In other words, we see a tension between two different time frames: a "speech-imagery" of the ongoing conversation (that produces a POP effect) and a "description-imagery" referring to the object of the conversation (that favors a mild PUSH effect). Nevertheless, after the context has been built, a new threshold is crossed with the mention of a singular event that captured the attention of the protagonist:

> Suddenly, at the other side of the street, I remark that there is also a woman at the window, a woman in red; I was in mauve, you know, my pretty mauve costume. I did not know the woman, a new lodger, who had been there for a month, and as it rains for a month, I had not yet seen her, but I saw immediately that she was a bad girl. At first I was very much shocked and disgusted that she should be at the window like I was; and then, by degrees, it amused me to examine her. She was resting her elbows on the window ledge, and looking at the men, and the men looked at her also, all or nearly all. One might have said that they were apprised beforehand by some means as they got near the house, which they scented as dogs scent game, for they suddenly raised their heads, and exchanged a swift look with her, a freemason's look. Hers said: "Will you?" (129–30)

At this stage, deictic elements have receded, even if some remain ("you know," "it rains"), but we have a more precise account of a series of events happening one after the other. We can also observe the salient use of a present tense now referring to the actuality of the story told ("I *remark* that there *is* also a woman at the window"). In this case, the author imitates a classical figure used in conversational narratives in order to dramatize the events told, just like Captain Haddock when he pretends that "we are in 1698." Soon after, the French version of the dialogue switches for the first time to a "passé simple," which is a way, as Benveniste has shown, to accentuate the autonomy of the story from the discursive interaction: "Je *m'aperçus* tout de suite que c'était une vilaine fille. D'abord je *fus* très dégoûtée et très choquée" (130, my emphasis). This effect is specific to French, because a narrator can choose to tell the main actions of a story using the "passé simple" or the "passé composé," the latter not limited to the expression of things accomplished. When a story is told with the "passé composé," the narrator signals the existence of a stronger link between past and present, thus diminishing for the audience the possibility of forgetting the discursive interaction.[16]

Also, we can notice that the narrator focalizes the story through the inner perspective of the character, referring to her thoughts and her visual experience of the scene. The focalization culminates with the direct speech: "Will you?" that corresponds to the way the protagonist is mentally interpreting the behavior of her neighbor. No doubt that, at this stage, the immersion in the storyworld has dramatically increased, reaching the point of "enactment-imagery." Even if some traces of the discursive interaction remain in the background, the main deictic center has now shifted a day prior.

In order to enrich the formalist typology of time distortions, my main goal was to describe how transitions from one space-time to another can be dramatized in verbal narratives, but we can also question the function of such progressive transitions: why did Maupassant not simply choose to switch abruptly from the context of the teller to the context of the adventure she tells, using the same impersonal style in both levels of narration? The naturalist aesthetic may have encouraged him to achieve a "reality effect"[17] by imitating the oral nature of the performance of the teller, which involves the presence of deictic elements, frequent addresses to the narratee, and the ephemeral use of *passé composé* and simple present. But this fading can also be related to an ethical effect if we consider that progressive transitions highlight the distance between the implied author and the embedded narrator, and therefore favor a distant apprehension of the social values expressed by the character.

In this case, the embedded story tells how Madame de Grangerie, a married aristocrat, slept with a stranger, after imitating the gesture of a prostitute that she saw across the street. In her story, she pretends that her gesture was just an imitation game and that it was not really meant to invite a passerby to come up to her room. Yet a man in the street, described as "a tall, fair, very good-looking fellow" (133), reacts to the gesture by visiting her. He insists to fulfill the "transaction" despite the protestations of the Baroness. In her version, she says that she is pushed to sleep with her "customer" only because she was afraid that he might stay until the return of her husband.

> Just then the clock strikes five, and Raoul comes home every day at half past! Suppose he were to come home before the other had gone, just fancy what would have happened! Then . . . then . . . I completely lost my head . . . altogether. . . . I thought . . . I thought . . . that . . . that . . . the best thing would be . . . to get rid . . . of . . . of this man . . . as quickly as possible. . . . The sooner it was over . . . you understand . . . and . . . and there . . . as it must be done . . . and I was obliged, my dear . . . he would not have gone away without it. . . . Well I . . . I locked the drawing-room door. . . . There! (135)

It is interesting to note that this part of the story is again saturated with deictics and with oral markers (hesitations, unfinished sentences, etc.) that have a POP effect by focusing attention once more on the discursive interaction situated in the first degree narrative. We can remark also a use of the tenses symmetrical to the fade-in sequence: in the original version, the narrator switches from the simple past to a simple present ("et voilà la pendule qui se *met* à sonner cinq heure"), and then to a series of *passé composé:* "j'*ai perdu* la tête," "j'*ai pensé,*" "j'*ai mis* le verrou" (135, my emphasis). While this sequence of events could be the climax of the story, it actually corresponds to some kind of fade-out sequence. Here, the decency of this ellipsis is supposed to express shame and remorse. She pretends that she acted that way only because she was trying to save her reputation, and not because she was tempted by this extramarital experience. But if we refer to the values professed by the writer, this version appears highly unreliable. Her guiltiness also appears hypocritical through a series of indirect clues (for example the way she describes the "good-looking fellow") and because it is shown that Madame de Grangerie mostly fears the consequences of her act—she is afraid that her "client" might come back for another transaction—while, even if she cannot admit it openly, she has enjoyed her transgression. Thus, at the end of the story, the pragmatic advices and the cynical comments given by Madame de Rennedon—who remained virtually present all along through deictic shifters addressed to her—resonate as a trace of the irony of an implied author:

> "There is one thing that worries me very much . . . very much indeed. . . . He left me two twenty franc pieces on the mantelpiece." "Two twenty franc pieces?" "Yes." "No more?" "No." "That is very little. It would have humiliated me. Well?" "Well! What am I to do with that money?"
>
> The little Marchioness hesitated for a few seconds, and then she replied in a serious voice:
>
> "My dear . . . you must make . . . you must make your husband a little present with it. . . . That will be only fair!" (137)

Conclusion

I have distinguished two different ways to manipulate the chronology of the story, linked to two different figures, and leading to variable functions in narrative interpretation.

1. *Undramatized analepsis* corresponds to information concerning the past of the story conveyed through indirect hints or allusive discourse of the characters, at the exclusion of dramatized analepsis as described below. In visual narratives, undramatized analepsis can take the form of a verbally "recounted past," but we can also find visual clues, like in the opening scene of *Rear Window* (Hitchcock), where a traveling shot of a leg in plaster with a message on it, and of a series of photographs on a desk, helps us to understand the background story of the protagonist. While undramatized analepses can play a fundamental role for narrative interpretation, they don't produce an immersion into the past, and consequently, the storyworld is perceived by the audience as if it was following the natural order of chronology, even when the interpreter reconstructs mentally an event that will never be "shown on the screen," like in *Le Passé* by Asghar Farhadi. In verbal narratives, any isolated evocation of the past using past perfect or present perfect tenses can be considered an undramatized analepsis.

2. *Dramatized analepsis* corresponds to flashbacks in visual narratives (comics or movies), but the concept can be widened to verbal media if we consider that the reader can experience, more or less objectively, a shift from one space-time frame to another. Dramatized analepsis involves some kind of *enactment* of the past that alters the linear unfolding of the fabula. In visual narratives, enactment minimally requires the showing of the new space-time frame. In verbal narratives, enactment is based on an embedded discourse involving some prototypical ingredients of narrativity. This reorganization of the chronological order of the narration can be related to an operation of a discrete authorial narrator, or to the telling act of a character staged by the first-degree narrative. The transition from one space-time to another can be immediate or gradual, but it always involves some kind of immersion into the storyworld situated in the past. A fading effect is realized when the act of telling is staged in the beginning of the sequence, for example by using a *voiceover* or a *recitative* in graphic narratives, but also by deictic or oral markers, digressions, and subjective or expressive modalities associated with the teller in the context of a verbal interaction. The shift is completed when references to the discursive act recede and the audience gets immersed in a new storyworld where a storyline appears as more or less autonomous from the original situation.

In movies, a long monologue of a character whose discourse possesses a high degree of narrativity could produce a *mild* example of a verbal dramatized analepsis, but the image showing the narrator prevents us from completely forgetting the context of the narrative act.[18] It is possible to have a chronological narration of a story using the alternation of recounting (undramatized analepsis) and enactment (dramatized analepsis), just as in the fight between Chevalier de Hadoque and Rackham le Rouge. A similar effect can achieved in verbal narratives: in *Manon Lescaut,* in the middle of the novel, the narration comes back briefly to the description of the interac-

tion between Des Grieux and Renoncour, before the former tells the end of his tragic romance.

This redefinition of time distortions aims to show that intermedial analysis can help us renew our understanding of narrative concepts, not only by adapting the tools developed for the analysis of literary narratives to their visual counterparts, but also, in return, by using this detour to rethink some fundamental narratological concepts. My aim was not to claim that there are no differences between media. Indeed, I agree with Brian Henderson when he claims that "film's multi-channelled textuality raises durational problems, and opportunities, not found in literature. Image, dialogue, voice-over, music, sound effects, and written materials may contribute, complementarily or redundantly, to a single duration; or they may create multiple, simultaneous, or contradictory temporalities" (9). But, as well as Werner Wolf, I am convinced that an "intermedial approach can [. . .] help to avoid one-sided generalizations which could be observed in previous mono-medial research, be it focused exclusively on verbal texts (as has been the case in literary studies) or on the visual arts (as has been the practice of most scholars of art)" (193). I have tried to show that a combination of theories dealing with embodied cognition, and linked with precise linguistic tools, offers new perspectives for further analysis of dramatized time distortions and, more generally, of immersion and enactment in verbal narratives. We need a more precise definition of *time shifters* in order to describe transitions from one space-time to another and to evaluate their role for narrative interpretation.

Endnotes

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1. There is a similar question about flashforward and prolepsis, but the two temporal shifts don't work entirely the same way and my focus in this paper is only on shifts to the past.
2. All images are published with the written authorization from MOULINSART. Graphics from the work of Hergé are protected by copyright and may not be used without prior written authorization from MOULINSART (contact: cecile.camberlin@moulinsart.be).
3. M.t. indicates that I am the translator.
4. In comics terminology, a "recitative" corresponds to a text associated with a narrator usually situated outside the panel. It contrasts with texts, usually found in bubbles, referring to dialogues or thoughts, or onomatopoetic effects (Groensteen and Miller 88–89). It is closely related to the use of "voiceover" in movies.
5. By immersion, following the definition given by Alison Griffiths, I mean "the sense of being present in a scene, the cognitive dissonance that comes from feeling like you're elsewhere while knowing that you haven't moved and forgetting for a moment about the mediating effects of the technology" (4).
6. It is a form of primary internal ocularization in the terminology of Jost.
7. For a deeper analysis of the textual complexity of this sequence, see Baetens (35–57).
8. On this concept, see Duchan, Bruder, and Hewitt.

9. For a more detailed survey of the concept of narrative sequence and its relation to narrative dynamics, see Pier ("Narrative Configurations"), Baroni and Revaz (*Narrative Sequence*), and Baroni (*La tension narrative*).
10. If we consider the story of the fight between Haddock and his imaginary enemies—a fight that might become harmful for him or for Tintin, when the latter is confused with an antagonist—we could even consider that we have two stories in parallel, Hergé using an avatar of a cross-cutting editing. Nevertheless, there are differences with classical cross-cutting, because normally, the two actions should share the same temporality instead of *imitating* each other.
11. For a more precise linguistic critic of the analysis of time by Genette, see O'Kelly (71–76).
12. For linguistic origin of the "Deictic Shift Theory," see Karl Bühler's concept of "deixis am phantasma."
13. See for example Monika Fludernik's definition of narrativity and its relation to experientiality.
14. Note that this condition of "high narrativity" makes my use of the term "embedded narrative" much more restricted than the way Ryan uses it to describe the connection between logical complexity and tellability (1991).
15. This translation of "Le Signe" is based on the web edition by eBooks@Adelaide; nevertheless, several elements have been revised on the basis of the French version published by Gallimard in the "folio classique" edition. All references are given according to the French edition.
16. We often find "passé simple" in dialogues of novels until the middle of the nineteenth century, because authors followed a rule popularized by grammars imposing that this tense should be used if the speech refers to an event that happened more than twenty-four hours ago. In practice, the use of "passé simple" in oral narratives receded after the end of the seventeenth century, and almost completely disappeared in the middle of the nineteenth century. Since the short story by Maupassant was published in 1886, we can consider this use of "passé simple" as unnatural, also because the story happened less than twenty-four hours before. In this case, the author seems to sacrifice realism in favor of making his story more immersive.
17. See Barthes.
18. These monologues are more frequent in drama, since the media has limited possibilities for representing the past. We find examples in *Antigone* (death of Hæmon) and in *Œdipus the King* (mutilation of Œdipus) by Sophocles, as well as in *Phèdre* by Racine, with the narration by Theramene.

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