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**A Journey
into Ford
Madox Ford's
*Parade's End***

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1. INTRODUCTION:

According to Virginia Woolf, the early part of the twentieth century was a period of breaking, falling, crashing and destruction, as she observed: "On or about December 1910 human character changed". Indeed, between 1900 and 1940 there were many revolutionary developments in science and art. In 1900, Sigmund Freud published his *The Interpretation of Dreams*, based on the concept of unconscious processes and childhood psychological experiences. In addition, in 1905, Albert Einstein presented his theory of relativity stating that time and space are not absolute and distinct entities but are relative to motion. In 1910, José Ortega y Gasset, a Spanish philosopher, introduced the idea of perspectivism, according to which there are as many spaces and realities as there are points of view. Moreover, three major philosophical developments of that period, Bergsonism, William James' pragmatism and Martin Heidegger's phenomenology, focused on how human consciousness experiences the world. In the arts, in 1911 Wassily Kandinsky painted abstract objects, while in 1908, Arnold Schoenberg composed music with no tonal centre (Kern 2011, 1-75-81).

These artistic and cultural innovations were revolutionary in providing new ways of depicting people's personal experiences, changes, affections, faith and creativity. Ultimately, the modernist world witnessed the breakdown of a shared sense of values and meaning and developed a new way of interpreting the world. Novels were compelled to find new ways of expression, which can be gathered together under the label of Modernism (Kern 2011, 1-3-202).

In Modernism, human existence is in constant struggle with the fundamental elsewhere of consciousness and moves away from its lost past towards an uncertain future, always trying to escape the moral responsibility of defining itself. Therefore, in the modernist period, the action in literature moves inside the mind (Kern 2011, 24-92). As Gertrude Stein pointed out in 1934: "I had to find out what it was inside anyone ... not by what they said not by what they did not by how much or how little they resembled any other one but I had to find it out by the intensity of movement that there was inside in any one of them" (Stein qtd. in Kern 2011, 92).

Modernist fiction is concerned with the conscious, subconscious and unconscious workings of the human mind, therefore it almost entirely dissolves the external objective events that make up the plot to give space to introspection, psychological analysis, and *reverie*. Modernist writers recreated the way characters process experiences, memories and

associations. They wanted to capture the outer world through individual psyches, and so they focused on the unfolding of the fragmentary impressions external events make on their characters' minds (Kern 2011, 3-83-87).

Specifically, Modernists rejected strong plots (65) and explored revealing moments like the memory of a childhood experience, epiphanies and other revelatory occurrences. In 1852, Gustave Flaubert claimed his intention was to resist strong plots and write a novel about nothing, sustained only by the force of his style. André Gide also wanted to avoid the artificiality of a plot, desiring to create a novel made up of unnecessary and ineffectual characters and action (Kern 2011, 55-66). Moreover, Henry James rejected the primacy of action over character: "What is character but the determination of incident? What is incident but the illustration of character?" (James qtd. in Kern 2011, 46).

Thus, modernist narratives make small events big and big events small, as modernist epiphanies centre on trivial events that have enormous emotional impact on the person experiencing them. They take their importance from the personal associations of the characters rather than from their real significance for the plot (Kern 2011, 49). As Virginia Woolf pointed out: "let us not take for granted that life exists more fully in what is commonly thought big than in what is commonly small" (Woolf qtd. in Kern 2011, 51).

From a narratological point of view, modernist novels have no real beginnings; they plunge the readers directly into the stream of life experience, while their endings are usually open and ambiguous. Moreover, modernist narratives avoid any chronological ordering of their material and the use of an omniscient, reliable and intrusive narrator. Instead, they use a single or multiple, limited and fallible point(s) of view, and develop a range of voices, making modernist works characterized by a polyphony of narrators. They treat time in a fluid and complex way through the use of cross-references backwards and forwards across the chronological time of the action, representing time in a discontinuous way (Kern 2011, 3-179).

Ford Madox Ford's works are fundamental in both the evolution and theoretical development of the new novel, as they laid the groundwork for the shift from the old conventional novel to the new modernist one (Calderaro 1993, 12) He was a writer-theorist and his voice represents the transition "from the nineteenth century and its certainties to the twentieth and its uncertainties" (Calderaro 1993, 13). His role as a theorist was decisive in the dismantling of old narrative structures and the construction of new canons that allowed Modernists to express the crises of their world. In fact, Ford had looked for a new form to

represent the crisis of his own time. He forged a novel in which the fragmented world is presented through a series of impressions of life, and events from different points of view. He developed innovative ways of effacing himself from his narrative in order to render the mental process of his characters (Calderaro 1993, 12-13-15).

The Good Soldier (1915) is considered Ford's masterpiece and an example of modernist literature. It is a great modern novel, and stands on the edge of Ford's new wave of Modernism. With this novel, Ford broke with the convention of narrative. In fact, Ford does not even provide a narrative, as it is the main character who produces the novel word by word. The novel features one of Modernism's best examples of an unreliable narrator, while it portrays the sexual hypocrisy of Edwardian society and embodies Ford's narratological meditation. On the other hand, *Parade's End*, the tetralogy he wrote almost a decade later, offers an even more compelling compendium of Ford's modernist features. Both the narrative style and the narrative content summarise Ford's novelistic experimentations and build a synthesis and a bridge between the old narrative conventions and the new, modernist ones.

The purpose of this study, therefore, is to analyse *Parade's End's* innovative modes of narration, while highlighting its peculiarities and innovative aspects regarding the old narrative conventions, and, at the same time, the modernist innovations it embodies. I use Genette's categories to explore the technical devices and kinds of narration and narrator Ford employs in his work, while I focus on the strict relationship between his narrative style and his content. Moreover, I pay attention to the contradictory aspects of *Parade's End's* narration that make it such compelling reading. The great interest of the tetralogy is partly due to its double nature, as Ford opens up to revolutionary innovations while still being bound to some naturalistic conventions. Most of the space here is devoted to the analysis of these contrastive narrative modes.

The study emphasises Ford's master role as a psychologist, an observer of human nature, while paying attention to his ways of representing human consciousness and its wandering. The thesis explores the way Ford depicts men coming to terms with World War I and its devastating impact on the single consciousnesses, the shared certainties and the social conventions of a dissolving era. I concentrate on the psychological portrait Ford paints of his characters at moments of historical and personal crises and on how he gives voice to their unconscious longings and shattered psyches. Space is given to highlight how the author portrays the ontological human search for meaning and self-awareness. Moreover, the study

seeks to explore how Ford deals with the challenge of presenting the characters' trauma in the war's aftermath and how they confront the new set of values born from the ashes of the old world. Attention is given to the way Ford orchestrates a multiplicity of human responses and perspectives to a shattering world, through his narrative innovations and experimentation.

The thesis analyses the technical aspects of the four novels, for instance, their representation of spatial and temporal dimensions, concentrating specifically on their very modernist treatment of time. It employs Bakhtin's *chronotope* to depict the human image and human development the tetralogy represents, while it focuses on the innovative devices Ford theorized and used for his personal treatment of narrative time. I focus on Ford's employment of time-shift to shatter the chronology of the narration while giving space and relevance to the remembrances of the characters. The study underlines the role of characters' memories and how the narrative follows their internal wanderings and flashbacks.

I also consider some idiosyncratic aspects of *Parade's End* - its polyphony and dialogism - which make it a rather cubist and modern narration. I underline how Ford built his own work as a polyphonic and dialogic composition while representing the intrinsic dialogism of human thought. Through Bakhtin's theories I explore the multiplicity of voices that compose the narration and fragment reality, making it impossible to reach an objective and final truth regarding the events. The thesis discusses the polyphony of the composition and the dialogic human nature of the characters' open-ended dialogue with themselves and with each other. Finally, the study suggests that Ford, with *Parade's End*, was able to go beyond the historical dimension of representation to portray the complexity of the human condition.

2. PARADE'S END:

Parade's End (written between 1924-28) is a compelling and innovative portrait of the human condition at the threshold of one of the greatest cataclysms of modern history: World War I. It depicts in a modernist and innovative way for its time, without any reticence, some of the most sensitive concerns of the twentieth century. These are the cruelty and foolishness of the war, the threshold of modernity, the end of an old system collapsing under the cataclysm of the war. The plot revolves around a love triangle between a young established English aristocrat, Christopher Tietjens, his unfaithful wife, Sylvia, and the young suffragette, Valentine Wannop.

Some Do Not (1924), the first novel of the tetralogy, introduces the characters and the personal life of the protagonist, Christopher. He is stuck in an unhappy marriage with an unfaithful woman, Sylvia, whom he married because she was pregnant with his child. She is in love with him, but she cannot bear his self-sufficiency and disinterest, and, thus, throws herself into many unfulfilling extra-conjugal affairs in her attempts to catch his attention. However, a divorce seems impossible because of Christopher's moral scruples and because she is a Catholic. This, of course, leads to a lot of pain, misunderstandings and personal revenge that make him miserable and her dissatisfied. However, Christopher meets a young suffragette, Valentine Wannop, the daughter of one of his father's dearest friends, with whom he falls in love, and his love is reciprocated. The novel focuses also on the gradual social breakdown of Tietjens. In fact, rumours about his interest in Valentine and his probable illegitimate affair with her, cause Tietjens to become progressively alienated from society. He is misunderstood and ostracized by his peers, who belong to a transitional world of insecure and neurotic men. Both Christopher and Valentine have to go through the experience of social disillusionment and awakening before being ready to commit to each other. The world which they believed in has been shattered and they can now see its true face. The collapse of their society and the experience of the war in the novel represent the initial rites and trials they have to cope with in order to be ready for a new stage in their lives. However, they are not able to fully commit to each other. They understand they are "the sort that ...do not" (Ford 2013, 251), and are strangers in the kind of erotic and lustful society that surrounds them. The title of the novel comes from the end of the novel when they decide not to make love like everybody else does, because they are not the sort of people that do that.

No More Parades (1925), like *Some Do Not*, takes its theme from the title: the end of the parades. It presents the hero back in the war in France, and it portrays his personal development. The war works for Christopher Tietjens like a metaphorical voyage from indecision to maturity and freedom from the dead, conventional values by which he lived. The novel focuses on the war and on a series of demanding trials Christopher needs to deal with. In the novel, Tietjens is the commander of a base camp and has to face the many difficulties and humiliations provoked by Sylvia, who has followed him to the front. In this novel, Sylvia's private war merges with the public one. Christopher's worst trial is the death of O' Nine Morgan, a Welsh man in his company to whom he refused permission to leave. The violent and bloody death of O' Nine Morgan, as well as the sense of guilt for being responsible for it, haunts Christopher for the rest of the novel. At the same time, he is haunted by the presence of Sylvia and his feelings for Valentine, with whom he is emotionally involved. Moreover, he becomes involved in a major scandal through Sylvia that will force his superior and godfather, General Campion, to send him back to the front line, his last and hardest trial. War is described in all its foolishness and cruelty, and represents the end of the parades, the end of military ceremonies and of the values they represent. The age of glory and lofty human values and ideals is gone forever. The foolishness and dejection of war have destroyed the peaceful and idyllic world of the English countryside in which *Some Do Not* is set, while also destroying the romantic ideals of Tietjens. However, Tietjens is able to remain self-conscious and self-aware, master of his own mind and to keep his integrity.

A Man Could Stand Up (1926), like *No More Parades*, alternates between world and private conflicts. It portrays Tietjens' rebirth from the trials of war. In this novel, Tietjens is able to stand up and become a new man. The first part of the novel takes place during Armistice Day and revolves around Valentine learning that Christopher is safely back from the war, and her finally deciding to commit herself to him. She is scared of her sexual nature but, at the same time, she understands that the only thing that keeps them apart is middle class morality, a charade which she no longer believes in nor respects. She decides to give herself fully to him, having lost faith in the old symbols of authority. The novel also moves back to portray Christopher during a day in the war. It shows his thoughts and heroic actions. The main motif of this novel, in fact, is represented by the metaphor of standing up on a hill rising from the mud of the war and the ashes of the old world. At the end of the novel, Christopher realizes he really wants to commit to and live with Valentine. Thus, the two lovers are finally

ready to be together, and decide to spend Armistice Day's night in each other's arms. However, the couple has to face other trials before being able to stay together, as they are joined by other officials and by Sylvia, who is still trying to manipulate Tietjens, and announces she has cancer. Nevertheless, this third novel ends with the couple starting their new life together in the post-war period.

In *The Last Post* (1928), the last novel in the tetralogy, a major narrative change occurs as Christopher remains in the background and does not appear in the action until the very end. The attention of the novel is centred on the thoughts of the other characters, in particular, of Mark Tietjens, Christopher's brother, who, after the armistice, has a major stroke and is now confined to a life of total silence. This novel focuses on the personal sphere of the characters and reviews their thoughts as they ruminate on what previously happened. The characters' thoughts constitute the major plot of this last novel. It begins with Mark's withdrawal from the world. He is discontented because he wanted Britain to occupy Germany and his brother to occupy the family estate, Groby, and not leave it to Sylvia. Mark refuses to make peace with the new order, with the post-war world, and goes through a spiritual illness and a metaphorical withdrawal from life. Christopher, on the other hand, has reconstructed himself as a post-war modern man and has come to terms with his time by rejecting his old beliefs and social responsibilities. He has gone to live with his brother, his brother's mistress and Valentine in a country cottage. Thus, he is now openly living with Valentine, who bears him a child, and he is earning his own living as a dealer in old furniture. In fact, he has renounced both his inheritance and his heritage. However, he is still pursued by Sylvia, who is bitter with revenge and behaves melodramatically. She spies on him and Valentine and sends her son, young Mark, to the cottage, while she is considering marrying General Campion for personal revenge and political convenience. As a motif of extreme provocation, she cuts down the Great Groby Tree, the symbol of the family's estate and of memories of the past and old traditions, and Christopher's most important legacy. However, her world is now waning and she finally admits that all the time she spent tormenting Christopher was wasted and fruitless. At the end of the novel, she finally surrenders to the new coming life and steps back from Christopher's life to respect Valentine's pregnancy and the life of her unborn child. The novel concludes with the hope expressed by the words of the dying Mark that Christopher will be able, even if devastated by the force of war, to take care of his new growing family.

Christopher Tietjens is the main character in the tetralogy. He is mainly inspired by Arthur Marwood, a friend of the author, Ford Madox Ford. However, Tietjens' marital problems, the core of the tetralogy, are suggested by the story of a poor fellow living in the south of France who committed suicide because of his unhappy marriage. Christopher Tietjens is the last surviving Tory in England, a sort of Anglican Saint, whose politics and values disappeared at the end of nineteenth century. Christopher is a Christ-like figure, from his name, with a mania for self-sacrifice through his refusal to accept his own money and Groby, his family's estate, and the calumnies that press upon him. He is burdened with the Englishman's sense of duty, filled with the idea that men should repress any display of emotion. He sums this up when he states, "I stand for monogamy and chastity. And for no talking about it. Of course, if a man who's a man wants to have a woman, he has her. And again, no talking about it" (Ford 2013, 16). He is an example of the taciturn Victorian gentleman. He is intelligent, stolid, stoic, clumsy, and principled, the last specimen of the English Tory. He is characterized by a sort of Tory paternalism toward women as he is bound to a past and values that no longer exist and are crumbling under his own eyes.

Sylvia, his wife, is one of the most remarkable and complex women portrayed in the twentieth century. She is cruel and unfaithful, but her actions appear justified and filled with human frailty. The total lack of emotional response and attention from Tietjens, as well as her unsatisfied sexual impulses, lead to her cruel and self-destructive behaviour.

To balance the character of Sylvia, the *femme fatale*, the character of Valentine Wannop appears as her opposite. The daughter of a professor and a famous writer, Valentine is soaked in classical culture and lofty ideals but is, at the same time, a very modern feminist. She is, in fact, an active suffragette and a pacifist. Paradoxically, the development of her character follows the opposite pattern to that of Sylvia. While one has to face and gain control over her sexual desires, the other has to embrace them to finally become a woman. Like Tietjens, throughout the tetralogy, she goes through the process of disillusionment necessary for her to become a woman and to fully embrace her sexuality. Like him, she is characterized by reticence and indecisiveness, which prevent her from living her passion for him and conquering her own happiness.

Vincent Macmaster, Christopher's oldest and dearest friend, unlike Christopher, is economically and socially ambitious. He yearns for the status and privileges Christopher has by virtue of his upper-class birth and ancestral fortune and he exploits his friend to get the

social elevation he longs for. Indeed, for him, the English gentleman is based entirely on appearance, not on intrinsic principles and values. To achieve his ends, he constantly schemes, and often acts unscrupulously. While Christopher keeps faith in lofty values and ideals and goes through, as a consequence, social downfall, Macmaster sells the best part of himself to become a successful man and socially influential.

General Lord Edward Campion, Christopher's godfather, represents the dullness and mediocrity of Christopher's society. In spite of his many efforts and his real affection for Christopher, he is not able to understand the reasons for Christopher's actions and behaviour and frequently misjudges and obstructs him. Though very capable in military matters, he is a terrible judge of human nature, as he admires Sylvia and considers Christopher an unfaithful and ungrateful husband.

Mrs. Wannop, Valentine's mother, on the other hand, turned to writing famous and important novels to economically support her family after the death of her academic husband. She holds Christopher in high esteem and continuously shows her gratitude for the financial help Christopher's father gave them after the death of her husband. She is one of the few characters that understands Christopher's delicate situation, inner struggles and unhappiness.

Sir Mark Tietjens, Christopher's older brother, is like the double of Christopher's himself. Despite the two being virtual strangers, they are really close due to their natural inclinations and values. They are both bound to a past and traditions that do not exist any more and respect a code of honour and sense of duty that the people around them do not understand. Mark is one of the few that can understand and support his brother, as he decides to believe in Christopher and have faith in him. He is the only one in Christopher's social *milieu* who understands the real character of Sylvia and who encouraged him to be happy with Valentine, also offering him financial support. At the end of the tetralogy, he is not able, unlike his brother, to come to terms with the new post-war world and he voluntarily withdraws from life and society. His death at the end of the tetralogy symbolises the death of Mark's world and the values he stands for.

Finally, *Parade's End* can be read as a modernist *Bildungsroman*, as it depicts the rise of the modern man from the ashes of the old world. The main motif in the tetralogy is the end of the parades, the end of an old system of values and beliefs doomed to crumble under the advance of modernity. It depicts men at the threshold of great historical changes and important

personal decisions. The four novels of the tetralogy focus particularly on the personal growth of the protagonist and the two women by his side.

3. MODE OF NARRATION:

Ford Madox Ford's main aim was "to make you see" (Ford qtd. in Boccolini and Fortunati 1994, 49), he wanted to show, to render the queer effects of real life in literature, rather than tell or report an exact chronicle (MacShane 1964, 67). In this sense, he promoted *mimésis* over *diégésis*. *Mimésis* consists of imitating reality or giving the illusion of it, and *diégésis* refers to narrating it through the clear consciousness of a narrative voice. Of course, real and complete *mimésis* is impossible in literature as even the most realistic and natural narration is only a narration, a *diégésis*. So, technically speaking, we can talk only of different levels of *diégésis* (Genette 1972, 75).

However, according to Ford, for *diégésis* to be successful, the readers must forget that the author exists, and be captivated by the vivid portrait of human life the author has created for them (Ford 1964, 48). Ford's narrator avoids any kind of comment or moral judgment of the actions and intentions of his characters (MacShane 1964, 16). He gives a sense of the baffling complexity of the modern world through the words and actions of his characters rather than by describing or reporting them *verbatim*.

However, Ford is not at all a realist author as his research for *mimésis* develops within a rich and animated presentation of impressions, perspectives and fragmented and overlapping experiences. He is a modernist advocate and experimenter. He chose for his works a focused kind of narration, whereby the action is filtered not through the consciousness of the narrator but through those of the characters, as his main aim is to represent the subjective and momentary impressions that cross his characters' minds (MacShane 1964, 41). Like Henry James, one of his greatest models, he could probably be ascribed to the so-called psychological realism, the faithful and consistent depiction in literature of inward human thoughts and feelings that became very popular from the late nineteenth century on.

In Ford's tetralogy *Parade's End*, the narrator only operates as a central intelligence through which all the events are filtered, and orchestrates the reader's experience of the text (Calderaro 1993, 15). Ford conceived the art of writing as real craftsmanship aimed to satisfy the readers (MacShane 1964, 56). He wanted to control their attitude towards the characters and all the impressions generated in their minds (Leer 1966, 105). The idea he wanted to convey to his audience was that they were witnessing something real, something authentic and natural (MacShane 1964, 42):

What is to be aimed at in style is something so unobtrusive and so quiet - so beautiful if possible - that the reader shall not know that he is reading, and be conscious only that he is living in the life of the book ... a book so quiet in tone, so clearly and so unobtrusively worded, that it should give the effect of a long monologue spoken by a lover at a little distance from his mistress's ear - a book about the invisible relationships between a man and a man; about the values of life; about the nature of God-the sort of book that nowadays one could read in as one used to do when one was a child, pressed against a tall window-pane for hours and hours, utterly oblivious of oneself, in the twilight. (Ford qtd. in Boccolini and Fortunati 1994, 84)

For this reason, his narrator, or rather narrative voice, must be impersonal and detached. It is like an impartial deity that listens without presenting its own opinion, commenting or making moral judgements or, even, without intruding into the lives of its own creations (MacShane 1964, 60). It is impossible to find, then, any kind of *metalepsis* in Ford's writing as he limits himself to the narrative function. He tries to avoid, when possible, the narratized speech, in which the events and the characters' words are integrated in the narration and reported like any other events by the narrative voice. He tries, instead, to give life and voice to the characters themselves by reporting extensively their mental processes and thoughts. As a narrator, he wants to hide himself and let the characters and events speak for themselves. He wants to reach the kind of aloofness that characterizes authors like Gustave Flaubert and Guy de Maupassant (MacShane 1964, 16-7-8-9).

However, he is always present at a certain level in the narration, like a director, always controlling the readers' attitude towards the text or reporting the characters' interiority (Leer 1966, 105). He never goes so far to use the interior monologue, as Joyce does. Nevertheless, he is able to go beyond the limits of free indirect speech to represent the shattered thoughts of his characters in a very modernist way. He is, in rather, characterized by a sort of dualism as he moves between both realistic and more innovative techniques to represent the subjectivity of the human consciousness.

Therefore, *Parade's End* is quite hybridised and contradictory: the narrator both uses the more traditional technical devices necessary to his *diégésis* and more innovative techniques to represent the new, modern sensibility. The narrator of *Parade's End* could be considered omniscient and heterodiegetic, that is, external to his own narration. However, he suddenly suppresses himself to give space to the multiplicity of perspectives of his own characters through which the narration is told and presented. He uses, then, an impersonal

technique to present the inside lives of his characters without making them first person narrators.

The narration is almost always a third person narration told using the past tense (Calderaro 1993, 15-6). The characters' multiple perspectives of the events of the narration are, then, rendered mostly through an extensive use of the transposed speech in both the indirect style and free indirect style. The narration often shifts from the zero-focalization of the omniscient narrator that introduces the context, places and characters of the narration, to inside the focused character. Thus, the narration is filtered, from that moment on, through the point of view of the focused character and expressed through the use of transposed speeches:

THE TWO YOUNG MEN – they were of the English public official class - sat in the perfectly appointed railway carriage. The leather straps to the windows were of virgin newness; the mirrors beneath the new luggage racks immaculate as if they had reflected very little; the bulging upholstery in its luxuriant, regulated curves was scarlet and yellow in an intricate, minute dragon pattern, the design of a geometrician in Cologne. The compartment smelt faintly, hygienically of admirable varnish; the train ran as smoothly - Tietjens remembered thinking - as British gilt-edged securities. It travelled fast; yet had it swayed or jolted over the rail joints, except at the curve before Tonbridge or over the points at Ashford where these eccentricities are expected and allowed for, Macmaster, Tietjens felt certain, would have written to the company. Perhaps he would even have written to *The Times*.

Their class administered the world, not merely the newly created Imperial Department of Statistics under Sir Reginald Ingleby. If they saw policemen misbehave, railway porters lack civility, an insufficiency of street lamps, defects in public services or in foreign countries, they saw to it, either with nonchalant Balliol voices or with letters to *The Times*, asking in regretful indignation: 'Has the British This or That come to *this*?' Or they wrote, in the serious reviews of which so many still survived, articles taking under their care, manners, the Arts, diplomacy, inter-Imperial trade, or the personal reputations of deceased statesmen and men of letters.

Macmaster, that is to say, would do all that: of himself Tietjens was not so certain. [...] (Ford 2013, 3)

This passage is at the very beginning of the first volume, hence of the entire tetralogy, and illustrates the technical strategies used by Ford to achieve his purposes as well as the heterogeneous nature of the text. It starts like a nineteenth century French realist novel, with an omniscient and heterodiegetic narrator describing the location and the situation, like in a typical narratized speech. At first the description is more general, then, it moves progressively

from the outside to the inside of the mind, by reporting in transposed speech in an indirect style the thoughts of the protagonist Christopher Tietjens. The movement to the psychological insight is emphasized by the allusion to the thinking and the remembering of Tietjens: “Tietjens remembered thinking”.

However, access to the direct perspective of the character is made progressively. At first, his thoughts are only “transposed” in indirect style by the narrative voice, as the expression “Tietjens felt certain” confirms, and, then, reported directly with the use of the free indirect speech. Allusions to the domain of thinking and remembering often anticipate at a distance the transposed speech in free indirect style, with the internal focalization of the character, whose extensive use distinguishes Ford’s work.

The entire second paragraph is in free indirect discourse. This means it is limited to expressing the logical chain of Tietjens’ thoughts without any intrusion from the narrator who has zoomed in the consciousness of his own character. This is made evident by the first line of the following paragraph. The use of the expression “of himself Tietjens was not certain” reveals that the previous perspective was Tietjens’ into which the reader had slipped without even realizing it.

The Ducheim breakfast, from the very first part of *Some Do Not*, perfectly represents the kind of focused narrative widely used in the tetralogy. Here the thoughts and impressions of Christopher about Valentine are explored and expressed directly through the use of the free indirect speech and the transposed speech in indirect style. More than that, it is Tietjens’ sensitivity and consciousness that filter the narration. In modernist literature, the character is the subject of the action of the narration to which he/she imparts the print of his/her being. During the Ducheim breakfast, both the protagonists Christopher and Valentine review their recent first meeting and the opinions they have of each other:

That was the strong, first impression! It was all very well for his surface mind to say that the girl was not by birth a tweeny maid; she was the daughter of Professor Wannop and she could jump! For Tietjens held very strongly the theory that what finally separated the classes was that the upper could lift its feet from the ground whilst common people couldn’t.

... But the strong impression remained. Miss Wannop was a tweeny maid. Say a lady’s help, by nature. She was of good family, for the Wannops were first heard of at Birdlip in Gloucestershire in the year 1417 – no doubt enriched after Agincourt. But even brilliant men of good family will now and then throw daughters who are lady helps by

nature. That was one of the queernesses of heredity ... And, though Tietjens had even got as far as to realise that Miss Wannop must be a heroine who had sacrificed her young years to her mother's gifts, and no doubt to a brother at school – for he had guessed as far as that – even then Tietjens couldn't make her out as more than a lady help. Heroines are all very well; admirable, they may even be saints; but if they let themselves get careworn in face and go shabby... Well, they must wait for the gold that shall be amply stored for them in heaven. On this earth you could hardly accept them as wives for men of your own set. Certainly you wouldn't spend your own wife's money on them. That was what it really came to. (Ford 2013, 78)

In this passage, the object represented is Tietjens' first impressions of Valentine Wannop, reported directly through Tietjens' consciousness and not filtered through the authorial voice. In lines 1-5, the readers are plunged directly into his mind. Furthermore, the expressions “for Tietjens”, “thought Tietjens had even got as far as to realise...” or “for he had guessed” or again “Tietjens couldn't make her out” mark the return of the narrator into the text to report Tietjens' thoughts through a transposed speech in indirect style.

However, this passage is exemplary of the use of focused narration as the portrait of Valentine Wannop is not painted by the author, Ford, but by the character Tietjens. The passage gives the perception of the character of Valentine filtered through the lens of Christopher's experiences, knowledge, beliefs and personal interests. His first impression of Valentine Wannop is influenced by his first, earlier meeting with her on the golf course. The memory of it naturally influences his perception of her, letting him know that she is athletic, as she can jump: “she was the daughter of Professor Wannop and she could jump!”.

Then, his social awareness, of what is proper of a class and what is not, helps him to socially place her: “On this earth you could hardly accept them as wives for men of your own set”. On the other hand, his passion for horses pushes him to make an implicit comparison between horses and human families and to talk about “heredity”: “But even brilliant men of good family will now and then throw daughters who are lady helps by nature”. Furthermore, Tietjens' interest and knowledge of history emerges from the passage as he is able to trace the origins of the fortune and greatness of the Wannop family back to Agincourt. Besides, his peculiar human introspection and intuition, which makes him a great reader of human nature, enables him to understand Valentine's story and moral heights: “And, though Tietjens had even got as far as to realise that Miss Wannop must be a heroine who had sacrificed her young

years to her mother's gifts, and no doubt to a brother at school – for he had guessed as far as that...”.

Everything is filtered through Tietjens' personality and mind's perspective. Ford does not communicate the objective knowledge he has of the events and the characters but what the characters themselves think or feel about those at a certain point in time. Many other realist writers used to communicate the thoughts and feelings of their characters, introducing them through expressions like “he thought”, “he felt certain”, “it seemed to him”, but they had never really tried to render the wandering of the waves of consciousness (Auerbach 2000, 319). Ford not only did it, but he also presented everything through their character's changing perspectives.

Throughout the tetralogy, the readers experience a formal shift from exterior to interior. From the first novel to the last one, like coming to a sort of climax, the narrator pushes deeper and deeper into the interior of the characters. The narration starts by the novel called *Some do not* with an omniscient narrator shifting from a zero focalization to a limited one. This enables Ford to report the characters' perceptions, ideas and thinking in an indirect way with the use of the more traditional narratized speech and transposed speech in indirect style.

Some Do Not (1924), the first novel of the tetralogy, is the most technically complex of the four novels. It is the most narrative, still soaked with the presence of an omniscient narrator, while, at the same, it foreshadows the shift to focused narration and the turn to the inside of the characters that is to take place in the following novels. The tetralogy, thus, gradually abandons the omniscient kind of narrative. It moves to a focused one to emphasize the individual responses to the casualties of destiny and the refracting waves of human consciousness.

No More Parades (1925), the second novel of the tetralogy, concentrates more and more on the individual response of Tietjens to the trauma of war and the raising of modernity. Technically speaking, it uses more and more extensively focused and interior narration, returning to the omniscient narrator only at the very end of the novel.

A Man Could Stand Up (1926), the third novel, by contrast, is almost entirely placed inside the consciousness of the characters. It focuses on the separate minds of Christopher and Valentine as they decide finally to reject the values which they have been raised on, to

commit themselves to each other. In this novel there are few external events, mostly represented through the perceptions and impressions of the two main characters.

In *The Last Post* (1928), the last novel of the tetralogy, Ford uses only the limited perspective of Mark Tietjens, using free indirect speech to represent his torn consciousness when facing the post world war situation. In this fourth novel, few events take place and the main focus of the narration is the individual responses of Marie-Léonie, Valentine, Sylvia and Mark Tietjens to the events. Almost the entire novel is presented as a focused narrative of one or other of these four characters, concentrating on what worries and concerns them most and fills their minds.

The modern plot lies inside the man, and it is possible to say that, in Ford, style and content correspond. Ford portrays the end of the parade, the end of the old system shattered by the pressures of the First World War, but more than anything, he represents the shattering of human identity and of the past man. The end of the parades is the beginning of the new man, placed at the centre of his own world in desperate attempt at self-analysis, at self-understanding and at standing up to face the contradictions of the modern condition.

He wants to find a new kind of happiness, more limited, personal and immanent, more selfish but at the same time free, no longer bound within the social constraints of the past. New men were looking for a new kind of self-fulfilment in the middle of the torn apart world they used to know. So, throughout the tetralogy, the readers experience a progressive crushing of the style that corresponds to the shattering of human consciousness. The modern consciousness is busy in a continuous self-analysis in the hope of finding itself again or finding an answer or solution to the baffling complexity of an elusive kind of reality.

Throughout the tetralogy, Tietjens moves from believing ardently in the values and responsibilities of Victorian society to totally breaking away from them. In *No More Parades*, he understands that these values and beliefs are only empty categories devoid of any meaning or concrete possibility of self-fulfilment for the man who still believes in them. In *A Man Could Stand Up*, he survives after having given up what he believed in, to embrace the new world. In *The Last Post*, he seems to have found peace in his private and familial dimension.

The first novel is the most narrative; the narrator is still an important presence and director of the scene. Reported speeches are more common as well as the narrator's descriptions, while there is as much normal reported speech as free indirect speech. Evidently, Ford felt the necessity to keep some traditional forms of narration, like reported speech.

However, at the same time, he tried his best to avoid *verbatim* kinds of dialogue. Apparently, it would have appeared implausible for the narrative voice to be able to remember and report the words of the characters precisely. Always aiming to convey a sense of natural and realistic narration, he also tried to avoid perfect recall and responsive dialogues (MacShane 1964, 76-7). His dialogues, then, are often made up of moments of silence, of ellipsis and of suspension dots, always trying to sound more natural and authentic, like a real picture of the stream of life:

Even when he, Tietjens, had slipped away from the party – to go to his good fortune! – Macmaster had come panting down the stairs, running after him, through guests coming up. He had said: ‘Wait . . . You’re not going . . . I want to . . .’ With a miserable and appalled glance he had looked up the stairs; Lady Macmaster might have come out too. With his black, short beard quivering and his wretched eyes turned down, he had said: ‘I wanted to explain . . . This miserable knighthood . . .’

Tietjens patted him on the shoulder, Macmaster being on the stairs above him.

‘It’s all right, old man,’ he had said – and with real affection: ‘We’ve powlered up and down enough for a little thing like that not to . . . I’m very glad . . .’

Macmaster had whispered: ‘And Valentine . . . She’s not here tonight . . .’

He had exclaimed: ‘By God! . . . If I thought . . .’ Tietjens had said: ‘It’s all right. It’s all right. She’s at another party . . . I’m going on . . .’

Macmaster had looked at him doubtfully and with misery, leaning over and clutching the clammy banisters.

‘Tell her . . .’ he said . . . ‘Good God! You may be killed . . . I beg you . . . beg you to believe . . . I will. . . Like the apple of my eye . . .’ In the swift glance that Tietjens took of his face he could see that Macmaster’s eyes were full of tears.

They both stood looking down at the stone stairs for a long time.

Then Macmaster had said: ‘Well . . .’

Tietjens had said: ‘Well . . .’ But he hadn’t been able to look at Macmaster’s eyes, though he had felt his friend’s eyes pitifully exploring his own face . . . ‘A backstairs way out of it,’ he had thought; a queer thing that you couldn’t look in the face a man you were never going to see again! (Ford 2013, 254)

The one above is classical reported speech, as the many “he had said” illustrate. However, at the same time, it is exemplary of Ford’s wish to represent the workings of the human mind and to offer the most natural portrait possible of the flow of human life. The dialogue, with its many elliptical sentences, not only represents the impossibility of modern men to communicate through language, no longer able to convey meaning, but also depicts

the more natural and vivid way men speak. It is able to catch the pauses, the silences, the emotions that compose everyday human communication, as ordinary people in everyday situations do not speak like Shakespearean characters.

However, even Ford is distant from the kind of authorial transparency he promoted in theoretical essays. Narrating events and facts objectively is, to him, less important than representing the reflections of the characters' consciousness. The narrator sometimes intrudes into the narrative to introduce the characters and direct the readers to their interior lives in quite a Victorian style:

He was a Tory- and as he disliked changing his clothes, there he sat, on the journey, already in large, brown, hugely welted and nailed golf boots, leaning forward on the edge of the cushion, his legs apart, on each knee an immense white hand- and thinking vaguely. (Ford 2013, 4)

With this little brush, the readers get to know directly from the narrator, like a nineteenth century one, that Tietjens is a Tory, maybe the last one. This defines his character and determines his inner struggles and his future destiny: his inability to change neither his clothes nor his principles, neither his values nor his beliefs. The author's comment hints at certain moral and human aspects of the character. In contrast to what Ford has affirmed, there is a narrative voice that suggests an interpretation and that comments. In the same way, the narrator's introduction of Sylvia already suggests her character and behaviour:

Her very oval, regular face had an expression of virginal lack of interest such as used to be worn by fashionable Paris courtesans a decade before that time. (Ford 2013, 25)

This brief comment already hints at Sylvia's sexuality, at her sexual appetite. She is not randomly compared to a courtesan. On the other hand, her attitude of virginal disinterest could allude to the chaste way of life she will be doomed to lead by her husband, while her natural boredom pushes her always to look for a kind of cruel fulfilment.

Moreover, traditional descriptions in narrative mood made by an omniscient narrator, following the tradition of the nineteenth century novel, are still an important presence in the tetralogy. The narrator uses them in particular in the four *incipit* of the novels to contextualize and orientate the reader, to focus on the location of the events and on the shift in action:

WHEN YOU CAME in the space was desultory, rectangular, warm after the drip of the winter night, and transfused with a brown-orange dust that was light. It was shaped like the house a child draws. Three groups of brown limbs spotted with brass took dim

highlights from shafts that came from a bucket pierced with holes, filled with incandescent coke, and covered in with a sheet of iron in the shape of a tunnel. Two men, as if hierarchically smaller, crouched on the floor beside the brazier; four, two at each end of the hut, drooped over the tables in attitudes of extreme indifference. From the eaves above the parallelogram of black that was the doorway fell intermittent drippings of collected moisture, persistent, with glasslike intervals of musical sound. The two men squatting on their heels over the brazier – they had been miners - began to talk in a low singsong of dialect, hardly audible. It went on and on, monotonously, without animation. It was as if one told the other long, long stories to which his companion manifested his comprehension or sympathy with animal grunts . . .

An immense tea-tray, august, its voice filling the black circle of the horizon, thundered to the ground. Numerous pieces of sheet-iron said, ‘Pack. Pack. Pack.’ In a minute the clay floor of the hut shook, the drums of ears were pressed inwards, solid noise showered about the universe, enormous echoes pushed these men - to the right, to the left, or down towards the tables, and crackling like that of flames among vast underwood became the settled condition of the night. Catching the light from the brazier as the head leaned over, the lips of one of the two men on the floor were incredibly red and full and went on talking and talking . . .

The two men on the floor were Welsh miners, of whom the one came from the Rhondda Valley and was unmarried; the other, from Pontardulais, had a wife who kept a laundry, he having given up going underground just before the war. The two men at the table to the right of the door were sergeants-major, the one came from Suffolk and was a time-serving man of sixteen years’ seniority as a sergeant in a line regiment. The other was Canadian of English origin. The two officers at the other end of the hut were captains, the one a young regular officer born in Scotland but educated at Oxford; the other, nearly middle-aged and heavy, came from Yorkshire, and was in a militia battalion. The one runner on the floor was filled with a passionate rage because the elder officer had refused him leave to go home and see why his wife, who had sold their laundry, had not yet received the purchase money from the buyer; the other was thinking about a cow. His girl, who worked on a mountainy farm above Caerphilly, had written to him about a queer cow: a black-and-white Holstein – surely to goodness a queer cow. The English sergeant-major was almost tearfully worried about the enforced lateness of the draft. It would be twelve midnight before they could march them off. It was not right to keep men hanging about like that. The men did not like to be kept waiting, hanging about. It made them discontented. They did not like it. He could not see why the depot quartermaster could not keep up his stock of candles for the hooded lamps. The men had no call to be kept waiting, hanging about. Soon they would have to be having some supper. Quarter would not like

that. He would grumble fair. Having to indent for suppers. Put his account out, fair, it would. Two thousand nine hundred and ninety-four suppers at a penny halfpenny. But it was not right to keep the men hanging about till midnight and no suppers. It made them discontented and them going up the line for the first time, poor devils. (Ford 2013, 259-60)

The passage is the *incipit* of *No More Parades* and starts directly *in medias res* at the front and in the middle of the war. The narrator introduces and extensively describes the environment and focuses, then, on the characters, again, on the human factor. However, the description, even if quite detailed, has little in common with those belonging to the naturalistic tradition. Ford conveys a quite impressionistic and futuristic description of the environment where evocative images like “glasslike intervals of musical sound” are placed side by side with futuristic effects that recreate the movement, the immediacy, and the sound of the war. The language is not only evocative, but also synesthetic and metaphoric, in sentences like: “An immense tea-tray, august, its voice filling the black circle of the horizon, thundered to the ground. Numerous pieces of sheet-iron said, ‘Pack. Pack. Pack.’ In a minute the clay floor of the hut shook, the drums of ears were pressed inwards, solid noise showered about the universe, enormous echoes pushed these men - - to the right, to the left, or down towards the tables, and crackling like that of flames among vast underwood became the settled condition of the night”.

This extract is not only futuristic, but also exemplary of the challenge when dealing with traumatic events in narratives. The two men are overcome by the noises and the sounds of the war that almost take on a life of their own and become real physical forces. The use of evocative figures of speech, like the personification “numerous pieces of sheet-iron said...” or the oxymoron “solid noise”, represents the inadequacy of every day words to depict trauma.

The narrative voice, then, does not limit itself to registering and reporting. It wants to render a particular effect and uses modernist stylistic innovations to do that. Moreover, at first, it only introduces the situation, the location and the characters but then gradually shifts to describe the interiority of the two men present on the scene: one is filled with “passionate rage”, the other is thinking of a cow. From then on, Ford returns gradually to represent what he is more interested in: their personal and inner lives.

The readers witness the formal shift from narrative mood to transposed speech to convey the characters' feelings and dissatisfaction: “The English sergeant-major was almost tearfully worried...”. Of course, Ford again inclines towards the use of free indirect speech,

as he wishes to represent also the consciousness of the minor characters: “Having to indent for suppers. Put his account out, fair, it would. Two thousand nine hundred and ninety-four suppers at a penny halfpenny. But it was not right to keep the men hanging about till midnight and no suppers. It made them discontented and them going up the line for the first time, poor devils”.

Parade's End, then, can be quite challenging to read as Ford works like a mediator between the realist tradition and modernist experimentation. His focus on the mind and inner lives of characters is mixed with his desire to be the most invisible narrator possible and with his longing for a transparent and natural kind of narration. However, he bends his technical skills to the representation of human consciousness. Thus, both the more traditional and more innovative technical devices are used to depict the characters' perspectives and report their voices:

And even now she had only to see the name of Drake in the paper – her mother's influence with the pompous front bencher of the Upper House, her cousin, had put Drake in the way of colonial promotions that were recorded in gazettes – nay, she had only involuntary to think of that night and she would stop dead, speaking or walking, drive her nails into her palms and groan slightly . . . She had to invent a chronic stitch in her heart to account for this groan, which ended in a mumble and seemed to herself to degrade her . . .

The miserable memory would come, ghostlike, at any time, anywhere. She would see Drake's face, dark against the white things; she would feel the thin nightgown ripping off her shoulder; but most of all she would seem, in darkness that excluded the light of any room in which she might be, to be transfused by the mental agony that there she had felt: the longing for the brute who had mangled her: the dreadful pain of her mind. The odd thing was that the sight of Drake himself, whom she had seen several times since the outbreak of the war, left her completely without emotion. She had no aversion, but no longing for him . . . She had, nevertheless, longing but she knew it was longing merely to experience again that dreadful feeling. And not with Drake.

Her 'turnings down' then of the really nice men, if it were a sport, was a sport not without a spice of danger. She imagined that, after a success, she must feel much of the exhilaration that men told her they felt after bringing off a clean right and left, and no doubt she felt some of the emotions that the same young men felt when they were out shooting with beginners. Her personal chastity she now cherished much as she cherished her personal cleanliness and persevered in her Swedish exercises after her baths before an open window, her rides afterwards, and her long nights of dancing which she would pursue in any room that was decently ventilated. Indeed, the two sides of life were, in her mind,

intimately connected: she kept herself attractive by her skilfully selected exercises and cleanliness: and the same fatigues, healthful as they were, kept her in the mood for chastity of life. She had done so ever since her return to her husband; and this is not because of any attachment to her husband or to virtue as such, as because she had made the pact with herself out of caprice and meant to keep it. She *had* to have men at her feet: that was, as it were, the price of her- purely social- daily bread: as it was the price of the daily bread of her intimates. She was, and had been for so many years, absolutely continent. [...] (Ford 2013, 132-3)

This passage, taken from *Some Do Not*, explores the sexual conflicts within the bosom of Sylvia Tietjens. Ford represents Sylvia's interiority in a very modern and introspective way. In spite of being still bound to the traditions of the nineteenth century novel and to its morality, he is modern enough to represent sexual desire and longing from a feminine perspective. The readers can get an insight into Sylvia's mind and are able to catch the reasons for the complexity of her character. The polyphony of the tetralogy offers the possibility for all the major characters to express themselves and show their inner conflicts. For this reason, the reader is in the position of understanding and knowing them and: "*tout savoir c'est tout pardonner*" (Ford 2013, 29).

However, in this passage, the narrator only reports the chain of her thoughts and memories with the use of the transposed speech in indirect style, while the focused character is Sylvia herself. Even if he only reports her perspective through the transposition of her thoughts and her limited focalization, the description is never impersonal. On the contrary, it is always filtered through her personality, her experience and knowledge of herself and of her past.

Ford perfectly describes the wanderings of her mind, the kind of Proustian involuntary thinking that excites remembrances arising like ghosts from the realm of dead: "the miserable memory would come, ghostlike, at any time, anywhere". The emergence of memory also activates physical sensations that the narrator reports: "she would see", "she would feel", "she would seem", like she could experience again that dreadful night and all the sensations she had then felt.

Ford puts the craftsmanship of a man of letters and the arts at the service of the portrait of the human mind, of its wandering, of its feeling and of its collapsing and standing up again in opposition to the rising modernity. He reports "the mental agony", "the longing" and "the dreadful pain of her mind", the passions and contradictions of human nature, as well as its

changes, its flowing, and the mutation of its capacity for feeling. Ford's attempt perfectly embodies the stream of consciousness, the casual and unintentional order of thoughts and impressions typical of the mind, as theorized by the psychologist William James, brother of the famous writer Henry James.

In this passage, past and present are superimposed to render both the mutability of Sylvia's feelings regarding her past lover Drake, and also her constant longing and desire for men. Then, her past strongly influences her present, her attitude towards her husband and then all the people around her.

Ford is able to render all this only by the use of transposed speech in indirect style. He uses expressions like "she imagined", "she felt", "in her mind", but he never intrudes directly into her mind using free indirect speech. The point of view is hers, but the narrator works as a superior intelligence that reports it: "she had only to see", "she had only involuntary to think", "she had to invent", "she had no aversion", "she had longing". Moreover, the use of suspension dots emphasizes the process of thinking. It looks like if Ford were really representing her in the middle of the act of thinking and the suspensions represented a moment of reflection or incertitude before the river could flow again.

Ford wanted to portray the inner life of the human mind that keeps flowing, moving and changing, always displaced in time and space, as according to him "for the whole of life is really like that; we are almost always in one place, with our minds somewhere quite other" (MacShane 1964, 41). He was very interested in the process of human thinking, in the fullness of human nature, in the mind's inner life and in the continuous movement and change in consciousness and thinking:

It is [...] perfectly possible for a sensitized person, be he a poet or prose writer, to have the sense, when he is in one room, that he is in another, or when he is speaking to one person he may be so intensely haunted by the memory or desire for another person that he may be absent-minded or distraught. (Ford qtd. in Boccolini, Fortunati 1994, 102)

For this reason, throughout the tetralogy, Ford makes wider and more and more extensive use of free indirect speech to make the characters narrate the events, explain themselves. In this way, he is able to represent, at the same time, the fragmented human consciousness and the mind's desperate attempts to think rationally. Ford's narration is, thus, characterized by an extensive use of free indirect speech, what Genette called *transposed*

speech, free indirect style. He used it to represent the internal focalization of his characters and create a polyphonic chronicle of his time.

It is the kind of *erlebte rede* that Leo Spitzer attributes to Giovanni Verga's *Malavoglia* (1881). *Malavoglia* is characterized by polyphony/chorality and the use of the so-called *erlebte rede* or free indirect speech to represent the voices of the choir that composes the novel. In *Malavoglia* there is not a single protagonist, according to Spitzer, as the entire village of Acitrezza is the protagonist, and the novel portrays the life of a community (Spitzer 1976, 293-316). The originality of *Malavoglia* is the same of *Parade's End*: they use the *erlebte rede* to depict how the fictional events of the plot affect the minds and the hearts of the multiplicity of characters.

Ford not only focuses on the perspective and focalization of the protagonist, Christopher Tietjens, but gives almost all his major characters the chance to express themselves. They can, then, participate in that polyphony that makes up the narration of the story. Almost everything is narrated through the filter of the characters' consciousness, especially when describing traumatic events and their effects on the mind.

The end of the first part of *Some Do Not* already foreshadows the direction the tetralogy will move towards: the internal shift to represent the inner waves and workings of human consciousness:

This, Tietjens thought, is England! A man and a maid walk through Kentish grass-fields: the grass ripe for the scythe. The man honourable, clean, upright; the maid virtuous, clean, vigorous: he of good birth; she of birth quite as good; each filled with a too good breakfast that each could yet capably digest. Each come just from an admirably appointed establishment: a table surrounded by the best people: their promenade sanctioned, as it were by the Church – two clergy – the State: two Government officials; by mothers, friends, old maids ... Each knew the names of birds that piped and grasses that bowed: chaffinch, greenfinch, yellow-ammer (*not*, my dear, hammer! *amonrer* from the Middle High German for 'finch'), garden warbler, Dartford warbler, pied-wagtail, known as 'dishwasher'. [...]

'God's England!' Tietjens exclaimed to himself in high good humour.

'Land of Hope and Glory! – F natural descending to tonic C major: chord of 6-4, suspension over dominant seventh to common chord of C major...All absolutely correct! Double basses, cellos, all violins: all wood wind: all brass. Full grand organ: all stops: special *vox humana* and key-bugle effect ... Across the counties came the sound of bugles that his father knew ... Pipe exactly right. It must be: pipe of Englishman of good birth:

ditto tobacco. Attractive young woman's back. English midday summer. Best climate in the world! No day on which man may not go abroad!' Tietjens paused and aimed with his hazel stick an immense blow at a tall spike of yellow mullein with its undecided, furry, glaucous leaves and its undecided, buttony, unripe lemon-coloured flowers. The structure collapsed, gracefully, like a woman killed among crinolines! (Ford 2013, 93-4)

This passage is the beginning of a long stream of consciousness that covers 3-4 pages of narration and reports the wandering of Tietjens' thoughts. They are presented as impressionistic images that run into each other without any interruption by the narrator or any apparent logical connection. The thoughts of Tietjens seem to follow a free and spontaneous kind of association and to form disconnected but evocative images.

The passage starts with the narrative voice that asserts "This, Tietjens thought, is England!", but goes on freely without any authorial intrusion. It evokes thoughts and images of England, natural landscape, music, Sylvia, Valentine, Macmaster and Mrs. Ducheim as well, as thoughts about language and society in the words of Tietjens himself.

The language takes on the form used by Christopher, made up of foreign and Latin words, cultural and specific references. That makes it clear that the perspective and voice are those of the character (Tietjens) himself, whose voice and thoughts are given full play.

There is no sense to the thoughts, which follow the associative order of Tietjens' mind, without any kind of logical relationship between them or any kind of conclusive meaning. The images follow an associative order and perfectly embody the modernist stream of consciousness. Even if it is impossible to label it as an interior monologue, as there is not an explicit use of the first person, the passage goes much further the boundaries of free indirect speech. The images are fragmented and, even if recurring, are presented in a scattered and illogical way. They exemplarily represent the associative and casual flow of human thoughts in which the readers are plunged. The author makes them experience the internal process of human thinking without using a pure free indirect speech. The sentences have no verbs and are composed of a few scattered words to evoke momentary and ephemeral overlapping images quite impressionistically. They represent what comes into Tietjens' mind in a particular moment, the beauty of the fleeting links that compose the life which the human consciousness constantly grabs at.

The two central novels *Parade's End* and *A Man Could Stand Up* revolve around World War I and the protagonist's experience of the front and of death. The narrative style

becomes more modernist, disintegrated and elliptical throughout the narration. Indeed, Ford had to deal with the problem of how to define trauma, as trauma is an experience so dreadfully painful that the brain cannot process it in the normal way:

He remembered once or twice – it must have been in September, '16- having had the job of taking battalion transport down from Locre to BHQ, which were in the château of Kemmell village . . . You muffled every bit of metal you could think of: bits, trace-chains, axles . . . and yet, whilst you hardly breathed, in the thick darkness some damn thing would always chink and jolt: beef tins made a noise of old iron . . . And *bang*, after a long whine, would come the German shell, registered exactly on the corner of the road where it went down by the shoulder of the hill: where the placards were ordering you not to go more than two men together . . . Imagine doing it with lorries, that could be heard five miles away! . . . The battalion would go pretty short of rations! . . . The same anti-chevaline genius had emitted the sentiment that he had rather the Allies lost the war than that cavalry should distinguish themselves in any engagement! . . . A wonderful passion for the extermination of dung . . . ! Or perhaps this hatred of the horse was social . . . Because the cavalry wear long moustaches dripping with Macassar oil and breakfast off caviar, chocolate and Pommery Greno they must be abolished! . . . Something like that . . . He exclaimed: 'By God! How my mind wanders! How long will it go on?' He said: 'I am at the end of my tether.' Ha had missed what the general had said for some time.

The general said: 'Well. Has he?'

Tietjens said: 'I didn't catch, sir!'

(Ford 2013, 427-8)

This passage is a clear example of how Ford - stylistically and technically speaking - deals with the challenge of representing the human mind. Representing its thinking while collapsing under the stress of traumatic events is a compelling challenge. It shows, moreover, how the narrative style pushes throughout the narration, opening up to more modern and modernist innovations and ways of representation.

The passage describes a very traumatic moment for Christopher Tietjens, when he discovers he will be sent back to the front, to be active and participate in the war. His mind wavers at this discovery, so much so that he is no longer able to control the flow of his thoughts. The process described in this passage by Ford is a moment of involuntary memory. The mind, being unable to process shock in a normal way, starts to trace back to and cling to some past memories of the war. As Ford asserts in the novel, this was Tietjens' habit: "He had a rule: *Never think on the subject of a shock at a moment of shock.*" (Ford 2013, 281).

Ford seems to anticipate McNally's theory according to which trauma is not at all amnesiac. On the contrary, it is due to the unwillingness of its victim to think about it in its immediate aftermath. This kind of belated memory is typical of dealing with trauma. According to Cathy Caruth, author of many essays and books concerning trauma theory, traumatic events seem to be accessible to the victims' minds only after a period of its erasure. This kind of belatedness of traumatic memories is, without any doubt, extensively present in Ford's tetralogy (Pederson 2014, 334-53).

In this passage, the remembering seems to be activated by the mind's need to flow on, as, as Ford himself highlighted, "The mind wanders" (Ford 109). To represent both the trauma and the wandering nature of memory, Ford felt obliged to adapt his narrative style. This passage starts as a transposed speech with the expression "He remembered once or twice." Moreover, it suddenly turns into a free indirect speech with internal focalization, as the sudden and repeated use of "you" confirms. The reader is plunged directly into the stream of Tietjens' thoughts, made of impressions, of sensations, of images and sounds. Christopher addresses himself very often directly with the use of "you": "You muffled", "whilst you hardly breathed", "where the placards were ordering you", so that the reader can understand what is in his mind.

However, the memory is suddenly interrupted by the arrival of the free association of ideas introduced by "Imagine". This is not a logical chain of thought but, rather, a free association of impressions, like pictures. This is outlined by the extensive use of suspension dots, which break up the narration and shatter its logical sequence. They imitate the way the mind works under particular stress, representing moments of suspension, interruption and illumination all at the same time. The report of the war is quite futuristic and very animated, fast and sensory as it describes sounds and noises like "a noise of old iron" and "*bang*." The free association of ideas is highlighted by Tietjens himself: "How my mind wanders! ...He had missed what the general had said for some time".

The narrator at the very end re-establishes the transposed speech in direct style and the distance between its own perspective and that of Tietjens. At the same time, he asserts the experience of a sort of stream of consciousness. This is often associated, as here, with an irregular kind of syntax and punctuation, a sort of fragmentation.

This is also the case in another passage, very famous in the literary world for its modernist value: the traumatic death of O' Nine Morgan. This passage is exemplary of the

use of free indirect speech in third person narration to represent the stream of consciousness of the character:

Tietjens let the trunk of the body sink slowly to the floor. He was more gentle than if the man had been alive. All hell in the way of noise burst about the world. Tietjens' thoughts seemed to have to shout to him between earthquake shocks. He was thinking it was absurd of that fellow Mackenzie to imagine that he could know any uncle of his. He saw very vividly also the face of his girl who was a pacifist. It worried him not to know what expression her face would have if she heard of his occupation, now. Disgust? . . . He was standing with his greasy, sticky hands held out from the flaps of his tunic . . . Perhaps disgust! . . . It was impossible to think in this row. . . His very thick soles moved glily and came up after suction . . . He remembered he had not sent a runner along to IBD Orderly Room to see how many of his crowd would be wanted for garrison fatigue next day, and this annoyed him acutely. He would have no end of a job warning the officers he detailed. They would all be in brothels down in the town by now . . . He could not work out what the girl's expression would be. He was never to see her again, so what the hell did it matter? . . . Disgust, probably! . . . He remembered that he had not looked to see how Mackenzie was getting on in the noise. He did not want to see Mackenzie. He was a bore . . . How would her face express disgust? He had never seen her express disgust. She had a perfectly undistinguished face. Fair . . . O God, how suddenly his bowels turned over! . . . Thinking of the girl . . . The face below him grinned at the roof – the half face! The nose was there, half the mouth with the teeth showing in the firelight. . . It was extraordinary how defined the peaked nose and the serrated teeth were in that mess . . . The eye looked jauntily at the peak of the canvas hut-roof . . . Gone with a grin. Singular the fellow should have spoken! After he was dead. He must have been dead when he spoke. It had been done with the last air automatically going out of the lungs. A reflex action, probably, in the dead . . . If he, Tietjens, had given the fellow the leave he wanted he would be alive now! . . . Well, he was quite right not to have given the poor devil his leave. He was, anyhow, better where he was. And so was he, Tietjens. He had not had a single letter from home since he had been out this time! Not a single letter. Not even gossip. Not a bill. Some circulars of old furniture dealers. They never neglected him! They had got beyond the sentimental stage at home. Obviously so . . . He wondered if his bowels would turn over again if he thought of the girl. He was gratified that they had. It showed that he had strong feelings . . . He thought about her deliberately. Hard. Nothing happened. He thought of her fair, undistinguished, fresh face that made your heart miss a beat when you thought about it. His heart missed a beat. Obedient heart! Like the first primrose. Not *any* primrose. The *first* primrose. Under a bank with the hounds breaking through the underwood . . . It was sentimental to say *Du bist wie eine Blume* . . . Damn the German language! But that fellow was a Jew . . . One

should not say that one's young woman was like *a* flower, *any* flower. Not even to oneself. That was sentimental. But one might say one special flower. A *man* could say that. A man's job. She smelt like a primrose when you kissed her. But, damn it, he had never kissed her. So how did he know how she smelt! She was a little tranquil, golden spot. He himself must be a - eunuch. By temperament. That dead fellow down there must be one, physically. It was probably indecent to think of a corpse as impotent. But he was, very likely. That would be why his wife had taken up with the prize-fighter Red Evans Williams of Castell Goch. If he had given the fellow leave the prize-fighter would have smashed him to bits. The police of Pontardulais had asked that he should not be let come home – because of the prize-fighter. So he was better dead. Or perhaps not. Is death better than discovering that your wife is a whore and being done in by her cully? *Gwell angau na gwillth*, their own regimental badge bore the words. '*Death is better than dishonour*'. . . No, not death, *angau* means pain. Anguish! Anguish is better than dishonour. The devil it is! Well, that fellow would have got both. Anguish and dishonour. Dishonour from his wife and anguish when the prize-fighter hit him . . . That was no doubt why his half-face grinned at the roof. The gory side of it had turned brown. Already! Like a mummy of a Pharaoh, *that* half looked . . . He was born to be a blooming casualty. Either by shellfire or by the fist of the prize-fighter . . . Pontardulais! Somewhere in Mid-Wales. He had been through it once in a car, on duty. A long dull village. Why should anyone want to go back to it? . . .

(Ford 2013, 275-6)

This is much more than a classical stream of consciousness, as Christopher's thoughts do not flow, they literally "shout to him between earthquake shocks." The traumatic value of the event is made explicit from the very start: "All hell in the way of noise burst about the world." Many different and overlapping images flow one after the other. Moreover, some thoughts recur many times cyclically, thus becoming dominant: thoughts of war action, of MacKenzie, Valentine and her possible disgust, and, of course, of O' Nine Morgan and his half grinning face that haunts Tietjens with the feeling of guilt for having contributed to his death. Around these thoughts revolves the bursting of Tietjens' mind, at first transposed by the narrative voice with the use of expressions like "He was thinking", "he remembered" (1), "thinking", "he thought"... In this passage, Ford mixes transposed speech where the narrative voice introduces the character's perspective, with free indirect speech to report thoughts directly, often with a single word or direct question addressed to himself.

The use of the stream of consciousness with free indirect speech is revolutionary and original. The narrative voice is present every time he asserts: "He wondered", "he thought",

“He could not work out”, “He remembered”, “he was”, “he saw”, “it worried him”, while for the rest, the narrator plunges the audience directly into Tietjens’ thoughts, which can be both articulate and fragmented. The passage, thus, mixes up transposed speech with free indirect style speech: “He did not want to see Mackenzie. He was a bore . . . How would her face express disgust? He had never seen her express disgust. She had a perfectly undistinguished face. Fair . . . O God, how suddenly his bowels turned over! . . . Thinking of the girl . . . The face below him grinned at the roof – the half face! The nose was there, half the mouth with the teeth showing in the firelight. . . It was extraordinary how defined the peaked nose and the serrated teeth were in that mess . . . The eye looked jauntily at the peak of the canvas hut-roof . . . Gone with a grin. Singular the fellow should have spoken! After he was dead. He must have been dead when he spoke. It had been done with the last air automatically going out of the lungs. A reflex action, probably, in the dead . . . If he, Tietjens, had given the fellow the leave he wanted he would be alive now! . . . Well, he was quite right not to have given the poor devil his leave”.

This extract is a perfect example of the use of free indirect speech by Ford in the passage, as well as in the tetralogy as a whole. Tietjens’ mind moves from thoughts of Mackenzie to those of Valentine, of her face or of the possible expression on her face. Thus, the image evoked of her is superimposed, like a cinematographic technique, onto that of O’ Nine Morgan’s corpse below him, recalling the image of the death and Tietjens’ inevitable feeling of guilt. It resembles a vortex of images, of overlapping thoughts that resist Tietjens’ efforts to control them. He tries to manipulate the workings of his mind, to play with it in order to evoke a certain kind of reaction and feeling in himself to run away from the present traumatic moment: “He thought about her deliberately. Hard. Nothing happened. He thought of her fair, undistinguished, fresh face that made your heart miss a beat when you thought about it. His heart missed a beat.” However, the blessing, raised by the thought of Valentine, lasts only for a moment, as the free association of his thoughts gain control over him again. The fragmentation of the images is mirrored in the fragmentation of the syntax and of the narrative style. The use of suspension dots reflects the working of Tietjens’ mind, while the use of short, elliptical sentences of few, even only one word, evokes the immediacy of the idea and of the mind’s processes, caught in the exact moment of their happening.

This process of the disintegration and fragmentation of the narrative style is made purposefully to plunge deeper and deeper into the limited internal focalization of the

characters. It becomes more and more common throughout the narration, as the trauma of the war seems to push Ford to need to use new and different ways of narrative representation.

While the tetralogy starts with the use of an omniscient narrator with zero focalization, it concludes with the very limited one of Mark Tietjens in the last volume, *The Last Post*. The entire novel is filtered through his point of view and from his perspective. The narration is always in third person, but with transposed speech and free indirect speech. Thus, the events are almost entirely narrated by the inner voice of Mark himself:

He felt satisfaction and impatience. There was some place to which he desired to get back. But there were also things to be done: to be thought out ... If God was beginning to temper the wind to these flayed lambs ... Then ... He could not remember what he wanted to think about ... It was - no, not exasperating. Numb! He felt himself responsible for their happiness. He wanted them to go rubbing along, smooth with the rough, for many long, unmarked years ... He wanted Marie Léonie to stay with Valentine until after her deliverance and then to go to the Dower House at Groby. She was Lady Tietjens. She knew she was Lady Tietjens, and she would like it. Besides, she would be a thorn in the flesh of Mrs. ... He could not remember the name ... (Ford 2013, 739)

In the above passage, the readers witness again the use of the transposed speech, “He felt satisfaction”, “he could not remember”, “He felt himself”, “he wanted”, along with free indirect speech in expressions like: “It was – no, not exasperating. Numb!” in which, again, the direct process of the mind thinking is reported. The act of thinking is again deliberately explicit. Mark, like his brother Christopher, is a modern man facing a collapsing reality and a crisis of human identity, and desperately trying to understand himself and his destiny. The necessity to think things through is felt with a kind of urgency: “but there were also things to be done: to be thought out...”. However, the mind still wanders without any seemingly rational control: “he could not remember what he wanted to think about...”. Mark’s desire to give an order to his thoughts, to his memories, to his impressions, seems to mirror the will of the author himself with regard to his subject.

Even if *The Last Post* offers an almost entirely limited perspective of the character of Mark, with some interruptions, it represents also some other minor points of view like those of his wife Marie Léonie, Sylvia, and Valentine. They altogether compose the polyphony that characterizes the novel. *The Last Post*, however, does not make for such compelling reading as its predecessors. It looks more like an extreme commentary on the previous narrations, a sort of re-reading and re-thinking, a new voice and perspective on the previous subject. It

asserts the relativity of human knowledge and the impossibility of stopping the stream of life itself. This flow forces all human beings to be part of a continuous development, a continuous change, a shifting of identity and of perspective, dooming them to never ending self-analysis and reflection with often useless and challenging results.

Ford had to deal with the difficulty of representing the trauma of the First World War and its huge impact on the shattered human psyche as well as the collapse of the human mind and identity under the burden of modernity. Although still bound to the conventions of the nineteenth century novel, he was revolutionary enough to be a promoter of Modernism and to mix more traditional kinds of narration and narrator with a very introspective kind of representation. He plunged directly into the minds of his characters through internal focalization. He presented streams of consciousness through transposed speech and free indirect speech, and used innovative modernist technical devices and futuristic effects to enrich his narrative voice and his narrative mood. His aim was to reach that stylistic plainness praised and used by the naturalistic authors of the nineteenth century, but his tools, as well as his objects of representation, are completely different. He wanted to represent the human consciousness facing modernity, the wanderings of the human mind and its falling apart. He wanted to be the historian of the human condition of his time but, at the same time, render all of this through a transparent, unobtrusive and quiet style to give the impression of reading something that had a proper life of its own.

4. THE CHRONOTOPE:

In *Forms of Time and of the Chronotope in the Novel* (1937), Bakhtin uses the term chronotope (literally “time space”) to define the intrinsic connection between temporal and spatial relationships in literature. In literary texts the spatial and temporal dimensions are fused into one whole and their intrinsic connection defines genre and generic distinctions which determine the image of man. The image of man is always chronotopic and cannot transcend the spatial and temporal coordinates. In his *Transcendental Aesthetics* (1781), Kant defines time and space as indispensable forms of cognition, while in literature they obtain a decisive role in defining immediate reality (Holquist 1981, 84- 85). In literature and in art, then, temporal and spatial dimensions are inseparable from one another and always coloured by emotions and ideological values. Each motif and aspect of artistic work has its own value. Thus, it is impossible to separate time and space and the values attached to them. Art and literature are, in fact, shot through with *chronotopic* values. The chronotope is the place where the knots that compose the narrative are tied and united. Because of this, time becomes palpable and visible and the events of the narrative concrete. Chronotope, thus, has the power to concretize and materialize time and space and the artistic representation itself, while, all the abstract, philosophical and ideological elements of novels gravitate toward it and through it become real, giving life to the imaging power of art (Holquist 1981, 243-250).

The chronotope in Ford is the metaphorical and symbolic one of the threshold, representing a crisis and break in the hero’s life. The threshold has a metaphorical valence that symbolises the breaking point of a life, the moment of crisis, the decisiveness or, in Ford’s case, the indecisiveness that changes, or fails to change, a life. This is the chronotope most present in Dostoevsky’s work, that, according to Bakhtin, embodies the new kind of novel born from the ashes of the nineteenth century’s monologic novel. As this thesis will highlight in the following chapters, there are strong connections between Dostoevsky’s and Ford’s works. The chronotope of the threshold represents resurrection, renewal, epiphany and decisions that determine the whole life of a man (Holquist 1981, 248). In *Parade’s End*, the narration is set in a universal and monumental moment of crisis and break: the outbreak of World War I. The threshold that *Parade’s End* represents is the one of modernity. The tetralogy portrays the collapsing of the old world and the rise of a new one. The main characters, thus, are described while coming to terms with a new asset of values and beliefs, while, also, burdened by important personal changes. Indecisiveness characterizes Ford’s

protagonists as the author decides to portray men in moments of personal and psychological crisis. The hero, Christopher Tietjens, as well as his lover, Valentine, throughout the tetralogy, have to deal with their indecisiveness that keeps them away from fulfilling their personal desires and subconscious longings. They are portrayed on the verge of important decisions that can change their lives, but, that, at the same time, they are hesitant to take. *Parade's End* revolves around the inner struggles of its characters when facing turning points in their lives and history. As already underlined previously, the tetralogy is a *Bildungsroman*, as the two main characters undergo a radical change and finally decide to commit to each other.

In Ford's work, the characters go through *askeis* that means through a struggle, suffering, through moments that shape their image, their essence and the nature of their subsequent life. The series of sufferings and adventures the hero undergoes contribute to the development and construction of his new identity, the one of a new man, purified and reborn. In *Parade's End*, Tietjens undergoes a sort of *katabasis* and *anabasis*. He apparently experiences a sort of descent to hell, like Dante, who is, in fact, mentioned several times in the tetralogy, and a sort of rebirth, of ascent to a new world and a personal fulfilment:

But, damn it, he himself, would make a pact with Destiny, at that moment, willingly, to pass thirty months in the frozen circle of hell, for the chance of thirty seconds in which to tell Valentine Wannop what he had answered back ... to Destiny! ... What was the fellow in the Inferno who was buried to the neck in ice and begged Dante to clear the icicles out of his eyelids so that he could see out of them? And Dante kicked him in the face because he was a Ghibelline ... Always a bit of a swine, Dante ... Rather like ... like whom? ... Oh, Sylvia Tietjens ... A good hater! ... (Ford 2013, 302)

In the passage above, Tietjens manifests his will to descent to hell, to spend thirty months in a frozen circle of hell, like the one described by Dante in his *Divina Commedia*, to be able, after that, to arise to Valentine Wannop, to go back to her and have the chance to talk to her, like Dante with Beatrice. Valentine appears to be, in fact, Tietjens' Beatrice, the only force in the narrative that makes Tietjens endure the hellish trials he has to go through and embodies his final reward at the end of them. Tietjens undergoes a real burial during the war, as he is literally buried alive in mud during action on the front line:

Long dollops of liquid mud surrounded them in the air. Like black pancakes being tossed. He thought. 'Thank God I did not write to her. We are being blown up!' The earth turned like a weary hippopotamus. It settled down slowly over the face of Lance-Corporal Duckett who lay on his side, and went on in a slow wave.

It was slow, slow, slow ... like a slowed-down movie. The earth manoeuvred for an infinite time. He remained suspended in space. As if he were suspended as he had wanted to be in front of that cockscomb in whitewash.

Coincidence!

It assimilated his calves, his thighs. It imprisoned him above the waist. His arms being free, he resembled a man in a life-buoy. The earth moved him slowly. It was solidish. (Ford 2013, 564)

Thus, Tietjens literally descends to hell, the symbolical condition of war and the physical one of being buried alive in the earth. However, the tetralogy portrays a man's rebirth, his ability to stand up again from this symbolical grave and ascend to a new life:

... But what about him, Tietjens? Was that the sort of thing that Providence ought to do to one? ... That's *tempting God!*

The Sergeant beside him said: 'Then a man could stand up on a hill ... You really mean to say, sir, that you think a man will be able to stand up on a bleedin' ill ...'

Presumably Tietjens had been putting heart into that acting temporary Sergeant-Major. He could not remember what he had been saying to the NCO because his mind had been so deeply occupied with the image of Perowne ... He said: 'You're a Lincolnshire man, aren't you? You come from a Fen country. What do you want to stand up on a hill for?'

The man said: 'Ah, but you *do*, sir!'

He added: 'You want to stand up! Take a look around ...' He struggled for expression: 'Like as if you wanted to breathe deep after bein' in a stoopin' posture for a long time!' (Ford 2013, 503)

The third novel of the tetralogy is entitled *A Man Could Stand Up* and portrays Tietjens' return to life, his rebirth as a different and modern man and his reunification with Valentine. The metaphor of standing on a hill gives name to the novel and returns many times in the narration. In the end, Tietjens is able to gain his personal heaven, to 'resurrect' and meet his own Beatrice and have a real conversation with her after years of silence. Like in Dante, real happiness lies in the encounter with the object of love:

He thought he suddenly understood. For the Lincolnshire Sergeant-Major the word Peace meant that a man could stand up on a hill. For him it meant someone to talk to. (Ford 2013, 537)

Thus, the chronotope in Ford acquires a sort of verticality, like in Dante's *Divina Commedia*. The human journey that Ford portrays unfolds in a vertical way. However, the world of *Parade's End* is not invested with Christian faith and beliefs, it is a mundane one. The temporal dimension, so, is not eschatological, but secular. Tietjens' rebirth is a mundane rebirth. Ford depicts a moment of crisis and resurrection in the life of modern man. *Parade's End* shows a vertical world but in a secular sense. It opposes the eschatology of medieval time, with time measured by the search for meaning of human consciousness. Its attempt to find a meaning is open-ended, as it could go on forever. In Ford, then, time, like space, is open, as it is linked to manifold human interpretations.

The hero in Ford is not a public figure: he is a private man that lives quietly, trying to find intrinsic meaning to his existence. Ford's characters are individuals, private persons, connected, at the same time, to their social group, their family, their homeland and its history. However, this kind of man is also solitary and lonely to the outside world, as well as his closer circle, that is hostile and alienating. In Ford, the man exists for himself and is detached from his public origin. Man is the centre of Ford's literary work, and, in spite of his indecisiveness, he is an active hero that goes through personal development and change. In *Parade's End*, the trials and adventure the protagonists have to go through have internal limits and a deep impact on their inner developments, changing and influencing them, making them new men and women. The protagonists go through the events of the narrative to change their identity, to become new people. They deal with a series of trials that test their nobility, principles and human compassion and, through these, they mature, discover their own personal self-fulfilment that does not need any kind of approval or recognition from the society around them. In Ford, man is no longer a public animal, and the human image has become multi-layered and multi-faceted.

However, these trials are both internal and external. The historical cataclysm of war tests the greatness and firmness of the hero's values and principles and compels him to find a new way of surviving in the post-war world. After the war, undeniably, the characters, as well as their world, cannot go back to their previous equilibrium. However, the trials through which the hero has to go are not only external, but also internal. His inner struggles and excruciating personal life shatter him to a point of no return. War acquires meaning according to its resonance in man's interiority. Social and political or historical events only gain significance through their connection with the inner part of men. In Ford, chronotope is not

static as it describes a changing world, created anew after the destructive force of war that, of course, has changed human nature too. The core of Ford's work is to show how a human being becomes other than what he was, the events that determine and define his entire life.

Parade's End is a *Bildungsroman*. It represents the overturning and demolishing of the idyllic pre-war world and its romantic ideals, which are no longer adequate in the capitalist world. The readers experience the breakdown of the hero's provincial romanticism, the disintegration of the previous human relationships under the influence of money, while the hero is re-educated to be able to live in this new egoistic world. Indeed, Ford's chronotope favours the personal development of the hero. Historical reality itself serves as a means for the disclosure of the character's consciousness, it is a possibility for the manifestations of the characters that compose the narration. In Ford's case, historical reality has the power to determine and influence the character of the hero and leads to a change or becoming of the character. However, historical and personal time are in opposition, as the time of the human consciousness follows paths that do not coincide with the unfolding of historical time. The plots of history are separate from the plots of personal life but they intersect into war. Because of this, *Parade's End* can be considered in a certain sense an historical novel. In *Parade's End* the author tries to find an historical aspect of private life, and also to represent history in a domestic light.

At *Parade's End*'s heart lies the chronotope of "the life course of one seeking true knowledge" (Holquist 1981, 130) as self-consciousness is the mode of the narration. The hero's self-consciousness cannot find a unified and whole chronotope anymore in the outside reality and looks, then, for an abstract and idealistic one. In Ford, thus, the chronotope lies inside the human mind. It is the metaphysical space of human consciousness where, from a narrative and compositional point of view, everything occurs. In the characters' human consciousnesses denouements occur and dialogues happen, as these are the places that reveal the ideas and passions of the characters. Human consciousness is, indeed, in Ford, a place of intersection of temporal and spatial sequences. This aspect will be developed in the following chapter of this thesis, where the subjective value of time in the tetralogy is explained. Thus, in Ford, the chronotopic connection between time and space happen in the consciousness of the characters, as both time and space gain meaning and significance from the characters' subjective perspective on them. In *Parade's End*, space and time are subjectively perceived and acquire symbolical values. Therefore, chronotope, in Ford, is not the product of a random

contingency. Everything is filtered through the meaning the characters assign to it, as everything has a resonance inside the human interiority. In Ford, events happen inside the man. Time and space are, therefore, meaningful objects of individual perception, as well as representations of inner changes.

In Ford, space is filled with real living meaning and it is crucial to the hero and his fate. It is burdened with a highly symbolical value, as the nature of the given place highly influences the various components of the narrative. The Englishness of *Parade's End* highly influences the nature of the events and of the characters. The personality of the hero is shaped by his origin and his values, his belonging to the disappearing English gentry and his faith in the principles that shape the English gentleman. Tietjens could not be Tietjens outside of England as the indecisiveness, moral scruples and nostalgia that characterize the narrative and its characters are distinctive components of that particular culture. Physical places, in Ford, are important in the way they influence men and in the symbolism the characters attribute to them. Thus, in *Parade's End*, space is familiar, definite, known and beloved, it is the characters' homeland, the landscape that has shaped their identities and their personal development. It is a function of them, as they have ties and relationships with it. Indeed, Ford's characters do not experience random contingencies but look for personal meaning to their world. Ford's space acquires importance and significance through its relevance for the human factor of the narrative. It is a subjective and symbolic space. Groby, for example, Tietjens' familiar estate in Yorkshire, is a physical space that recurs many times in the thoughts and concerns of the characters. It is a highly symbolic place that embodies the ancestral values and traditions of an England doomed to succumb to modernity. All the characters show a deep attachment and consideration to this symbolical place. Both Christopher and Mark show great fondness for it, and great concern for its fate and the reputation of its name. On the other hand, General Campion and Sylvia show the desire to possess it, as it could confer them the dignity and loftiness they do not have. The end of Groby is highly symbolical of the rise of modernity and the end of the parades around which the tetralogy revolves. After the war the estate is rented to Americans who have no respect for its history. Moreover, Sylvia manages to have the Great Groby Tree, symbol of the traditions and historical past and values of the estate, removed, seriously damaging the entire structure of the house. These dramatic changes symbolise the decline of the British gentry and its principles in the aftermath of the war. Thus, space, in *Parade's End*, acquires meaning and

importance in accordance to the value and significance the characters attribute to it. In *Parade's End*, the majority of the action happens inside the characters' minds, so that physical places are important only according to their symbolic and personal relevance for the single characters.

In Ford, as explained in the following chapter, the crisis happens inside the man, so time and space are subjectively felt. However, of the two dimensions, time is of primary importance, as the literary primary mode of representation is temporal. Time is, in fact, the dominant principle of the chronotope (Holquist 1981, 85-86). In Ford, time belongs to human beings, and has major relevance in the composition of the narrative, as well as in the representation of the human condition. Because of its relevance in the tetralogy, the following chapter will be devoted entirely to analysing the temporal dimension in *Parade's End*.

5. TIME OF NARRATION:

The tetralogy *Parade's End* was written between 1922 and 1927 and published between 1924 and 1928. The first novel, *Some Do Not*, was published in 1924, while the last, *The Last Post*, in 1928. The narrative is set between 1912 and 1920. It is a subsequent narrative whereby the fictional narrator, Ford, recounts imaginary events that happened in the past, using the past tense.

However, in the tetralogy there is no chronological treatment of time; on the contrary, time is represented as totally diachronic. The narrative is not linear as events are portrayed out of chronological order and time is disoriented and dispersed. The narration is diachronic, chaotic and made up of time-shifts. Linear plotlines are not important at all to Ford, and disappear, so linear actions lose their significance. Rather than merely describing events themselves, Ford takes the fluctuations and constant contradictions of consciousness itself as his ultimate object. He enters imaginatively into human dilemmas and depicts them in all their bewildering complexity. He sought to portray the mental processes through which meaning is gained and to represent the difficulties inherent in any attempt to comprehend contemporary life, what the character of Valentine Wannop describes as a work of polishing, tarnishing and arrangement:

‘Because,’ the girl said, ‘it’s the way your minds works ... It picks up useless facts as silver after you’ve polished it picks up sulphur vapour; and tarnishes! It arranges the useless facts in obsolescent patterns and makes Toryism out of them ... (Ford 2013, 120)

In the *Parade's End* tetralogy, time is subjective rather than objective and there is no chronological measure of it because most of the events are portrayed through the flashbacks of the characters. In the early years of the twentieth century, the French philosopher Henry Bergson theorized a new and modern conception of time that became very successful among modernist writers, thinkers and philosophers. According to him, there are two kinds of time: an external time and an internal time. The first is the objective kind of time, a chronological one like that of history and historical events. However, the time of the tetralogy is mostly a psychological and internal one, the so-called duration, set in the consciousness of the characters. According to Bergson, this is individual and subjective as it changes according to the human perception of it. Its speed and duration can vary according to the different intensities, contents and meanings of the events as lived by each individual (Bergson 1888, 7-105).

As a consequence, Ford, like many other modernist writers, represents a reality that exists only in the individual and is mostly entirely subjective. Modernist time is internal and qualitative, the one in which people live. The human mind and the human consciousness move and wander in this space, but, at the same time, they fragment their experiences in order to find their meaning.

Thus, in the tetralogy, there are two simultaneous temporal dimensions: one external or rather historical that goes from 1912 to 1920 and the other internal, made of the characters' efforts at sense-making. External and internal time are, so, in open contrast. External time spans over the late Victorian Age, the First World War and the post-war world period. The internal one, instead, loses itself in other times and places, wanders and constantly changes. Discontinuity of time and space, then, characterizes the tetralogy, while mirrors the characters' lives and the readers' experience of the text (Sabbagh 2014, 181).

The linear plot appears frozen or composed of insignificant and casual events, as memory and mind wander and go backward and forward independently. Ford represents human consciousness through reminiscence and the emergence of external events through summoning consciousness that frees them from their chronological order and from the present time. As Auerbach stated in his *Mimesis* (1953), modernist time can be considered as a Neoplatonic kind of time. In this case the primary image of the object is set inside the man that contemplates it while facing at the same time his past (Auerbach 2000, 326).

In *Parade's End* everything is based on reminiscences, the characteristic mode of Ford's narrative. To give full play to it, Ford uses two different kinds of devices: flashbacks and time-shifts. Flashbacks and time-shifts are two different narrative techniques of complexity and frequency, both employed by Ford to alter standard linear time. Time-shifts act upon the external time of the narrative, disrupting the chronological order of narration. On the other hand, flashbacks represent real movements inside human minds and act at the level of internal time. With time-shift, Ford captures the complexity of life as he can return to the past or advance to the future to explain or narrate an event. Within the flashback, instead, the ordering is simply chronological and follows the characters' process of remembering.

Reminiscence, the kind of involuntary memory, made famous by Proust, is the predominant mode of the tetralogy. Ford's technique consists of narrating most of the story through flashbacks that mimic and recall the structure of human memory. Most of the events, thus, are narrated through the filter of the characters' flashbacks that emerge from the stream

of consciousness, the interior dialogues, and associative order of thoughts of the same character. For this reason, then, past can be considered the primary narrative of the tetralogy, according to Genette's distinction between primary and secondary narratives. Normally this distinction accords to the present time primary status and to diachronies secondary status (Genette 1972, 90). However, in this particular case the narrative is based on reminiscence that is the predominant mode of the tetralogy. Therefore, past cannot be considered of secondary importance.

In *Parade's End*, the characters go through the same events, experiences, or, at least, their memories of them, several times to understand them. Human beings are always in the process of interpreting and developing themselves by trying to give meaning to their lives and to their past experiences. They try to capture their mutability to get a synthetic conception of the world. This is the multiple refracting of human consciousness.

There is, in the whole tetralogy, a dense layering of flashbacks, through the minds of the characters. The real remembrances fired by the involuntary and free associations of thoughts by the characters tell something the readers did not know, something the narrative had skipped over through narrative ellipsis. The narration, thus, becomes complex and chaotic as the readers often slip smoothly into a flashback or a time-shift without even realizing it.

Furthermore, narrating memories in the tetralogy seems to give shape and organization to the events recalled, helping the characters to recreate their selves shattered by modernity. According to trauma theory, language can be performative and narrating can heal and reconstruct victims' shattered psyches, while it can give shape and temporal order to the events recalled. Mostly, it gives a sort of interior liberation, freedom from the traumatic events, reached only through narrating them. The victims of traumatic events feel a compulsion to repeat them to free themselves from the burden (Pederson 2014, 334-53). In the same way, Ford's characters seem doomed to live some significant events of their lives over and over again. Some flashbacks recur several times so that some past events are evoked again and again. The use of flashbacks, thus, can also represent the compulsion to re-enact traumatic events.

It is, then, almost impossible to analyse *Parade's End* exclusively in terms of Genette's categories as the whole narrative follows these modernist devices that alter the linear and chronological rendering of the plot. Thus, it would be compelling for the scholar to highlight all the diachronies that compose the narrative, as, throughout the whole tetralogy, there is no

chronological order, but only alterations in the pattern of narrative time. The narrative is made up of ellipsis and jumps in time, making it impossible to talk about an alteration of the chronological order of events as this does not even exist. Nineteenth century conventions of temporal representation were inadequate to Ford, and, so, he employed a modernist re-arrangement of the treatment of time.

While time-shift follows the movements of consciousness, at the same time, it is a movement through the external time of the narration. It disrupts time and space and fragments the text to create many time and place dislocations. Time-shift has been theorized by Ford himself to erase any kind of linear plot. The principle underpinning Ford's art is his claim that "we are almost always in one place with our minds somewhere quite other" (Ford qtd. in MacShane 1964, 41), as the human mind travels and wanders in time and space. Ford, as he asserts in his *It Was the Nightingale* (1933), represents a homo duplex:

... And he is, indeed, then, homo duplex: a poor fellow whose body is tied in one place but whose mind and personality brood eternally over another distant locality. (Ford qtd. in Sabbagh 2014, 163).

Thus, the link between events depends only on the internal logical and associative process of the character that remembers. Time-shift allows Ford to give full play to all the tenses of memory, and to move backwards and forwards over a series of events without following an order based on calendar time. Through it, the narration moves throughout time, while, through the use of narrative ellipsis, it literally jumps from one moment or event of the main plot to another, apparently without any kind of logical sequence.

This technical device frees Ford from any obvious chronological narrative and allows him to achieve kaleidoscopic effects by juxtaposing events separated in time. The narrative is made of moments of consciousness, of scenes or macro-sequences connected in time by the use of time-shifts. Ford's use of time-shift makes an event recur within different time frames where it often reappears from the perspective of another character. The readers can contemplate the scene from a diversity of points of view, each calling for a different interpretation. Thus, event and subjective impressions are superimposed, creating a polyphony of perspectives and a dense layering of time frames.

Moreover, because of the time-shifts, the readers are often placed in the middle of an event or scene *in medias res*, that is, in the middle of an action. They do not know what happened before and are obliged to fill the gaps in the narrative ellipsis themselves. This is

called *delayed decoding*, as the readers are only able to “decode” the significance of the action later. The whole narrative is constructed like a “detective story”, as Ford himself asserts:

... the time-shift ... is a thing that delights everybody. It is in fact indispensable to the detective writer. He begins his story with the words: “he is dead,” she said. Then he gives some details of the past of him and her. He returns to the present to introduce the sleuths and the district attorney. The chief sleuth delves for pages into the past of him and her, going back thirty years to “his” past in Muddy Creek and Pekin. He returns to lunch with the District Attorney who is trying to doublecross him and then back and back ... And back once more to the “15th March 19-.” Eventually the final clue is given, by something that happened in 1922 and you return to the present for half a page to dispose of the sleuth and the dashing young lady. (Ford qtd. in Sabbagh 2014, 170)

However, Ford is presenting a quest for meaning and meaningfulness and not for ultimate and objective truth that, since the turn of the century, has become relativized. The same event and its significance is considered through different and successive points of view in different temporal contexts, so that its ultimate significance is never wholly reached (Sabbagh 2014, 185).

The composition is created anew but also mingles with previous occasions: this is what Ford called *progression d’effet*. It is a technical device according to which the events of the narrative are piled one on top of the other, making the story progress faster and faster and with greater intensity until their cumulative effect leads to the final one Ford desired to achieve. In this way the events narrated gain meaning only through the subjective perception of time inside the minds of the characters (Calderaro 1993, 43).

Rendering the consciousness of the characters is always belated: one registers the experience as worthy of representation only when it has passed. The tetralogy is a belated reconstruction of life filtered through memory. So, events are narrated only as opportunities offering insights into the inner lives of the characters and into the significance behind each event. The characters are the narrative agencies, the consciousness through which the action of the novel is allowed to take place.

The tetralogy, thus, gradually shifts deeper and deeper into the interior life and insights into human consciousness. Time passes gradually, from being disrupted and disordered by the many time-shifts that alter the chronological order of the external time of the narration, to becoming placed inside the consciousness of the characters that remember. As Robert Green stated in his *Ford Madox Ford: Prose and Politics* (1981), the time covered by the tetralogy

tapers down passing from five years, to two weeks, to one day, and to few hours (Green 2010, 159). This is a move from objective time to Bergsonian subjective duration, exemplified by the increasing dominance of interior dialogues in the narrative (Sabbagh 2014, 191).

The narration represents a man that is not master of his own time, but, quite the opposite, a victim of the modernity that crushes his identity. The narrative portrays the collapsing of human identity, its conflicts, its victories, its coming to terms with the new, modern society and its constantly changes. In Ford, style and contents mirror each other just as the treatment of time in the tetralogy mirrors the human condition portrayed by the author. As Omar Sabbagh states in his *From Sight through to In-Sight* (2014) “all the characters’ thinking through their lives and the events in which they are involved, or rumoured to be involved, all their speculation in their entanglement and angst, their desperate searching for a connection with beginnings and ends, is structured much like the architectonic of the novel as a whole.” (Sabbagh 2014, 170) The total absence of a linear and chronological plot, the narrative treatment composed only of diachronies, time-shifts, temporal ellipsis as well as a dense layering of flashbacks, mirror the condition of the modern man who is not the master of his time, but subjected to it.

Ford portrays moments of consciousness: the whole narrative is composed of scenes not functional to the advancement of the plot but significant and representative of the consciousness of the characters. They are portrayed while busy in a constant process of self-analysis and self-discovery, living over and over again in a quite obsessive way the few significant moments of their lives. They look for meaning, but, most of all, they try desperately to catch their own changes and movements in the flow of time. In Modernism, time is not a physical and autonomous reality, but always linked to some moment in the past or in the future and cannot be separated from human experience: time is human and subjective. And Ford represents this kind of time, a time of the consciousness discarded and re-ordered only by the interventions of memory, and linked to the complexity and instability of human experience. As the tetralogy progresses, the narrative style begins focus more and more on the nature of consciousness itself.

Indeed, the war broke up the sense of time. Apparently, Ford wrote to a correspondent in 1931 that “The world before the war is one thing and must be written about in one manner ... the after-war world is quite another and calls for quite different treatment” (Ford qtd. in Sabbagh 2014, 177) The tetralogy portrays Christopher Tietjens, the last Tory in England,

coming to terms with the collapse of the old Victorian values and fully embracing the twentieth century. On the other hand, the narrative shifts from representing the public sphere of human life to representing the familial and private one. Thus, each novel of *Parade's End* follows its own temporal treatment, progressively shifting from the depiction of external time to that of internal time.

Some Do Not is the novel of the tetralogy in which the action still takes place in an external time that is, however, interrupted by the recurring use of time-shifts. It is the most narrative of the four, where significant and functional events are needed to make the plot develop. However, the novel's treatment of time cannot be considered as traditionally chronological. The vicissitudes of the characters are presented through huge time jumps and ellipsis.

In terms of time, the narrative *Some Do Not* is divided into three main temporal macro sequences. It starts in Rye in June 1912, when the protagonist Christopher Tietjens and his friend Macmaster are introduced by the author while on a train going to visit reverend Ducheim, and ends with the nocturnal adventure of Christopher and Valentine and their encounter with General Champion outside Mountby.

The second part is set five years later, after a huge temporal ellipsis, in the dining room of Sylvia and Christopher, in their apartment in Grays Inn, while the action takes place in the course of a single afternoon.

The third part takes place in the street between Grays Inn and the War Office, at the War Office and then back at Christopher and Sylvia's apartment, in the course of only few hours. With the progress of the narrative, internal time expands, while external time shrinks, spanning only a few hours. However, each part is composed of other time-shifts and flashbacks that again disrupt the chronological plot. As already pointed out, the narrative is based on crucial and meaningful moments in the consciousness and development of the characters.

The very first part of *Some Do Not* is composed of different scenes that convey important information for the narrative. The first presents the main protagonist, Christopher Tietjens, introducing him through the narrative voice, through his own perspective and through the filter of Macmaster, his best friend. The second scene, on the other hand, introduces the "evil" wife, Sylvia Tietjens, already presented through the words and thoughts of the previous characters. The narrative, thanks to a time-shift, moves to Lobscheid and to a

time slightly earlier than the first scene, to represent the moment when Sylvia, together with her mother and Father Consett, takes the decision to go back to her husband. Time-shift, however, moves the narrative again back to the moment the readers left Tietjens and Macmaster lodging in Rye. Here, for the very first time, the working of memorial mode of narration activates the time-shift. Thus, it is Macmaster's remembering that apparently pushes the narration to another time-shift that informs the reader about what actually happened the previous afternoon: the first meeting between Tietjens and the suffragette, Valentine Wannop, on the golf course. The diachrony is introduced by Macmaster's desire to remember:

Macmaster sat down again and deliberately began to review the day. It had begun with disaster, and in disaster it had continued. And, with something like a bitter irony, Macmaster had remembered... (Ford 2013, 44)

The narration going backward in time is justified by the character's need to review the past. The readers, then, jump into these times almost without realizing it. However, the narrator is always present to remind them:

Yes, the day had begun disastrously with Sylvia's letter; it ended- if it was ended! -almost more disastrously with the General's eulogy of that woman. During the day he had nerved himself to having an immensely disagreeable scene with Tietjens. Tietjens *must* divorce the woman; it was necessary for the peace of mind of himself, of his friends, of his family; for the sake of his career; in the very name of decency!

In the meantime Tietjens had rather forced his hand. It had been a most disagreeable affair. They had arrived at Rye in time for lunch- at which Tietjens had consumed the best part of a bottle of Burgundy. During lunch Tietjens had given Macmaster Sylvia's letter to read, saying that, as he should later consult his friend, his friend had better be made acquainted with the document. (Ford 2013, 45)

It is evident that the time-shift to the past covers the following pages of the novel to describe the rest of that dreadful day: Macmaster's first meeting with Mrs. Ducheim as well as Christopher's with Valentine on the golf field. The time-shift is introduced gradually as the reader is warned of Macmaster's wish to review the events of the past day. At the beginning of the chapter, the readers are confounded by incomprehensible references to previous events they did not know about. However, directly from Macmaster's perspective, the readers get a summary of what they already knew before shifting to the time-shift itself.

Macmaster repeated: 'I said the General is in a terrible temper. It's just as well you didn't come up to dinner.'

Tietjens said: 'He isn't... He isn't in a temper. He's as pleased as punch at not having to have these women up before him.'

Macmaster said: 'He says he's got the police scouring the whole county for them, and that you'd better leave by the first train tomorrow.' (Ford 2013, 40)

This is an example of *delayed decoding*. The readers cannot at first understand what the characters are talking about, but, then, thanks to the time-shift activated by Macmaster's memory, they come to understand and are able to complete the puzzle. After that, the narrative goes back to the moment of interruption to describe breakfast at the Ducheim's and all the events that follow until the two protagonists' accident with the carriage.

The third temporal sequence of *Some Do Not* is again based on diachronies and flashbacks. Even if the narrative setting has only the duration of a few hours, narrative time jumps backwards and forwards continuously, according to the characters' remembering that fire up the time-shift.

For example, in the fourth chapter of the second part of *Some Do Not*, Valentine, while she is with Mark Tietjens in the war office waiting-hall, goes back in her mind to Macmaster's famous Friday evenings. She focuses, later on, on a particular one, significant to her, when Sylvia Tietjens had paid her respects and kissed Mrs Wannop. Only later, from the omniscient perspective of the narrator, do the readers discover that it happened some weeks before the main action and are able to place it in external time sequence:

That had been five – or at most six – Fridays before Valentine sat with Mark Tietjens in the War Office waiting-hall, and, on the Friday immediately before that again, all the guests being gone, Edith Ethel had come to the tea-table and, with her velvet kindness, had placed her right hand on Valentine's left. Admiring the gesture with a deep fervour, Valentine knew that that was the end. (Ford 2013, 226)

Three days before, on the Monday, Valentine, in her school uniform, in a great store to which she had gone to buy athletic paraphernalia, had run into Mrs Ducheim, who was buying flowers. Mrs Ducheim had been horribly distressed to observe the costume. She had said: 'But do you go *about* in that? It's really dreadful.' (Ford 2013, 226)

Here the author intervenes directly to give the chronological coordinates of the action and, at the same time, underlines the continuous time-shift of the text. From one point in time, set five or six Fridays before the moment of the main action taking place in the War Office, the narrative moves immediately on to another. It is always moving back and forward

according to the memories of Valentine in an incessant flow through which she, like the narrator, decides to move at her own pleasure.

As the passage above shows, the narration from this time-shift moves to another, three days before, on a Monday, to recall another past event. In *Some Do Not* the treatment of time is entirely based on time jumps. Thus, the main action is composed of fragments of events significant to the characters that have lived them, but, most importantly, that live them again in their minds. So, time progressively becomes more and more an internal value.

Thus, *No More Parades* takes place almost completely in the minds of Christopher and Sylvia, as there is a progressive shift by Ford to the inside and insights of his characters. The narration then settles down under modernist pressure. It shifts from a scene-based structure, still widely present in *Some Do Not* as well as most nineteenth century novels, to represent the inner processes of the characters and the duration of time in their consciousness. As the narrative shifts to represent internal time, time-shifts are replaced by a dense layering of flashbacks that function as a reconstruction of the plot as well as of the shattered self.

No More Parades takes place nearly entirely inside human minds, while its geographical locations are the military base and Rouen, and is set the day Christopher hears Sylvia is in Rouen. This little event is the occasion that allows him to put his thoughts and memories in order, in the style of a military report. For the very first time in the tetralogy, the author uses the first person narration, as the trauma of Christopher's conjugal life seems to compel him to narrate to himself his traumatic past in order to cope with it:

He said to himself: We must go methodically into this! Methodically into the history of his last day on earth...

Because he swore that when he had come out to France this time he had imagined that he was cutting loose from this earth. And during the months that he had been there he had seemed to have no connection with any earthly things. He had imagined Sylvia in her convent and done with; Miss Wannop he had not been able to imagine at all. But she had seemed to be done with. [...]

[...] He said to himself that he must put, in exact language, as if he were making a report for the use of garrison headquarters, the history of himself in his relationship to his wife...And to Miss Wannop, of course. 'Better put it into writing,' he said.

Well then. He clutched at his pocketbook and wrote in large pencilled characters: 'When I married Miss Satterwhaite,' –he was attempting exactly to imitate a report to General Headquarters – 'unknown to myself, she imagined herself to be with child by a fellow called Drake. I think she was not. [...]' (Ford 2013, 308)

Here the character feels the urgency to narrate his own story to himself, methodically and in precise language, to go into his traumatic past in order to understand it and maybe find a solution, a way out of it. The compulsion to repeat traumatic events is not only theorized by most recent trauma theory, but it is also a practice present in literature and used by fictional characters, like the mariner in Samuel Taylor Coleridge's *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* (1798), almost from the beginnings of the narrative form. Narrating seems to ease burdens and help people to reconstruct what is left of their identities and lives. Moreover, here, the emphasis is on the therapeutic capacity of writing, strongly promoted by Freudian psychoanalysis, that had become famous and widespread in the same years as the writing of *Parade's End*. Modernist literature places great importance to writing as a reflective practice that gives people the chance to see themselves as whole person, as in *La Coscienza di Zeno* (1923) by Italo Svevo. Here the entire narration starts with the doctor's invitation to write to see himself in his wholeness. Ford's intention, then, seems to defy the conventions of chronology by giving the readers an emotional history of Christopher's relationship with Sylvia.

This is not merely a flashback, but an example of the so-called *progression d'effet*, as this kind of embedded narrative does not add anything new to the events and information already conveyed by the text. It offers, instead, a new and belated perspective of them, that of Christopher, adding new psychological elements and interpretations and enriching the effect these events have already had on the narrative. This embedded narrative is not functional to the development of the plot or action, but to the one of the consciousness.

The second part of *No More Parades* takes place largely in the mind of Sylvia, which is as much as fragmented as Christopher's. It starts at the moment Christopher rides off to see Sylvia and she sees him arriving at the hotel. Her memories and reflections are fired up on seeing Perowne, with whom she had an affair five years earlier, in a provincial French town. That part of the story, which happened five years previously, and only briefly touched upon by other characters before in their narration, is covered and revealed to the reader from Sylvia's perspective through her flashback. The reader is plunged into the wandering of her memory during which Sylvia starts an internal dialogue with her dead, martyred priest, father Consett, in heaven. She makes an inner deal with him and giving him ten minutes to show her a presentable man in the restaurant and in the lobby of the hotel:

So she said: ‘Blessed and martyred father, I know that you loved Christopher and wish to save him from trouble. I will make this pact with you. Since I have been in this room I have kept my eyes in the boat – almost in my lap. I will agree to leave off torturing Christopher and I will go into retreat in a convent of Ursuline Dames Nobles – for I can’t stand the nuns of that other convent – for the rest of my life ...And I know that will please you, too, for you were always anxious for the good of my soul ...’ She was going to do that if when she raised her eyes and really looked round the room she saw in it one man that looked presentable. She did not ask that he should more than look presentable, for she wanted nothing to do with the creature. He was to be a sign: not a prey!

She explained to the dead priest that she could not go all the world over to see if it contained a presentable man, but she could not bear to be in a convent forever, and have the thought that there wasn’t, for other women, one presentable man in the world ... For Christopher would be no good to them. He would be mooning for ever over the Wannop girl. Or her memory. That was all one ...He was content with LOVE ...If he knew that the Wannop girl was loving him in Bedford Park, and he in the Khyber States with the Himalayas between them, he would be quite content...That would be correct in its way, but not very helpful for other women...Besides, if he were the only presentable man in the world, half the women would be in love with him...And that would be disastrous, because he was no more responsive than a bullock in a fattening pen.

‘So, father,’ she said, ‘work a miracle ...It’s not very much of a little miracle...Even if a presentable man doesn’t exist you could put him there ...I’ll give you ten minutes before I look...’ [...] (Ford 2013, 368)

She said: ‘The ten minutes is up, father ...’ and looked at the round, starred surface between the diamonds of her wristwatch. She said: ‘Good God! ...Only one minute ...I’ve thought all that in only one minute ...I understand how hell can be an eternity...’ (Ford 2013, 370)

...But she was still conscious of her pact with the father and, looking at her wristwatch, saw that by now six minutes had passed ... (Ford 2013, 374)

Sylvia was overwhelmed at the ingenuity of Father Consett. She looked at her watch. The ten minutes were up, but there did not appear to be a soul in the dim place ...The father had – and no doubt as a Sign that there could be no mistaking! – completely emptied that room. It was like his humour. (Ford 2013, 378)

It is an exemplary passage of the Bergsonian duration of time, as the readers experience a limited duration of ten minutes through the mental and subjective perception of the character of Sylvia. For ten pages at least, her present situation is mixed up with memories of her past

while, every so often, the countdown to ten recurs. At first one minute seems to her like a hellish eternity.

Sylvia's narration goes on through the use of time-shifts so that the scene changes only to show dinner time, when Sylvia joins Christopher and Sergeant-Major Cowley. This part ends with Sylvia and Christopher dancing to a phonograph and then going up to Sylvia's bedroom, while the third part of the novel returns to the mind of Christopher.

It starts at the moment he wakes up, when Levin and General Campion enter his tent to question him about the previous night. In this way, only through the words of the characters, not directly from the narrative voice, are the events of the previous night revealed to the readers. Because of these events, Christopher is sent to the front line and, thus, faces a mental breakdown. This part closes when Campion inspects Christopher's cook-house.

Thus, *No More Parades* takes place over one day and the following morning. The novel represents time according to Bergsonian duration, that is, its speed and duration are internal and subjective, as the narration takes place inside the minds and consciousness of the characters. The first part's time spans one evening and the following morning, while the second takes place some hours before dinner, and the third is only a few hours of the following morning. Chronological time progressively shrinks as consciousness time expands, while in *Some Do Not* time representation stills followed the Victorian and realist model of novel. The narrative was more descriptive and based on vignettes or scenes, even though the many time-shifts and narrative ellipses discarded linear time to jump from one sequence to another.

A Man Could Stand Up, on the other hand, represents more fully the theme of consciousness, as in this novel, the narrator reaches new heights in the arrangement of chronological time by departing even further from the conventions of chronological narrative. The narrative starts on Armistice Day, 1918. The beginning is concerned with the mind of Valentine on the phone to Mrs. Macmaster. Here, again, Ford offers a perfect example of the Bergsonian duration of time. After the phone call, in the time lapse of ten minutes, the character of Valentine thinks to herself so that the ten minutes appear to her and also to the reader as much more:

A hell of a lot ... Beg pardon, she meant a remarkably great deal! ... to have thought of in ten seconds! Eleven, by now, probably. Later she realised that that was what thought was. In ten minutes after large impassive arms had carried you away from a telephone and deposited you on a clamped bench against a wall of the peculiar coldness of

torpedo-grey distempered plaster, the sort of thing rejoiced in by Great Public (Girls') Schools ... in those ten minutes you found you thought out more than in two years. Or it was not as long ago as that.

Perhaps that was not astonishing. If you had not thought about, say, washable distemper for two years and then thought about it for ten minutes you could think a hell of a lot about it in those ten minutes. Probably all there was to think. Still, of course, washable distemper was not like the poor – always with you. At least it always was in those cloisters, but not spiritually. On the other hand you always *were* with yourself!

But perhaps you were not always with yourself spiritually; you went on explaining how to breathe without thinking of how the life you were leading was influencing your ... What? Immortal soul? Aura? Personality? ... Something!

Well, for two years ... Oh, *call* it two years, for goodness' sake, and get it over! ... she must have been in ... well, call *that* a 'state of suspended animation' and get that over too! (Ford 2013, 457-8)

The passage above not only offers a great example of the subjective duration of time, but it also offers an explanation of the nature of human thoughts. Valentine analyses the working of her own thinking and the changes her life and thoughts can have on her personality. This first part ends when she decides to seek out Christopher and commit to him.

The second part starts after a huge time-shift to several months before and takes place only in the mind of Christopher at the front line. It actually takes place during the great battle of Amiens during which the allies were nearly defeated by Ludendorff. In this part, Christopher decides, like Valentine, to abandon all Edwardian conventions and commit to her.

In the third part of the novel, the narration goes back to Armistice Day, when Christopher and Valentine meet at Grays Inn and come to a precise understanding of one another. During their meeting, both their minds are alternatively explored. Once again, the treatment of time is composed of flashbacks and filtered through the characters' thoughts.

The temporal ellipsis that exists between the events of *No More Parades* and *A Man Could Stand Up* is filled by flashbacks from Valentine Wannop. She goes back, while on the telephone to Mrs. Ducheim, to events that happened during the war, to fill the narrative ellipsis. Again, the focus is on the interiority of the characters composed of a layering of flashbacks and reminiscences, while the external chronological time almost disappears in the narration.

Armistice Day, during which the entire narration of *A Man Could Stand Up* develops, is never presented as an historic event, but only through the significant and personal experiences of the minds and memories of the characters. The tetralogy focuses more and more progressively on human consciousness at war with itself and with the changing times. Thus, with the progress of the narrative, fewer and fewer events take place while full play is given to the narration of many more internal conflicts.

The Last Post is the final novel of the series and is the most radical and modernist. It takes place in the time span of a few hours and all the action occurs in the minds of the characters, especially that of Mark Tietjens. The story is set sometime between the years of 1926 and 1929, when the character of Christopher is in his forties and takes place in Christopher and Valentine's cottage. The novel, instead of representing the historical dimension of the post-war world, re-presents, with continuous flashbacks and reminiscences, the events of the three previous novels.

In this last novel, the representation of time as Bergsonian duration reaches its peak as, in *The Last Post*, only a few events take place and the novel covers only a period of about one hour in a single afternoon. Everything is based on flashbacks as the narration has moved totally inside the human mind, while the physical setting of the narration has become almost irrelevant, only symbolical.

A good example of the use of flashback with internal focalization to narrate past events that the readers otherwise would never know is the narration of the terrible night of the Armistice Day. During it, McKeanie, Christopher's comrade in arms, goes mad and Sylvia announces that she is dying of cancer. These events are not presented in *A Man Could Stand Up*, they're omitted through a final ellipsis, but they emerge gradually during *The Last Post* in the stream of consciousness of Marie Léonie, Sylvia and Valentine.

The narrative is composed of inner dialogues the characters have most of the time with themselves, in a continuous dialogic relationship with their inner selves, always presented through the use of free indirect speech. The novel offers a sort of re-reading of the previous events through the lens and perspective of other characters, only minor in the previous novels, according to the so-called *progression d'effet*. In this way, Ford explores the mindscapes of Mark, his wife Marie Léonie, Sylvia and Valentine. The stream of consciousness of Marie Léonie adds a new perspective on the past events and sheds a new light on the characters of Christopher and Valentine. Being no longer central, they are highly criticized and discussed.

Christopher is no longer a central character, so space is given to other characters, their consciousness and perspectives. The main intention of the author is once again to paint a history of the consciousness of his time, not only of one man but of every man.

The treatment of time in *Parade's End* is both modernist and innovative. First, like many other modernist writers, Ford represents time as subjective and internal, according to Bergson's idea of duration. In *Parade's End* the external and chronological time of the narration is in open opposition to the perception the characters have of it. Their internal time becomes progressively the dominant dimension of the narrative. It is a time measured through human consciousness as the real drama lies inside and is perceived by it.

On the other hand, it is impossible to talk about the chronological aspect of narrative time as Ford uses technical devices for the purpose of avoiding it. The narrative always jumps from one moment in time to another. Time-shifts disrupt the traditional sequence of events while flashbacks, that take place internally in the minds of the characters, moves from one memory to the next. The narrative does not follow a linear and progressive plot that comes to a meaningful conclusion, quite the opposite; it is composed of moments, memories, macro temporal sequences and internal dialogues set in the minds of the characters. The narration is not only diachronic but chaotic. In this way, the same events may recur many times in the memories and in the dialogues of the characters and acquire different meanings and interpretations each time, as the narration is composed of a series of overlapping impressions that follow the associative order of memory.

In the narration, event is superimposed on event, impression on impression, interpretation on interpretation to create a layering of voices, that polyphony that characterizes the tetralogy. The variety of voices embraces different perspectives of the same event and object. The entire tetralogy seems based on the idea of the soap advertisement, as expressed by Tietjens while talking and debating with Valentine about their differing views concerning war:

She found him – as subconsciously she knew he was – astonishingly mild. She had too often watched him whilst he listened to her mother's tirades against the Kaiser, not to know that. He did not raise his voice, he showed no emotion. He said at last: 'You and I are like two people ...' He paused and began again more quickly: 'Do you know these soap advertisements that read differently... As you come up to them you read "Monkey's Soap"; if you look back when you've passed it's "Needs no Rinsing." ... You and I are standing at different angles, and though we both look at the same thing we read different messages.

Perhaps if we stood side by side we should see yet a third ... But I hope we respect each other. We're both honest. I, at least, tremendously respect you and I hope you respect me.'
(Ford 2013, 207)

Christopher, in the passage above, perfectly explains Ford's architectonic method of constructing his tetralogy. In an exemplary modernist way, the tetralogy seems to state that any kind of absolute and objective truth or knowledge is impossible. Reality is manifold, elusive and unintelligible in spite of the many efforts men make to catch it, and completely and totally understand it in all its complexity. The narration within the tetralogy goes backward and forward on itself exactly like the manifold consciousness of the characters whose minds compulsively repeat and re-live the few significant events that shape their personalities.

Finally, the whole narration is composed of the flashbacks, ellipsis and diachronies that link the macro sequences of the main plot and allow it to move from one moment of consciousness to another. They plunge progressively deeper and deeper into it and represent, at the same time, the destruction of the old treatment of time. From now on, time is inside the characters, the only ones able to give meaningful significance to the events of their lives.

6. THE POLYPHONY AND THE DIALOGISM:

Ford's *Parade's End* can be considered both a polyphonic and dialogic novel, according to the theories formulated by Mikhail Bakhtin in the late 1920s. Bakhtin, in his *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics* (1972), formulated the theory of the 'polyphonic novel' as opposed to the 'monologic novel'. For his formulation he analysed and used the work of Dostoevsky, showing him as the greatest example of this new type of novel. From Dostoevsky's work, Bakhtin extrapolates some outstanding categories that qualify it as a polyphonic novel. These characteristics can also be applied to Ford's *Parade's End*.

According to Bakhtin, the revolutionary aspect of Dostoevsky's work was that he destroyed the monologic level of the novel. What he created was the polyphonic novel, a totally new genre. In this genre, the voice of the character is constructed exactly like the one of the author (Bakhtin 2014, 7). Dostoevsky represented "free people, capable of standing *alongside* their creator, capable of not agreeing with him and even of rebelling against him" (Bakhtin 2014, 6). His characters are treated "as ideologically authoritative and independent." The great innovation was that he gave the characters the possibility to be expressions of their own consciousness, therefore different from the author's consciousness and no more object of it (Bakhtin 2014, 5-7). The main innovation of the polyphonic novel, as opposed to the monologic novel, is not only the space given to the hero's self-consciousness but the fact that it does not coincide with that of the author.

However, in a truly polyphonic novel, the authorial voice is expressed everywhere at its highest degree but, at the same time, does not influence the voices of the other characters as they are not judged or defined. In this new type of novel, the hero is relatively free and independent as everything in the narration becomes functional to his self-consciousness (Bakhtin 2014, 64-51-52). The new novel is characterized by this "*freedom of other points of view to reveal themselves* without any finalizing evaluations from the author" (Bakhtin 2014, 64).

Through the authorial voice, the character expresses his own point on view of life, his own intentionality and uses his personal language. As a consequence, the characters gain their own life inside the novel, they become an 'otherness', an autonomous consciousness that lives inside the narration accordingly to its own voice and speaking its own language. The fact that the characters can embody their own vision of the world and represent their own personal point of view on it is pretty much revolutionary (Bakhtin 2014, 83).

For this reason, the polyphonic novel is totally new and detached from the “objectified image of a hero in the traditional novel” (Bakhtin 2014, 7). The entire novel is made up of the hero’s *discourse* and pure voice representing himself and his world. The readers do not see him acting, but hear him talking about himself and his world. Everything that really matters is filtered through his voice, while everything that is left outside is considered nonessential (Bakhtin 2014, 53-5). In the polyphonic novel, the protagonist or the hero has “*a particular point of view on the world and on oneself*” (Bakhtin 2014, 47) as is enabled to evaluate his own self and his surrounding reality. He has become not only cognizant but also ideologist (Bakhtin 2014, 78). What Dostoevsky represented was “*the sum total of his consciousness and self-consciousness, ultimately the hero’s final word on himself and on his world*” (Bakhtin, 2014, 48). The core point of the polyphonic novel is not how the hero appears in the world but how the world appears to the hero (Bakhtin 2014, 47). The really important aspects of the novel are not the features of everyday reality that compose the plot but rather “*the significance of these features for the hero himself*” (Bakhtin 2014, 48). In this new kind of novel the object of the novelistic quest is “who he is”, while reality becomes an element of the character’s self-consciousness. This gives the characters the opportunity to unfold and reveal their position (Bakhtin 2014, 64-48).

The hero’s voice is never isolated as it is surrounded by other voices, words and evaluations of him (Bakhtin 2014, 52) that compose a web of independent and free voices, separate from the authorial one. The hero is not only self-conscious, but looks for himself in the others, in “the mirrors of other people’s consciousnesses” (Bakhtin 2014, 52). A polyphonic novel is made of many cognitive subjects in a dialogic position (Bakhtin 2014, 73). The core of the polyphonic novel is the representation of “*a plurality of independent and unmerged voices and consciousnesses, a genuine polyphony of fully valid voices...*” (Bakhtin 2014, 6). In a polyphonic and dialogic novel, the single truth of each one is put in opposition in a dialogic contact, they reflect on one another and add new light and perspective on one another (Bakhtin 2014, 73).

Knowledge is never monolithic but can be achieved, where possible, only through a dialogic effort. At the base of this new genre lies the Socratic notion of the dialogic nature of truth and the dialogic nature of human thought looking for it (Bakhtin 2014, 110). In fact, according to the ancient Greek philosopher, Socrates, truth is born between people in the

process of their dialogic interaction. Socrates called himself a “pander” or a “midwife” and his method “obstetric” as it brought people together and made them discuss and oppose in a sort of quarrel from which truth rises. However, he knew that no kind of ready-made truth was possible, the only one was the result of this dialogic quarrel between different human consciousnesses. According to Bakhtin, the idea is in its own nature dialogic as it is created by the dialogic meeting of two or more consciousnesses. Thus, ideas can be generated only through other ideas when they enter into a dialogic relationship with one another and in this way human thought becomes genuine thought. Thought consists of a dialogic relationship between ideas that come in contact with each other and become authentic only when in living contact with another alien thought, the one of another consciousness. In fact, it raises from the contact between different voice-consciousnesses (Bakhtin 2014, 110- 88).

In the new polyphonic novel, the hero not only pays attention to how other people reflect him, using them as cognitive tools to discover himself, but he also takes their points of view into account. He is not isolated, he takes into consideration others’ voices, rumours, evaluations and perspectives, sometimes he even tries to imagine them. Self-consciousness is strictly linked to consciousness of the surrounding world and the truth about the world merged with the truth about oneself (Bakhtin, 2014, 53- 78).

The new kind of polyphonic novel, as opposed to the monologic one is characterized by a “*fully realized and thoroughly consistent dialogic composition*” (Bakhtin 2014, 63), “one that affirms the independency, internal freedom, unfinalizability, and indeterminacy of the hero” (Bakhtin 2014, 63). The hero here is an autonomous person subject to a dialogic mode of expression, a dialogue that is the core of the creative process of the entire novel (Bakhtin 2014, 63). In this kind of novel, a hero’s consciousness is “thoroughly dialogized” (Bakhtin 2014, 251), constantly addressing itself, another and a third person (Bakhtin 2014, 251). The “man in man” can be revealed only through this interaction of one person with another. For this reason, the centre of the polyphonic novel is dialogue itself, as, through it, human beings show themselves outwardly (Bakhtin 2014, 252). Thus, the polyphonic novel takes the shape of a great dialogue between the hero and the author, the hero and the other characters and the other characters and the author. It is an endless discourse through which these independent and autonomous voices come to life. This endless kind of discourse is placed side by side with someone else’s discourse opposing different semantic positions and points of view that never blend but stay independent and free. This kind of opposition is at

the core of the polyphonic novel, as the character can express himself only when stimulated, provoked, interrogated or thought of by others equally dignified as him (Bakhtin 2014, 64).

Dialogism can invest every single level of the narrative, even words themselves that can be double-voiced and create a sort of micro-dialogue that echoes the great one. Moreover, dialogism can be present even if a real dialogue does not even occur, as it takes place every time two or more different ideological and semantic positions clash. In dialogues, one speaker literally repeats the ideas and statements of another speaker giving them a new value and relevance by expressing his own doubt, indignation, irony, mockery and so on. Inevitably, someone else's speech and words, when introduced into our own speech, trigger a new interpretation and become subject to our personal evaluation. In this way, they become double-voiced (Bakhtin 2014, 194-195).

Our everyday speech is full of other people's words and ideas, some of them merge with ours, while others we use to reinforce our own speech. Moreover, the rendering of someone else's statement in the form of a question already leads to a clash of two or more voices and ideas within the same single discourse. On the other hand, dialogism can also take the form of hidden dialogicality, in which the statements of the second speaker are omitted but also present invisibly as they influence the present and visible words of the first speaker. This is an effective dialogue, even if only one person is speaking at the moment, as the uttered words respond and react to the invisible speaker, to something outside and other from itself. As Bakhtin points out, inner speeches are filled with other people's words and are then constructed like a succession of replies to the words and statements of others (Bakhtin 2014, 195-196-197-238). Thus, dialogism seems to invest every level of this new kind of novelistic genre, the polyphonic novel, whose self-consciousness is the major mode.

Everything in the polyphonic novel is meant to give an answer to questions like "Who am I?" and "With whom am I?" (Bakhtin 2014, 239). The attitude of the hero towards himself is inseparably bound up with his attitude towards others, and with the attitudes of others towards him. His consciousness stands out against the background of the other consciousnesses, while his words about himself are structured under the continuous influence of someone else's words about him (Bakhtin 2014, 207). Bakhtin's own words can be used to express that "the hero's self-awareness was penetrated by someone else's consciousness of him, the hero's self-utterance was injected with someone else's words about him" (Bakhtin 2014, 209). However, according to Bakhtin "to find one's voice and to orient it to others, to

separate one's voice from another voice with which it has inseparably merged – these are the tasks the heroes solve in the course of the novel” (Bakhtin 2014, 239).

Dostoevsky represented men always on the thresholds of a decision or a moment of crisis, a turning point of their soul and their subjectivity and this determines the hero's discourse. For this reason, plot itself is not important as in the monologic novel, as this kind of characteristic dialogism is not plot-dependent but absolutely free from it. Dialogue, indeed, is the very essence of human thought and, thus (Bakhtin 2014, 61- 238-252). As Bakhtin himself stated, in the polyphonic novel: “The object is precisely *the passing of a theme through many and various voices*, its rigorous and, so to speak, irrevocable *multi-voicedness* and *vari-voicedness*” (Bakhtin 2014, 265).

Parade's End can be considered a polyphonic novel as it perfectly embodies its main characteristics as theorized by Bakhtin. As has been shown in the chapter “Mode of Narration”, Ford achieved a new authorial position regarding to the represented characters. As has been shown, Ford steps back from his narration to give independent voice and space to the perspective of his characters, through whose consciousnesses every event of the narration is filtered. The endless and inner dialogues of the characters are there to give significance to the external events (Sabbagh 2014, 183). As has been discussed, in Ford's work the author wants to be only a stage director that controls a narration made up of scenes or macro sequences. Ford's narrator avoids any kind of moral comment or judgment on his characters. He is like an impartial deity that orchestrates the narration and the events but never intrudes directly. He tries to suppress himself and to be impersonal in order to give full play to the multiplicity of human consciousnesses represented in his work. Moreover, like in the most exemplary polyphonic novel, Ford does not take for himself, in quality of author, any kind of authorial surplus as the characters are placed at his own level (Bakhtin 2014, 75).

However, Ford never frees his characters' minds entirely from the control of the narrator; both when he is writing from the position of the omniscient narrator and when he is following the movement of a character's consciousness, he writes as a third person. It still is Ford's desire to let us hear his voice that makes him summarize the thoughts of his characters in the third person rather than present them to us directly. Moreover, as we saw, he somehow introduces them and gives important suggestions on their conditions. By these means, he is able to show us the events as a character perceives them and at the same time to show us the narrator's judgment of the characters' thoughts and feelings. The revolution stays in its will

to stay aside, not to interfere with the lives of its own creation. He employed free indirect speech and a focused kind of narration to portray the depths of the human consciousness and represent everything through its subjective perspective and sense of reality.

Throughout the tetralogy, Ford pushes deeper and deeper into his characters' interiority, representing it through the limited focalization of the characters themselves. The plot of the tetralogy is placed directly inside the consciousnesses of Ford's characters. Ford uses a focused narration. Through it, he represents the subjectivity and the momentary impressions of his characters' consciousnesses. Everything is a *function* of the character's self-consciousness, as self-consciousness is the dominant mode of the tetralogy as well as of the polyphonic novel (Bakhtin 2014, 50). Ford's use of the focused narrative and of free indirect speech to give full play to the stream of consciousness and interior dialogues of the characters is meant to give space, voice and freedom to them.

In the polyphonic novel, the protagonist or the hero embodies and portrays a particular perspective on the world and on oneself, a personal ideology (Bakhtin 2014, 47-78). The polyphonic novel portrays ultimately "*the hero's final word on himself and on his world*" (Bakhtin 2014, 48). In Ford too, the hero embodies the values of Toryism and represents a crumbling world and outdated values, a specific vision and ideology that clashes with the manifold of the others' surrounding him. All the other characters, then, enter the hero's world as symbols of specific and different ideological positions (Bakhtin 2014, 238) that clash with that of the main character and help him to unfold his own. Sylvia represents the modern woman, subdued to her impulses and desires, while Macmaster and Mrs. Ducheim embody the insensitivity and dullness of the new order of things.

In *Parade's End*, can be seen what Bakhtin found in Dostoevsky: "Not only the reality of the hero himself, but even the external world and the everyday life surrounding him are drawn into the process of self-awareness, are transferred from the author's to the hero's field of vision" (Bakhtin 2014, 49). The core point of the polyphonic novel is not how the hero appears in the world but how the world appears to the hero. Everything in Ford is filtered through the consciousness of his characters, who are busy in the quest of making sense of the world. Everything revolves around the self-introspection of the characters that, within their minds, keep wandering and moving backwards and forwards on their lives, trying to find meaning. To justify the kind of introspection that characterizes the polyphonic novel, Ford

made his hero the last Tory of England, a man bound to a past that no longer exists, and, moreover, troubled by the hardest personal life possible for a man:

I needed someone, some character, in lasting tribulation – with a permanent shackle and ball on his leg ... A physical defect it could not be, for if I wrote about that character he would have to go into the trenches. It must be something of a moral order and something inscrutable ...

Human tribulations are the only things worth writing about. You can write about Napoleon at St. Helena or even at Elba. No one could present him as he was in his triumphs. I needed then a hard-luck story. The hardest human luck!... (Ford qtd. in Sabbagh 2014, 182)

This particular kind of man is always pondering the meaning of past events in retrospect, in a continuous and self-conscious *discourse* (Sabbagh 2014, 186). As Ford stated in *It Was the Nightingale* (1933), his hero “was to be too essentially critical to initiate any daring sorties...his activities were most markedly to be in the realm of criticism” (Ford 2011, 197). In this kind of novel based on self-consciousness, plot is no more suspenseful but based on the inner development of the subjectivity of the character and its search for meaning (Sabbagh 2014, 187). Moreover, the plots based on self-consciousness and soul-searching are open-ended and could go on forever. The attempt of man to think about himself, to find a meaning in his life is an endless process, a vicious circle (Bakhtin, 2014, 51): “the significance of external events, when entered into the dialogue of the self with the self, is a search which is potentially never-ending” (Sabbagh 2014,185). In the polyphonic novel, the “hero’s consciousness of self lives by its unfinalizability, by its unclosedness and its indeterminacy” (Bakhtin 2014, 53). In the polyphonic novel, the hero never coincides with himself (Bakhtin 2014, 51).

Moreover, the centre of Ford’s work is the nature of human thinking. In the polyphonic novel, the idea becomes the subject of the artistic representation. The image of the hero is inseparably linked with the image of the idea that expresses itself in a dialogic manner (Bakhtin 2014, 85-87). Ford’s characters are, then, vital and human, they are self-conscious and they show it through their words and dialogues. The words of Ford’s characters are meaningful and autonomous as they express their personal vision, perspective and evaluation of the world and life.

One of the most important aspects of the polyphonic novel is that the consciousness of the hero is never isolated, but always put in opposition or relationship with many others. Like

in Dostoevsky, the narration of *Parade's End* is made of overlapping and shifting points of views, consciousnesses and voices that run after one another. The polyphonic novel is populated by many points of view and voices that overlap and oppose each other. The idea this kind of novel conveys is intersubjective and acts at the level of a dialogue between consciousnesses. *Parade's End* perfectly corresponds to the polyphony theorized by Bakhtin:

... we have access, we are insiders to Valentine's, to Tietjens', to Mark's, to Sylvia's versions of events, but each exclude and play off each other, building up an open-ended, cubist composite – even by the end, we are not a hundred percent sure whether Mark junior is indeed Tietjens' son, whether his father committed suicide, whether his mother did indeed die of a broken heart, having found out about Sylvia's betrayal and so on. (Sabbagh 2014, 190)

Its narrative style is composed of many voices orchestrated by the author. Everything is composed as a dialogue and a connection between consciousnesses that reflect one another in a constant dialogic relationship. Ford organizes the voices and points of view of many different individualities, of many different men-ideas that convey a specific conception of the life and world and crashes with other points of view, thus, creating dialogism. In Ford everything is filtered through the subjective response of the characters, nothing happens outside of their consciousnesses that are put into dialogic contact. The reasons of each character are never left out, that means the novel is characterized by a polyphony of points of view that run after each other:

... all the various characters' thinking though of the action, which is where the real action lies, on the inside, are set off against each other, so that were the reader to identify with Tietjens, his or her reading experience would then be discretely fractured by seeing similar facts thought through differently with different contexts, patterns, and different temporal contexts by different characters. (Sabbagh 2014, 192)

Each character has the chance to explain themselves through the use of the focused narrative, while at the same time they're seen through the perspective of others as their actions are always commented on and judged by the other characters. For example, in *Some Do Not*, Tietjens is framed on his way to the War Office by Mark, his brother, recounting the many calumnies about him he was able to collect from the character of Ruggles. In this way, Christopher has the chance to observe from the outside his whole situation and what society actually thinks of him, he is able to see himself as mirrored by other consciousnesses:

Mark waited for explanations. Christopher was pleased at the speed with which the news had travelled: it confirmed what he had said to Port Scatho. He viewed his case from outside. It was like looking at the smooth working of a mechanical model. (Ford 2013, 179)

Moreover, the characters themselves are often introduced not by the authorial voice but by the perspective of other characters that shed a different light on them. For example, in *Some Do Not*, the characters of Titjens and Macmaster are introduced through the filter of the perspective of one other, while Sylvia is introduced and highly judged by other characters before her physical appearance in the novel. Even many events are not directly introduced by the author in the texture of the plot, but are narrated through the filter of other characters' voices and perspectives. The night Sylvia leaves the apartment directed to Paddington is never narrated but is told from Christopher's perspective. In *No More Parades*, he goes back to it over and over again in order to determine its meaning. Indeed, the paternity of Christopher's child, as well as the suicide of his father and the causes of the death of his mother are never treated by the author but only widely discussed by the manifold consciousnesses of the other characters. Not only are the single actions of the characters judged and commented on by the others that compose the polyphony of the novel, but also their thoughts and intentions are supposed and taken for granted while evaluated and put in dialogic opposition:

'In St James's Park I invited Miss Wannop to become my mistress that evening. She consented and made an assignation. It is to be presumed that that was evidence of her affection for me. We have never exchanged words of affection. Presumably a young lady does not consent to go to bed with a married man without feeling affection for him. But I have no proof. It was, of course, only a few hours before my going out to France. Those are emotional sorts of moments for young women. No doubt they consent more easily.

'But we didn't. We were together at one-thirty in the morning, leaning over the suburban garden gate. And nothing happened. We agreed that we were the sort of persons who didn't. I do not know how we agreed. We never finished a sentence. Yet it was a passionate scene. So I touched the brim of my cap and said: So long! ... Or she... I don't remember. I remember the thoughts I thought and the thoughts I gave her credit for thinking. But perhaps she did not think them. There is no knowing. It is not good going into them ... except that I gave her credit for thinking that we were parting for good. Perhaps she did not mean that. Perhaps I could write letters to her. And live...' (Ford 2013, 309)

In this passage from *No More Parades*, Tietjens goes back with his mind to the last departure he had with Valentine Wannop before going back to the War, in order to remember and figure out what actually happened, the things that have been said, withheld and thought. The meeting is based on lack of communication and lack of action, and on the effort of human mind to remember what actually happened. Christopher describes a half-imagined conversation in which no real words of affection have been pronounced but only presumed, taken for granted. The position of the protagonist clashes with the one of other characters, without real dialogue between them. The fact of thinking itself seems to imply the opposition of two perspectives, even if one of the two is only presumed. Ford portrays characters who think in a dialogic manner, whose consciousness unfolds while opposing another. Tietjens seems able to remember what she thought and what he gave her credit for thinking. The dialogic communication between the two seems to take place only in the mind of Christopher, it looks like a fictional and imaginative dialogue. This supposed dialogue that never took place in the real world of the fiction is based on what Tietjens thought she thought. The thoughts of Valentine, however, still represent that ‘otherness’ with which his consciousness clashes. It is a perfect example of hidden dialogue where the words and positions of the other speaker are taken for granted, even supposed. Christopher himself apparently knows that there is no way to know what she was actually thinking, that all his guessing is useless and there is no good in his speculating. However, the dialogic meeting of the positions of the two different characters takes place for real in the mind of Tietjens and has, as a consequence, its own dignity and value.

Moreover, the entire narration is structured as a dialogic composition. The novel’s structure follows the multiplicity of consciousnesses that clash with one another in a never-ending dialogic opposition. James Heldman describes the structure of the narration itself as made of “shifting points of view” (Heldman 1972, 273). He identifies four distinct points of view: the conventional commenting and judging omniscient narrator, most typical of the Victorian novel, the relatively impersonal dramatic or objective narrator that speaks in impersonal and descriptive voice and presents the scene, the narrator that employs a third person narrative and a focused internal narrative of the thoughts of individual characters and, finally, the internalised first person narrator in which the narrator as presenter has disappeared and the character’s thoughts are presented directly (Heldman 1972, 273). As Sabbagh states,

“nearly all the action is represented or presented to the reader in the zig-zag dialectic of the inner and outer dialogues of all the character” (Sabbagh 2014, 169).

Thus, dialogism is a structural element of the narration itself. The different perspectives and points of view of the characters run after each other, thanks also to the time-shifting and flashbacks of which the narration is composed. Time-shifting makes the events overlap and the different perspectives of the characters on them meet and oppose. In fact, as it is mostly entirely a focused narration generated through a recurrent use of flashbacks, the narrative is always filtered by the perspective of a different consciousness. This is the texture of *Some Do Not* that is built on the interweaving of the conscious and unconscious minds of its main characters. As already highlighted, the narration is based on the idea of a subjective and cubist kind of knowledge, introduced by Tietjens himself at the end of *Some Do Not* while discussing with Valentine their two different perspectives on the war:

‘You and I are like two people ...’ He paused and began again more quickly: ‘Do you know these soap advertisements that read differently..... As you come up to them you read “Monkey’s Soap”; if you look back when you’ve passed it’s “Needs no Rinsing.” ... You and I are standing at different angles, and though we both look at the same thing we read different messages. Perhaps if we stood side by side we should see yet a third ... (Ford 2013, 207)

In *No More Parades*, when Sylvia goes to Rouen to meet Christopher, the narration allows three different perspectives to overlap at the same moment, highlighting the dialogic character of the tetralogy itself. Sylvia allows Christopher to read a series of letters that she has withheld from him up to this point. Among these is a letter from Mark that Sylvia has already read. As Christopher reads the letter, Sylvia simultaneously recites it in her head from memory, allowing us, the readers, to read it as well. Sylvia is able to see herself from the perspective of Mark as she remembers his sardonic description of her efforts to persuade him to withhold an income Christopher had previously refused from his brother. As Sylvia recalls Mark’s letter, then, the reader is party to an overlapping of perspectives. Mark’s own words about Sylvia and Valentine are heard at the same time as Sylvia’s response to them. Moreover, the reader can contemplate Christopher reading it to himself and, knowing well Christopher’s feelings about the money, about Sylvia, and about Valentine, imagine his intellectual response to it. Thus three minds are brought before the reader, with their own styles and voices, in

response to the same matter, in a very cubist way. In this scene, there is an overlapping of many consciousnesses.

As already stated, the same event, thanks to the structure of the composition, is commented on by different perspectives and voices that create an inner dialogism. The entire last novel of the tetralogy, *The Last Post*, represents exactly an additional interpretation over the events of the previous novels, from the additional perspectives of minor characters that had not enough space to speak beforehand. In the tetralogy, some events recur many times, each time adding a different meaning or point of view to the layering of meaning already present in the polyphony of the narration. The idea at the core of the tetralogy itself is based on dialogism, as the romance between Christopher and Valentine is idealistically dialogic. Tietjens' longing for her is not sexual, but dialogic. He wants to seduce her in order to be able to have with her a life-long conversation. Love itself is, then, described as a dialogic meeting between two 'othernesses':

The beastly Huns! They stood between him and Valentine Wannop. If they would go home he could be sitting talking to her for whole afternoons. That was what a young woman was for. You seduced a young woman in order to be able to finish your talks with her. You could not do that without living with her. You could not live with her without seducing her; but that was the by-product. The point is that you can't otherwise talk. You can't finish talks at street corners; in museums; even in drawing-rooms. You mayn't be in the mood when she is in the mood – for the intimate communication that means the final communion of your souls. You have to wait together – for a week, for a year, for a lifetime, before the final intimate conversation may be attained ... and exhausted. So that ...

That in effect was love ... (Ford 2013, 557)

Here, dialogic communication is considered “the final communion” of souls and the essence itself of real love. Thus, the ultimate declaration of love is the desire to talk, to create a lifetime dialogue with another consciousness in order to get deeper in oneself and find a meaning in the aftermath of events.

Each perspective is opposed to the previous one or the following. Reaching a definite and objective truth about human identity is not possible, so readers do not get to know who the character really is, but “*how* is conscious of himself” (Bakhtin 2014, 49). An absolute and definitive answer does not exist and is not possible. The narrative could go on forever as it is built on a human subject, the continuous dialogue that every man has with himself that is in its own nature open-ended. In both Dostoevsky and Ford, a finalizing discourse and answer

is made impossible, the questions of the characters are doomed to reverberate in a continuous and open-ended inner dialogue (Bakhtin 2014, 251). Ford portrays the ontological human desire to know oneself and find a meaning to one's own actions to stop being the laughingstock of a mocking destiny. In Modernism it is impossible to reach an objective and absolute truth about human nature and the surrounding world. The institutions and values that protected men have become empty structures no longer able to convey any meaning or security.

In *The Last Post*, as already highlighted, every event, especially the ones of ambiguous nature, like the paternity of Silvia's son and the death of Christopher's father, are commented on again from the perspective of Mark Titejens and apparently come to a clarification. The character of Mark comments and evaluates all the actions and decisions of the other characters again to try to achieve a final truth. However, the only thing he is actually able to achieve is his subjective and personal truth, that is the one according to him, his way of thinking and his consciousness. On the other hand, Tietjens' speculations about other characters' intentions and thoughts are, as already stated, totally conjectural and debatable, as well as the other characters' speculations about him. As in Dostoevsky, the characters are able to reach only for the truth of their own consciousness (Bakhtin 2014, 55). In Ford, truth is never wholly reached as it is given full play to the different interpretations and evaluations of the characters that are totally subjective and sometimes even in opposition. It can be said that in Ford there is no ultimate truth as every action, word, tone and thought can assume a different meaning, significance and intention from the perspective of the other characters. Thus, everything is filtered through the subjectivity of that particular consciousness and cannot be taken as true for the others. Characters can achieve meaning but not a totalized truth.

In Ford, the thoughts, impressions and evaluations of others about the main characters create a web of voices as important as the thoughts of the protagonists. In the tetralogy, characters' voices are more important than actions, as the plot sometimes take input from what the characters are rumoured to do than from what they really do (Bakhtin 2014, 207). Readers share the knowledge that the Englishmen represented by Ford also quite ironically don't express themselves and their feelings to others: "... we exchanged no confidences ... A disadvantage of being English of a certain station" (Ford 2013, 308). The entire narration, then, is based on a lack of communication between the characters. Christopher and Sylvia never speak:

‘If,’ Sylvia went on with her denunciation, ‘you had once in our lives said to me: “You whore! You bitch! You killed my mother. May you rot in hell for it ...” If you’d only once said something like it ... about the child! About Perowne! ... you might have done something to bring us together ...’ (Ford 2013, 153)

Christopher and Valentine also never speak, while Christopher never speaks with his brother Mark and with his father as in the family they are all laconic and taciturn. He never speaks to Macmaster either as he always prefers to keep silence on his inner self due to a great love of privacy:

And, indeed, with him, the instinct for privacy – as to his relationships, his passions, or even as to his most important motives – was as strong as the instinct of life itself. He would, literally, rather be dead than an open book. (Ford 2013, 304)

The longing for privacy and discretion as well as the desire to hide his feelings and protect Sylvia’s and his name’s reputation characterize Christopher. In the conversation Christopher has at the beginning of *Some Do Not* with General Campion he prefers not to speak, leaving, then, room for misunderstanding. Then, *Parade’s End* is characterized by the efforts minor characters do to understand or figure out Tietjens’ apparently contradictions and real intentions, and at the same time by their inability to catch them:

‘Because,’ Mark said with emphasis, ‘you treat these south country swine with the contempt that they deserve. They’re incapable of understanding the motives of a gentleman. If you live among dogs they’ll think you’ve the motives of a dog. What other motives can they give you?’ He added: ‘I thought you’d been buried so long under their muck that you were as mucky as they!’ (Ford 2013, 190)

Mark’s words highlight a common characteristic of human nature that causes the greatest misunderstandings between people: ascribing to others one’s proper motives, reasons and feeling instead of distinguishing their otherness and their qualities. Macmaster, General Campion, Mark Tietjens and others make suppositions and rumours about Tietjens’ inner self and private life but they are not able to find the totalized truth that lies inside the man. His inner self and its reasons belong only and exclusively to Tietjens and sometimes not even he is able to fully comprehend his choices and actions. The minor characters are represented while desperately trying to understand the nature of the hero, but, at the same time, are doomed to stay forever un-finalized and undecided. In the polyphonic novel the essence of

the protagonist's self-consciousness, in this case Christopher, cannot be caught by others (Bakhtin 2014, 62). Apparently only Valentine is able to get Christopher's real essence:

‘Because, ‘the girl said, ‘it’s the way your mind works ...It picks up useless facts as silver after you’ve polished it picks up sulphur vapour; and tarnishes! It arranges the useless facts in obsolescent patterns and makes Toryism out of them ... I’ve never met a Cambridge Tory man before. I thought they were all in museums, and you work them up again out of bones...’ (Ford 2013, 120)

As already highlighted, in *Parade's End*, the identity of the main characters seems to be strictly bound up with what other people think of them, in spite of the truthfulness of it. This leads to a clash of identities, perspectives and visions. The narration itself is a continuous and open-ended dialogue with itself that could go on forever. Ford portrays a slice of modern reality through a polyphony of voices. Like Dostoevsky, Ford felt the dialogism of his epoch and detected this particular *dialogic relationship* among voices, their dialogic interaction (Bakhtin, 2014, 90). He does not portray only the perspectives of the main characters but also the minor, always opposing and contrasting them. The single truth of the character is always compared to the other characters' perceptions of it. Like Giovanni Pirandello, Ford represents the multiple identities of the fragmented human subject susceptible to various perspectives of different individuals.

Moreover, the focus of Ford's narration is the inner and psychological insight of his characters. In his novel, the self-consciousness of the characters unfolds through an internal dialogism: “the dialogue is to show the developing affects and effects of character” (Ford qtd. in Sabbagh 2014, 180). Therefore, most of the dialogues that compose the narrative happen inside the characters' minds. Actually, in Ford, dialogues are mostly inner and addressed to oneself. In *Parade's End*, the characters express themselves mostly in a dialogic form. They have a dialogic self, “a dancing open soul to the other within the self, open to play and change, but with enough original structure to allow for this” (Sabbagh 2014, 182). Ford, like Dostoevsky, understood the dialogic nature of human thought that is the core of the polyphonic novel. He portrayed the work of human thinking in Hannah Arendt's terms:

“Mental activities ...and...especially thinking – the soundless dialogue of the I with itself – can be understood as the actualisation of the original duality or the split between the me and myself which is inherent in all consciousnesses. (Arendt qtd. in Sabbagh 2014, 183)

According to Bakhtin, the genuine life of the person of the character is made available only through a *dialogic* penetration of his personality, “during which it freely and reciprocally reveals itself” (Bakhtin 2014, 59). Moreover, according to Sabbagh:

...the continuous presentation of the workings of single consciousnesses is not one of monologues but of dialogues with the self; that is to say, the inner reality is able to take into account its own realm of objectification, which, in part, allows for the ambiguity about action and events, about external reality in the first place. This is also another way that Ford renders his impressionist “homo duplex”, through selves’ reflexive dialogues - the characterological or internal variant of it. (Sabbagh 2014, 180)

In the polyphonic novel, as well as in *Parade’s End*, the voices of the characters are shattered and divided (Bakhtin 2014, 254) and the characters appear to double themselves in the process of thinking. Ford’s characters are inwardly doubled and inclined to what Bakhtin calls “internal dialogization” (Bakhtin 2014, 237). In Ford, there are many interior dialogues between the two selves of the same characters in which, sometimes, also the words, thoughts and statements of other people not present at the moment of thinking are taken into consideration and evaluated, sometimes even supposed. The orientation of one person to another person’s discourse and consciousness is not only the basic theme of Dostoevsky’s work (Bakhtin 2014, 207) but also of Ford’s work. Actually the thoughts of the characters can give voice to dialogic and conflictual perspectives.

Moreover, in the polyphonic novel, the characters are portrayed in moments of inner and personal crisis, on the threshold of huge turning points in their lives. Dostoevsky represented men always on the thresholds of a decision or a moment of crisis, a turning point of their souls (Bakhtin 2014, 61) and Ford does exactly the same. This allows the works to give full play to the wandering and shattering of the characters’ consciousness and minds. The tetralogy represents the inner conflicts of men and women facing the great revolution of the changing of the world and values they used to know and respect. The entire tetralogy is, then, set in a moment of universal crisis, the burst of World War I, and represents a monumental crisis (Sabbagh 2014, 182). Modernist novels are built on critical moments, on the acknowledgment that men are going through a moment of decay, of transition and crisis (Sabbagh 2014, 177). Moreover, the entire tetralogy represents characters at turning points. For example, *Some Do Not* is set on the day of the summer solstice, a day of transition, and moves later on to Tietjens’ last night in London before returning to the war. *A Man Could*

Stand Up, on the other hand, is set on Armistice Day, on the outset of a new order of things, when Christopher and Valentine are on the threshold of finally committing to each other, after a decade of wavering.

Parade's End is, then, a *bildungsroman* as the characters of Christopher, Valentine and Sylvia, throughout the narration, turn their initial positions upside down and embrace big changes in their lives. The personal growth of the characters, however, is made possible only through a constant and incessant process of self-analysis and interior dialogization. Inner dialogues about ultimate life decisions and questions are characteristic of the polyphonic novel as dialogism is present in every single form of dialogue. Inner dialogues, then, unveil the double voice and conflicts of the shattered characters:

The inner dialogues in these novels are always questioning, always posing different options and perspectives against each other within the single self: this is part of the selves' self-objectification and countenancing of otherness within the rubric of a nominal unity. (Sabbagh 2014, 193)

As a consequence, Ford makes great use of inner dialogues instead of inner monologues to represent the dialogism of his characters' consciousnesses, as has already been shown. Like in Dostoevsky, his characters address themselves and have inner dialogues directly with their under selves. Therefore, real fictional dialogues happen in the minds of the characters much more than in the real world of narration. Thus, Ford's characters frequently become victims of their own unconscious thoughts. Characters are victims of their "under self" that take part in multi-layered internal dialogues in their minds. Some of the characters are even aware of their subconscious alter ego. For example, Valentine in *Some Do Not* shows that she is aware of both her conscious and under self that struggle inside her mind:

... What on earth did she want, unknown to herself?

She heard herself saying, almost with a sob, so that she was evidently in a state of emotion: 'Look here! I disapprove of this whole thing: of what my father has brought me to! Those people ... the brilliant Victorians talked all the time through their hats. They evolved a theory from anywhere and went brilliantly mad over it. Perfectly recklessly ... Have you noticed Pettigul One? ... Hasn't it occurred to you that you can't carry on violent physical jerks and mental work side by side? I ought not to be in this school and I ought not to be what I am!'

At Miss Wanostrocht's perturbed expression she said to herself: 'What on earth am I saying all this for? You'd think I was trying to cut loose from this school! Am I?' (Ford 2013, 471)

Here Valentine not only talks to herself but also addresses directly her under self and questions it. In the passage, the conflict between the hidden desires and longings of the unconscious self of Valentine and her rational side, that tries to understand the nature of her own feelings, is very evident. Christopher, Valentine, Sylvia and occasionally other minor characters like Macmaster and General Campion go through psychic and interior conflicts. For example, when General Campion writes a letter to the Secretary of State for War concerning Christopher, he finds himself asking and addressing himself about what to do, as if he was talking to some stranger and other consciousness:

At the end of each sentence that he wrote – and he wrote with increasing satisfaction! – a mind that he was not using said: 'What the devil am I going to do with that fellow?' Or: 'How the devil is that girl's name to be kept out of this mess?' (Ford 2013, 410)

General Campion not only addresses himself directly, but also appears to be subject to a sort of splitting of his mind. Another mind, that is not his conscious and rational one, but one over which he has no control ("a mind he was not using"), steps in to question directly him. Moreover, like Valentine, Christopher is also self-aware of his double self and inner struggles that unfold in his interior dialogization:

He exclaimed to himself: 'By heavens! Is this epilepsy?' He prayed: 'Blessed saints, get me spared that!' He exclaimed: 'No, it isn't! ... I've complete control of my mind. My uppermost mind.' (Ford 2013, 435).

As has been shown, Christopher is aware of the duplicity of his mind and, at the same time, addresses himself dialogically. He appears to be able also to control the working of his mind. Christopher is probably the character who goes through the majority of inner conflicts and dramatic decisions, the most aware and at the same time the most shattered:

Now: what the Hell was he? A sort of Hamlet of the Trenches? No, by God he was not ... He was perfectly ready for action. Ready to command a battalion. He was presumably a lover. They did things like commanding battalions. And worse!

He ought to write her a letter. What in the world would she think of this gentleman who had once made improper proposals to her; balked; said 'So long!' or perhaps not even

‘So long!’ And then walked off. With never a letter! Not even a picture-postcard! For two years! A sort of Hamlet all right! Or swine!

Well, then, he ought to write her a letter. He ought to say: ‘This is to tell you that I propose to live with you as soon as this show is over. You will be prepared immediately on cessation of active hostilities to put yourself at my disposal. Please. Signe, Xtopher Tietjens, Acting O.C. 9th Glams.’ A proper military communication. She would be pleased to see that he was commanding a battalion. Or perhaps she would not be pleased. She was a Pro-German. She loved these tiresome fellows who tore his, Tietjens’, sofa-cushions to pieces. (Ford 2013, 557)

The passage shows the internal conflicts of Tietjens, his shattered psyche and his never-ending self-analysis that comes to be expressed in a dialogic way. He questions himself about his own nature and makes an effort to figure out the possible thoughts and evaluations of another character, Valentine. The dialogic conflict takes place not only between the upper and the under selves of the character thinking, Tietjens, but also between them and the other consciousness of Valentine. Throughout the tetralogy, Christopher’s consciousness is rendered not as an internal monologue, but as an inner dialogue:

... His voice – his own voice. Came to him as it from the other end of a long-distance telephone. A damn long-distance one! Ten years...

If then a man who's a man wants to have a woman.... Damn it, he doesn't! In ten years he had learnt that a Tommie who's a decent fellow His mind said at one and the same moment, the two lines running one over the other like the two subjects of a fugue: ‘Some beguiling virgins with the broken seals of perjury’, and: ‘Since when we stand side by side, only hands may meet!’

He said: ‘But damn it; damn it again! The beastly fellow was wrong! Our hands didn't meet ... I don't believe I've shaken hands I don't believe I've touched the girl...in my life ... Never once! ... Not the hand-shaking sort ... A nod! ... A meeting and parting! ... English, you know ... But yes! She put her arm over my shoulders ... On the bank! ... On such short acquaintance! I said to myself then ... Well, we’ve made up for it since then. Or no! Not made up! ... Atoned ... As Sylvia do aptly put it; at that moment mother was dying ...’

He, his conscious self, said: ‘But it was probably the drunken brother ... You don’t beguile virgins with the broken seals of perjury in Kensington High Street at two at night supporting, one on each side, a drunken bluejacket with intermittent legs ...’ (Ford 2013, 249)

The passage is not only a dramatization of the dialogic working of Christopher's thought but it also emphasises the opposition of his conscious and under selves. The opposition reflects the continuing debate in Tietjens' mind between what he wants and what he thinks he ought to do, which always puts him in a position of conflict. The conflict reflects the tension between the outer and inner life of the characters, between the private and the social dimension. This continues throughout the novel and indicates not only the characters' growing sense of disparity between the two, but the force and validity of their subjective perception(s) of reality. Moreover, the passage not only shows the dialogic working of Christopher's thoughts but also his awareness of it. The dramatization of the characters' thoughts in a dialogic form continues throughout the tetralogy, as it appears to be the device chosen by Ford to represent human thinking:

The old lieutenant said: 'Hotchkiss . . .' And Tietjens exclaimed: 'Of course it's Hotchkiss ... I've seen your name signing a testimonial to Pigg's Horse Embrocation ... Then if you don't want to take this draft up the line ... Though I'd advise you to ... It's merely a Cook's Tour to Hazebrouck ... No, Bailleu l... and the sergeant-major will march the men for you ... And you will have been in the First Army Lines and able to tell all your friends you've been on active service at the real front'

His mind said to himself while his words went on ...' Then, good God, if Sylvia is actively paying attention to my career I shall be the laughing-stock of the whole army. I was thinking that ten minutes ago! ... What's to be done? What in God's name is to be done?' A black crape veil seemed to drop across his vision . . . Liver ... (Ford 2013, 282)

Again, the process of the character's thinking is rendered in the real form of a dialogue, exactly as if Christopher's mind was talking to itself. The working of consciousness is expressed through a dialogic interrogation: the upper and rational mind addresses itself about the best way to proceed. However, Christopher is not the only character who expresses himself through an inner dialogue with his under and subconscious self:

She said to herself: 'Is this to go on for ever?' Her hands were ice-cold. She touched the back of her left hand with the fingers of her right. It was ice-cold. She looked at her hands. They were bloodless...She said to herself: 'It's pure sexual passion...it's pure sexual passion...God! Can't I get over over this?' She said: 'Father! ... You used to be fond of Christopher ... Get our Lady to get me over this ...It's the ruin of him and the ruin of me. But, oh damn, don't! ... For it's all I have to live for ...' She said: 'When he came mooning back from the telephone I thought it was all right ... I thought what a heavy

wooden-horse he looked ... For two minutes ... Then it's all over me again ... I want to swallow my saliva and I can't. My throat won't work ...' (Ford 2013, 356)

These inner dialogues can be also with absent or hidden speakers that are actually not present in the moment of speaking, but nonetheless form part of real inner dialogues. For example, in the passage above, a dialogue takes place in Sylvia's mind between her and Father Consett, who is not only absent from the scene, but also dead. However, she establishes a real conversation with her dead father, taking for granted his thoughts and his position on Christopher, so that the actual presence of the father is not actually necessary. Thus, these dialogues are often between more than two people, the characters, their inner and shattered selves and the perspective of another character that is, somehow, implied and taken into consideration in the narration and in their process of thinking. Moreover, as we can see in the passage above, the narration makes up for the lack of communication between the characters with half-imagined communication that establishes a new kind of dialogism throughout the tetralogy.

Finally, *Parade's End* embodies and perfectly represents the polyphonic novel studied by Bakhtin and realized by Dostoevsky. The tetralogy is polyphonic: it portrays a plurality of voices, perspectives and points of view that the narrator skilfully puts into a dialogic opposition. In a very modernist way, through focused narration and free indirect speech, Ford is able to free his characters from his own control and judgment and give total independence to their voices and consciousnesses. They are not only free and independent but they also embody their own proper visions and ideologies. The voice of the author is only one among the many more of the tetralogy, as each character has the possibility to express their own proper language and vision in opposition to that of others.

The composition of the narration itself enables the interweaving and overlapping of perspectives and visions. The scenes and macro-sequences of which the narration is composed are linked together by the recurrent use of time-shifts that makes the focused perspectives of the different characters meet and confront. A suspenseful plot is totally irrelevant in this kind of novel as the main focus is the developing of the characters' consciousness and their subjective response to the external events of the narration. Ford's main focus is on the unfolding of human consciousness and its ontological search for meaning, self-analysis and introspection. He wanted to represent the inner side of men and have psychological insights into them. The real plot lies inside them and consists of their infinite search for significance.

The narration itself, then, is made up of a plurality of consciousnesses that unfold themselves in an open ended process of self-analysis and dialogic thoughts. Throughout the narration, they keep pondering over themselves, other characters' evaluations that compose the tetralogy and the fictional events that influence them. In fact, dialogism is the main characteristic of the polyphonic novel. In *Parade's End*, the characters' voices and consciousnesses reveal themselves in a process of continuous dialogism. While the fictional lives of the characters lack of communication, their inner ones are characterized by never-ending dialogues. Their voices express themselves through inner dialogues. The characters have real inner dialogues with their inner selves, their under selves, as human thoughts take expression only through inner dialogism. The characters are doubled and find a way of expressing themselves not through monologues but through dialogues between their conscious and unconscious selves.

Moreover, these dialogues take the positions and voices of other characters into consideration. These characters are physically absent from the scene, but ideologically present and relevant to the thinker. The characters unfold their own consciousnesses through a dialogic process, as only the meeting between two othernesses can engender authentic thought. Only through a dialogic opposition can they discover themselves and their positions. Dialogism pervades every level of *Parade's End*, while polyphony shapes its structure.

7. CONCLUSIONS:

In this dissertation I have analysed Ford Madox Ford's tetralogy *Parade's End*, by taking into account Gérard Genette's taxonomic standpoints and Mikhail Bakhtin's literary theories about modernist novels, underlining the complexity and manifold character of Ford's four novels, their modernist and innovative aspects, as well as their more traditional and conservative sides. By doing so, taking into consideration both technical devices and critical theories, the innovatory strength of the tetralogy compelled approaching it under different angles and lights, to capture the inexhaustibility of its possible readings and its universal value. The aim was to underline how, on the one hand, Ford's work places itself, after a systematic analysis of its narrative mode, in the modernist trend and, on the other hand, stands out for its new artistic position, embodying perfectly the dialogism and polyphony that characterize the greatest innovators in the realm of artistic form, like the Russian author Fëdor Dostoevsky.

The attempt to provide a systematic and taxonomic description, in Genette's terms, of the different modes of narration employed by Ford is due to clarify his innovative and discrepant technical devices used to portray the workings of the human mind and consciousness with a very impersonal and detached narrative voice. The compelling nature of the narrative is due to Ford's intention to plunge the readers into his characters' minds, while using a quiet and unobtrusive style. This dissertation provides many different examples of the devices employed by Ford to reach his purpose, like internal focalization, stream of consciousness and free indirect speech, to underline how *Parade's End* mediates between modernist innovations and realist traditions. The thesis attempts at showing how the urgent and personal necessity to become a historian of the human condition and capture the wanderings of human mind, while shattered under the pressure of coming modernity, compelled Ford to become a modernist promoter, but in a very personal way. The study provides examples of both more innovative and original devices as well as more traditional ones, emphasizing how the narration constantly moves from the ones to the others, creating a unique way of presenting the trauma of the human mind and its way to deal with a changing reality.

Furthermore, the dissertation has taken an insight into the chronotope of the narrative, by using Bakhtin's definitions and examples, to underline the subjective value of time and space in *Parade's End* and illustrate the image of man it portrays. What has been pointed out

is how, in Ford's tetralogy, everything acquires meaning according to its resonance in the characters' interiority, as the majority of action and events happen inside the characters' minds. Therefore, human consciousness becomes a place of intersection of temporal and spatial sequences, and man is portrayed in his private dimension. As far as the image and position of man in the novel, the dissertation has urged that he is portrayed at the threshold of important decisions and changes, at a breaking point of his life, and is, thus, subjected to internal change and development. How historical time and personal time intersect into war has been underlined, the historical cataclysm that compels Ford's hero to change, to go through a process of metaphorical fall and rebirth. On the other hand, it has been shown how the physical space of the narrative is filled with real meaning and is crucial to the hero's fate. Additionally, an entire chapter has been devoted to take insights from the narrative's representation of time.

The dissertation has offered a deep analysis of *Parade's End* treatment of time, being a crucial element of Ford's mode of narration. Like space, time in *Parade's End* is subjective and internal, measured through human consciousness, in accordance to Bergsonian duration. Internal time is the temporal dimension of the narrative, in open opposition with chronological and external time. The thesis has attempted to illustrate how Ford translates this modernist and innovative conception of time into technical devices, underlining how this renders the tetralogy compelling for its readers. It has provided examples of the different ways through which Ford disrupts the chronological asset of time and the linear and progressive plot. What has been emphasized is how this is achieved in two different ways: by moving backward and forward in the narration through time-jumps and temporal ellipsis, and by following the associative order of human memory, its flashbacks and overlapping and layered impressions and interpretations. The characters are portrayed while busy repeating and re-living the events filtered through their own subjectivity. Specifically, the thesis emphasizes the importance for Ford of representing the wanderings of human mind and its personal response to outer events.

In the last part, insights haven been drawn from the polyphonic nature of *Parade's End* and its consequential dialogism. Ford represents characters independent from his authorial voice, free to express themselves and take part in the polyphonic painting that is reality. The thesis has illustrated how the structure of the tetralogy itself favours the meeting and opposition of a plurality of voices, alongside perspectives and points of view, the overlapping of the characters' impressions and perspectives, enabling the polyphony and the dialogism of

the narrative. Different examples have been provided of how dialogism pervades the text and distinguishes characters' processes of thinking. It has been shown that characters are busy in inner dialogues with their inner and under selves, as well as with the positions and voices of other characters physically absent but ideologically present, discovering themselves and their positions only through a dialogic opposition necessary to the unfolding of their consciousnesses.

Thus, with *Parade's End*, Ford Madox Ford succeeds not only in creating a portrait of the man of his time, but also in representing the human condition in its contradictory aspects. He is not only an historian of his age, but also a master psychologist in capturing the internal conflicts, longings and impulses of men, as well as in depicting the working and wandering of their mind and the intrinsic dialogism of their thoughts.

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