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“Lots of Lovely Language”:
A Narratological and Stylistic Analysis of
John Banville’s *The Sea*

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1. INTRODUCTION

The thesis at hand is concerned with a narratological and stylistic analysis of John Banville's novel *The Sea*, which was awarded the prestigious Man Booker Prize in the year 2005. The interest in this novel was sparked off over two years ago, when I was required to read it for a seminar and became immediately intrigued by it.

The final inspiration for this thesis, as well as its title, was provided by a critic of the *Daily Telegraph* who deplores the "story deficiency" of the novel and says that "[t]here's lots of lovely language, but not much novel".¹ In the following analysis of the novel, it will be revealed just how poetic the language is and how the so-called "story deficiency" makes room for a captivating character portrayal. *The Sea* is not a novel that excels by means of a breathtaking action, but it is a wonderfully crafted aesthetic achievement. In order to fathom what makes the novel so fascinating, a study of its narrative technique and style is indispensable because, as Ira Konigsberg puts it,

Only through narrative technique can we perceive the world of the novel, can we make it, to some degree, our own, and can we fuse our own subjectivity with the subjectivity within the text. [...] Narrative technique must be understood in the way it fosters both an emotional and an intellectual involvement within the reader by provoking specific mental acts of perception, cognition, and judgement. (262)

Narrative technique is, therefore, the most important starting point for an analysis and interpretation of the novel because it is responsible for the reader's emotional response to and judgement of it. Therefore, a large part of this study is devoted to aspects of narratology, namely the figure of the narrator in the first chapter, perspective and focalization in the second chapter, the narrative modes in the third chapter, the representation of speech and thought in the fourth chapter, and the novel's complex temporality in the fifth chapter. However, in the case of *The Sea*, a study of its narrative technique alone is not sufficient because it also excels through a highly poetic prose and an extremely original and symbolic use of language that is laden with intermedial references. Therefore, the sixth chapter is concerned with aspects of style in *The Sea*, particularly with the use of rhetorical figures and the poetic characteristics of Banville's prose, and the seventh and last chapter is concerned with intermediality.

¹ See <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/3643199/Wave-after-wave-of-vocabulary.html> (8 March 2009).

2. THE NARRATOR

There are innumerable scholars who have concerned themselves with narrative technique. The chapters to come will largely be following the theories of Franz K. Stanzel and Gérard Genette which, although they have already been published several decades ago and are considered dated by some researchers in the field, provide a very good tool for the analysis to be undertaken here. According to Stanzel, there are three constitutive elements of the narrative situation, namely person, perspective and mode (see *A Theory of Narrative* 5). Although the structure of the present paper shall by no means provide a hierarchical ordering, the placement of the chapter about the narrator at the beginning was deliberate because it will lay the groundwork for the later analyses. Moreover, as the Dutch theorist Mieke Bal pointed out, “[t]he narrator is the most central concept in the analysis of narrative texts. The identity of the narrator, the degree to which and the manner in which that identity is indicated in the text, and the choices that are implied lend the text its specific character” (*Narratology* 19).

The first aspect to be analyzed, then, with regard to the narrative situation, is the identity of the narrator in the text. If “[t]he world of the characters is completely identical to the world of the narrator” (Stanzel 4), then there is a first-person narrative situation, and it is easy to observe that this is the case in *The Sea*. Very quickly, it becomes obvious that the narrator refers to himself as “I”; however, the presence of the first person pronoun is not sufficient for a first-person narrative situation because a third-person narrator can refer to himself as well. Still, we soon learn that Max Morden has lived through the events he recounts and that, therefore, *The Sea* is a story of personal experience, which results in a first-person narrative situation.

The precedent paragraph has made evident that Stanzel’s terminology is slightly mischosen because many readers will associate the term *first-person narrative situation* inevitably with the personal pronoun. The Genettian terms are, therefore, more adequate and in the case of *The Sea*, the narrator is homodiegetic because he is “present as a character in the story he tells” (*Narrative Discourse* 245). Moreover, Max Morden is an autodiegetic narrator because he is the protagonist of his story.

One of the most important aspects to be analyzed in a first-person narrative situation is the distinction between the ‘experiencing self’ and the ‘narrating self’. The experiencing self produces an effect of authenticity and immediacy which makes the reader feel as if

he were directly present. The narrating self, on the other hand, reflects on previous experiences and comments on his state of affairs. It also openly announces its presence and, consequently, the reader always knows that the story is mediated. Due to the reflections or comments made by the narrating self, it can usually be identified more easily than the experiencing self, as can be seen in the following quotation:

On that afternoon, the rainy Saturday afternoon of this momentous kiss *I am about to describe* [emphasis added], Chloe and I were sitting in the middle of a bench near the front, so close to the screen that it seemed to tilt out over us at the top and even the most benign of the black-and-white phantoms flickering across it loomed with a manic intensity. (143)

However, as already becomes obvious from this passage, the distinction between the narrating self and the experiencing self is not always clear-cut and it can be quite tricky to discern which part of the narrator is rendering the story. In the quotation above, we can only say without a doubt that it is the narrating self which is recounting the prepositional clause at the beginning of the sentence. However, there are no indications whatsoever after the phrase in italics which would make it possible to identify either the narrating self or the experiencing self. On the one hand, the narrator employs the past tense in this quotation, which creates quite a big distance and, therefore, suggests that it is rendered by the narrating self. On the other hand, the scene above is very vividly presented and seems quite authentic and immediate to the reader and, thus, it could also be rendered by the experiencing self.

In the following quotation, the narrating self is easier to identify because there are more reflections and comments. Already the verbs in the first sentence reveal that the passage is rendered by the narrating self because the verb ‘recall’ creates a big distance between the experiencing self which experienced the kiss and the narrating self which only remembers it. In the same vein, the present perfect tense and the adverb ‘then’ in the third sentence separate the two phases of the narratorial “I”. The most obvious indication for the narrating self is italicized and shows the narrator struggling for the most adequate description of this kiss:

I do recall a kiss, one out of the so many that I have forgotten. Whether or not it was our first kiss I do not know. They meant so much then, kisses, they could set the whole kit and caboodle going, flares and firecrackers, fountains, gushing geysers, the lot. This one took place – *no, was exchanged – no, was consummated, that is the word* [emphasis added], in the corrugated-iron picture-house, which all along has been surreptitiously erecting itself for this very

purpose out of the numerous sly references I have sprinkled through these pages. (141-142)

There are also instances where the experiencing self becomes immediately obvious, as in the following quotation, which is combined with quoted interior monologue and, therefore, establishes a great extent of immediacy and authenticity:

The conversation did not flow. Miss Vavasour was nervous still and the Colonel's stomach rumbled. Late sunlight striking through a bush outside in the blustery garden dazzled our eyes and made the things on the table seem to shake and shift. I felt over-sized, clumsy, constrained, like a big delinquent child sent by its despairing parents into the country to be watched over by a pair of elderly relatives. Was it all a hideous mistake? Should I mumble some excuse and flee to a hotel for the night, or go home, even, and put up with the emptiness and the echoes? (148-149)

Another obvious instance of the experiencing self is the following quotation, which is largely narrated in the present tense and, therefore, achieves an even greater extent of immediacy:

Nor did she stop there, but, flushed with that initial triumph, and seizing the advantage offered by my temporary infirmity, went on to direct, a figurative hand cocked on her hip, that I must pack up and leave the Cedars forthwith and let her take me home – home, she says! – where she will care for me, which care will include, I am given to understand, the withholding of all alcoholic stimulants, or soporifics, until such time as the Doctor, him again, declares me fit for something or other, life, I suppose. What am I to do? How am I to resist? She says it is time I got down seriously to work. 'He is finishing,' she informed her betrothed, not without a gloss of filial pride, 'a big book on Bonnard.' I had not the heart to tell her that my Big Book on Bonnard – it sounds like something one might shy coconuts at – has got no farther than half of a putative first chapter and a notebook filled with derivative and half-baked would-be aperçus. *Well, it is no matter. There are other things I can do. I can go to Paris and paint. Or I might retire into a monastery, pass my days in quiet contemplation of the infinite, or write a great treatise there, a vulgate of the dead, I can see myself in my cell, long-bearded, with quill-pen and hat and docile lion, through a window beside me minuscule peasants in the distance making hay, and hovering above my brow the dove refulgent. Oh, yes, life is pregnant with possibilities* [emphasis added]. (259-260)

As will be seen later in the chapter on temporality, there is a very interesting and highly complex use of narrative tenses in *The Sea*. Without wanting to anticipate too much, it can be said at this point that the narrative past does not always refer to past events and that the narrative present does not always designate present happenings. However, in the quotation above, the "discourse-now" and the "story-now" are identical, which is to say

that the events are rendered at the same moment that they happen. Technically, of course, this is not possible because a narrator can either render his story in writing or in telling. Obviously, he could never write quickly enough to render the happenings at the exact moment they occur; and, consequently, he could never achieve concurrent narration. With telling, it is not hard to see that the same is the case. In fact, there is a more than obvious gap in the rendering above: “‘He is finishing,’ she informed her betrothed, not without a gloss of filial pride, ‘a big book on Bonnard’,” the narrator tells us, directly quoting his daughter, but inserting a comment of his own. Evidently, during the time it takes him to make this comment, his daughter has long finished her sentence and the “discourse-now” and the “story-now” do not coincide any longer.

Still, although it is obvious at closer investigation that there cannot be concurrent narration, we get the impression that this is the case and, because the “discourse-now” and the “story-now” are the same, the narrating self and the experiencing self are set in the same point in time and there is no clear distinction between them any longer. However, in the quotation above there are no narratorial comments (apart from the one just mentioned, and the parenthetical phrase about shying coconuts), which makes it easy to identify the experiencing self, especially in the part italicized which is an interior monologue.

However obvious the above examples of the narrating self and the experiencing self may be, they are not easy to spot in the novel and, as was shown in the first quotation, in most cases, the distinction between the narrating self and the experiencing self is not easy. Following the theory of Franz Stanzel, *The Sea* is a quasi-autobiographical novel – autobiographical, clearly, because the narrator remembers his life, but only quasi because he just recounts selected passages and because he is a fictional persona – in which the two phases of the narratorial “I” are in constant tension:

The characteristic feature of the quasi-autobiographical first-person narrative situation is the internal tension between the self as hero and the self as narrator. In an earlier book, I suggested the terms ‘experiencing self’ and ‘narrating self’ for these two phases in the life of the narratorial ‘I’. The narrative distance separating the two phases of the narratorial ‘I’ temporally, spatially and psychologically, is generally a measure of the intensity of the process of experience and education to which the narrating self was subjected before it began the narration of its story. The narrative distance (between the narrating and the experiencing self) is, therefore, also one of the most important points of departure for the interpretation of the quasi-autobiographical first-person novel. The variety of its form extends from identification to complete estrangement between the narrating and the experiencing self. (Stanzel 212-13)

In the special case of *The Sea*, the experiencing self is also fairly hard to identify because a large part of the story is told in retrospection and, therefore, the past tense is employed, which does not produce an effect of immediacy. But even in a past tense context there is a strong focus on the narrator's feelings and sensations and, consequently, much of the story is rendered by the experiencing self. However, the experiencing self in *The Sea* very rarely occurs in isolation because the narrating self, which is older and wiser, often intervenes in the narration of the experiencing self and inserts many comments.

Another aspect that is highly important in the first-person or homodiegetic narrative situation is the question of the narrator's reliability. As is obvious, homodiegetic narrators, qua dramatized narrators, are marked by their human limitations, and especially by their lack of omniscience. Consequently, because a first-person narrator only knows his particular perspective on certain events and does not know the thoughts and feelings of other characters, we can never fully trust that what he narrates is true. This does not mean, however, that a homodiegetic narrator is automatically unreliable.

In fact, the concepts of *reliability* or *unreliability* are highly complex and controversial. It was in the 1960s when Wayne C. Booth first introduced the terms with the following definition: "[...] I have called a narrator *reliable* when he speaks for or acts in accordance with the norms of the work (which is to say, the implied author's norms), *unreliable* when he does not" (158-159). Hailed at first for describing a concept that was intuitively always understandable but never put into words, this definition soon met its criticisms because it is very vague and does not answer the question of how a narrator's reliability or unreliability is actually detected. The vagueness of this definition is due to the fact that it hinges on the implied author, a concept that is very slippery and elusive itself and will not be dealt with here in any more detail because it is not particularly relevant for the present paper. Still, it can be seen that Booth's attempt at a definition of unreliability, albeit praiseworthy, was almost immediately doomed to fail because it described a highly opaque and complex notion via a concept that was just as, or perhaps even more, obscure. The implied author, however, would not even have been the main problem of Booth's definition if he had gone on to describe how unreliability can be detected. This is a problem that has concerned narratologists ever since, and in 2005, Ansgar Nünning made the attempt at a solution. "Unreliability is an effect that most readers intuitively recognize" ("Reconceptualizing Unreliable

Narration” 91), he wrote, and although this does not give the reader a recipe of how to identify unreliable narrators, we know now that we can (at least partly) trust our spontaneous impressions when reading a text. And this is exactly why it will be claimed here that the narrator in *The Sea* is unreliable. When still unfamiliar with any narrative theory whatsoever, I felt that the narrator was not to be trusted completely already after the very first reading of the novel, even though I could not really put my finger on the reasons for his unreliability. Research for the present paper has not only shown that this feeling was justified, but also produced results which make it possible to prove the narrator’s unreliability.

Before embarking on a more detailed analysis of why Max Morden is not reliable, it is, however, crucial to mention that there are several kinds of unreliability. Although she did not explicitly state this, Rimmon-Kenan was the first to point out this problem when she wrote: “An unreliable narrator [...] is one whose rendering of the story and/or commentary on it the reader has reasons to suspect” (100). Accordingly, a narrator may be unreliable in that he renders the story incorrectly, or, alternatively, he might narrate the events exactly as they happened, but misinterpret them. The first critic to explicitly define such a distinction was Susan Lanser, who proposed the term *unreliable narrator* for the first case and *untrustworthy narrator* for the second one (see Nünning, “Reconceptualizing Unreliable Narration” 93).

Apart from this distinction, it is essential to differentiate between different reasons for unreliability, like “the narrator’s limited knowledge, his personal involvement, and his problematic value-scheme” (Rimmon-Kenan 100).

The first reason was already adumbrated above – due to his embodiment in the story, a homodiegetic narrator can only have limited knowledge. A first-person narrator has no privilege over the other characters whatsoever; he is just an ordinary person like every one of us and, obviously, does not know the thoughts and feelings of the people around him. The second reason is equally obvious: due to his personal involvement, a narrator can never attain the psychological distance that would be necessary for an objective and, consequently, reliable rendering of the story. Obviously, the more the narrator is personally involved, the more his rendering will be laden with subjective interpretations, which make him an unreliable narrator. It is with the problematic value-scheme that we enter a dodgy area and have to face questions that are difficult, if not impossible, to answer. What exactly is a “problematic” value-scheme and who decides

on which value-scheme is “problematic” and which one is “normal”? Again, we are with Nünning’s theory of intuition and, basically, with reader-response theory, which claims that every reader constructs the meaning of a text himself.

In this context, it is also interesting to consider more closely the age in which Banville wrote and published *The Sea*. Although he does not want to be considered a postmodern writer, he cannot deny the era of production he is in, which is, whether he likes it or not, postmodernism. Especially in this age we are confronted with the claim that there is no absolute truth, and this inherently nihilistic world-view is transferred to fiction, positing that readers have to actively interact with the text in order to arrive at an interpretation.

Coming back to Booth’s definition, we can see now that there are no inherent “norms of the work.” Indeed, it is the reader who constructs the norms himself, which shows that the notion of reliability is dependent on the individual. Reliability or unreliability, respectively, is mostly a construction by the reader, a consequence of subjective interpretation that differs from person to person. The individual, then, might consider a narrator to be unreliable due to his “unacceptability of his [moral] philosophy in terms of normal moral standards or of basic common sense and human decency” (Riggan qtd. in Nünning 97). Finally, the reader thus is not dependent on his intuition alone, but has some clues how to interpret the narrator. Basically, the interpretation process involves an analysis of the narrator’s moral standards and his human decency, which the individual reader juxtaposes with his own ideas of human decency and moral standards. At the end of the day, every reader has to decide for himself whether, according to these findings, he considers the narrator to be reliable or not.

After this longish theoretical excursus, it is now possible to say that in the case of *The Sea*, as in probably most novels, there is no definite proof of the narrator’s reliability or unreliability. There might be a number of readers who consider Max Morden reliable, and they will have sufficient evidence to make this claim. Personally, however, I think that we must read his story with caution because he is not completely trustworthy. However, it is also important to say that the terms *reliability* and *unreliability* do not constitute a binary opposition (see Nünning, “Unreliable Narration” 13). In fact, there is a range of nuances between these extremes. The claim that the narrator in *The Sea* is not completely reliable, therefore, is not equivalent to saying that he is totally unreliable. With Riggan’s discussion of unreliability, then, it is quite easy to see why I have reservations concerning Max Morden.

First of all, although the summer in Ballyless was allegedly such an important time for him, there are some explicit textual indications that show that he does not remember it very clearly, as in: “In fact, I do not recall under what circumstances exactly I managed eventually to get inside the Cedars” (85). Reading how Max fantasized about getting inside the Cedars, one might expect him to remember the first time he finally set foot in this house, home to “the gods”, and for him the epitome of a happier life.

Below is another quotation that shows that Max does not remember the past very well:

When exactly I transferred my affections [...] from mother to daughter I cannot recollect. [...] No, I recall no grand moment of recognition and acknowledgment, no slipping of Chloe’s hand shyly into mine, no sudden stormy embrace, no stammered profession of eternal love. That is, there must have been some or even all of these, must have been a first time we held hands, embraced, made declarations, but these first times are lost in the folds of an ever more evanescent past. (140-141)

This quotation is even more conclusive because, even if “getting inside the Cedars” is not a particularly memorable event for him, a person usually remembers his or her first love, which Max does not.

He also openly states that he does not remember the Graces very clearly, which is especially evident in the following citation: “I keep going up close to them, the two Graces, now mother, now daughter, applying a dab of colour here, scumbling a detail there, and the result of all this close work is that my focus on them is blurred rather than sharpened, even when I stand back to survey my handiwork” (224). This passage is particularly significant because of the imagery of painting, which will be considered in more detail below. However, it can already be stated at this point that Max does not, and maybe does not even want to, remember the past, but consciously reinvents it by “applying a dab of colour here, scumbling a detail there.” To a large extent, therefore, he does not narrate the past – he paints it. Painting being a very creative process, he does not have to adhere to the facts, but can “apply colours” and “scumble” just as he likes. As Stanzel says, “a first-person narrator not only remembers his earlier life, but can also re-create phases of it in his imagination. His narrating is, therefore, not strictly confined to the horizon of experience of the experiencing self” (82).

What Max renders, then, is not the traumatic long-ago summer, but an idealized version of the past. This is made evident by the very name he gives to the Graces: the “gods”, he calls them on more than one occasion – ethereal beings endowed with superhuman

qualities. In fact, the terms *human* and *god* are intrinsically contradictory because human beings have flaws and make mistakes, whereas gods are superior to them in every respect. The fact, then, that Max constantly refers to them as “the gods”, makes obvious that he, in utter idealization, depicts them as they never could have been. He frees them of their mistakes and human flaws, although they have quite many – Chloe is a very aggressive, at times even malicious, young girl; Myles is her mysterious twin brother who does not speak although the doctors could never find a medical reason for his muteness; and their mother is perhaps secretly in love with the governess. It is not hard to see that they are anything but god-like, but Max is not aware of it, or notices it but does not want to admit to himself just how flawed they are and, therefore, denies their mistakes.

What remains to be clarified, now, is why Max renders a picture of the past that is anything but realistic. Of course, the traumatic summer was set about fifty years prior to the act of narrating and there might be the one or the other detail which Max has indeed forgotten. For instance, he says: “I do not recall there having been a hallway here” (156), a fact which is not very surprising because he did not spend so much time inside the Cedars and can hardly be expected to remember its architecture in all its details.

However, to a large extent, he consciously misrepresents the past and he must have motives for that. Considering the episodes when Max talks about his wife and daughter, it becomes obvious that he did not have the best relationship to them. He loved his wife, he says, but he also admits: “I have come to realise how little I knew her, I mean how shallowly I knew her, how ineptly [...] Was I too lazy, too inattentive, too self-absorbed? Yes, all of those things [...]” (215). Moreover, he seems quite contemptuous of her aspirations to become a professional photographer: “Did I seem to disapprove of her attempts to be an artist, if taking snapshots can be considered artistry?” (176). This quote reveals two important facts about Max: for one, he does not consider photography as art and secondly, because Anna was “only” a photographer and not concerned with “serious” art like him, he regards her as inferior to him. After reading these utterances by Max, the questions arise why a man who sincerely loved his wife would ridicule her in a way like this and, by implication, if he really loved her as much as he tells us.

With his daughter Claire, a similar problem arises because Max says: “What age is she now, twenty-something, I am not sure” (43). Immediately afterwards, he says that his daughter is very intelligent and although he does not explicitly state it, it is possible to

detect a trace of fatherly pride in his descriptions. Again, one might wonder why a father who, although he begrudges his daughter for not being as breathtakingly beautiful as her mother, is proud of her for being “quite the bluestocking” (43-44) does not even know her age. This is where the narrator’s value-schemes and moral standards come in, which are very problematic. In our society, family constitutes one of the most important values and for the reader it might seem strange that Max Morden does not attach much importance to it. In fact, he contradicts himself because on the one hand, he is (or pretends to be) deeply struck by the death of his wife and on the other, he does not take her aspirations seriously.

Apart from the narrator’s problematic value-schemes, there is yet another reason for unreliability, the most obvious one, which is the narrator’s limited knowledge. In the case of *The Sea*, a particularly evident example of this is the episode when Max is sitting on a tree and overhears Rose talking to Mrs. Grace: “Of Rose’s tremulous hiccupy words the ones I caught were *love* and *foolish* and *Mr Grace*, and of Mrs Grace’s responses only a shouted *Carlo?* followed by an incredulous whoop. Suddenly the train was there [...]” (231).

During their whole conversation, Max had been hearing the approaching train, and due to this noise, and Rose’s shaky voice, he could not understand properly what they were saying. He even openly admits to not hearing everything when he says: “Of Rose’s tremulous hiccupy words *the ones I caught* [emphasis added] [...]” However, he does not even think about other possibilities of what they could have talked about, but immediately jumps to conclusions and cannot wait to tell Chloe about his discovery. To a certain extent, it is not his fault because he is convinced that he is telling the truth; however, this passage still makes him unreliable because the reader now knows that what he has recounted was false and we can never be sure that all the other things he tells are correct.

Another aspect that also has to be taken into account is the fact that due to the retrospective character of the story, the narrator can deliberately choose which pieces of information to disclose and which ones to withhold. We are at the narrator’s mercy, and to a certain extent, we have to trust that what he says is true because we cannot call into question the whole story; however, it is possible that the narrator intentionally leads us astray.

Such intentions are, of course, not mentioned explicitly in the text, but we do get to know a lot about Max's personality. We know for sure that he has never managed to get a grip on his life – he has been working on a book on the painter Bonnard for ages, but for some reason does not manage to finish it. He even says about himself:

[...] work is not the word I would apply to what I do. Work is too large a term, too serious. Workers work. The great ones work. As for us middling men, there is no word sufficiently modest that yet will be adequate to describe what we do and how we do it. *Dabble I do not accept* [emphasis added]. It is amateurs who dabble, while we, the class or genus of which I speak, are *nothing if not professional* [emphasis added]. [...] *We are not skivers, we are not lazy* [emphasis added]. In fact, we are frenetically energetic, in spasms, but we are free, fatally free, of what might be called *the curse of perpetuance*. *We finish things* [emphasis added][...] (41)

Again, it is obvious that his statements are partly very contradictory to his actions. He says that he does not dabble, whereas in fact, while observing him, the reader can see that dabble is all he does. Moreover, he calls himself professional, which reveals that he has quite a high opinion of himself which is not always justified because a professional person would not have such a bad working morale. However, it is not only his actions which contradict his statements, but his statements contradict themselves. This can be seen particularly clearly in the last sentence of the quotation above because persons who are “free of the curse of perpetuance” will not be very likely to finish things.

The most interesting part of this quote is, however, when Max says: “We are not skivers, we are not lazy.” He might not consider himself a lazy person, and this is where the most important, yet also most implicit, reason for his unreliability comes in. As has already been said, he does not get his life under control, and he also tells us why this is the case: he is “bereaved and wounded and require[s] indulging” (50). In fact, although he does not explicitly tell us so, he is so traumatized by the deaths of Chloe and his wife that all he does is lick his wounds and reflect on these disturbing and painful events. He, therefore, uses his loss as an excuse for not managing to pick up the pieces of his shattered life. Traumatized as he might be, he could still make an effort to deal with these blows of fate together with his daughter. However, while mourning for her mother, Claire realizes that life goes on and tries to make the best out of it, whereas her father's way of coping is complete withdrawal and indulgence in his love of the bottle. Incidentally, his fondness of alcohol is another reason for his unreliability. We do not know at what points of his narration he is drunk – in fact, we only know for sure that he

is sober at the ending; but theoretically, the rest of the story might be rendered in a state of inebriety.

After the distinction between the narrating self and the experiencing self and the discussion of reliability, another element that is important considering the figure of the narrator is the fact that “[t]he first-person narrator is very concretely an embodied self, that is to say, his corporeality is part of his existence as an experiencing subject” (Stanzel 90).

Indeed, there are many references to the physical condition of the narrator in *The Sea* and there are several descriptions of his physical appearance. We know about his “inordinate and absurd size” (128), we know that his beard is “of a peculiar dark-rust colour” (128) and that his hair is greying. We also learn that, due to his state of mind, his physical condition and his appearance are getting worse and worse, which is most clearly stated in the following quotation:

This morning it was the state of my eyes that struck me most forcibly, the whites all cracaleured over with those tiny bright-red veins and the moist lower lids inflamed and hanging a little way loose of the eyeballs. I have, I note, hardly any lashes left, I who when young had a silky set a girl might have envied. At the inner extremity of the upper lids there is a little bump just before the swoop of the canthus which is almost pretty except that it is permanently yellowish at the tip, as if infected. And that bud in the canthus itself, what is that for? Nothing in the human visage bears prolonged scrutiny. The pink-tinged pallor of my cheeks, which are, I am afraid, yes, sunken, just like poor Vincent’s, was made the more stark and sickly by the radiance reflected off the white walls and the enamel of the sink. (131)

At first glance, all these references might not seem particularly important; however, they are highly significant to the story and to the construction of the narrating instance. As has already been established above, Max Morden is a homodiegetic or first-person narrator. Moreover, as is not hard to discern, he is an overt narrator, defined by Manfred Jahn as a narrator

who refers to him/herself in the first person [...], one who directly or indirectly addresses the narratee, one who offers reader-friendly exposition whenever it is needed [...], one who exhibits a ‘discoursal stance’ or ‘slant’ toward characters and events, especially in his/her use of rhetorical figures, imagery, evaluative phrases and emotive or subjective expressions [...], one who ‘intrudes’ into the story in order to pass philosophical or metanarrative comments, one who has a distinctive voice. (*Narratology* N3.1.4)

Evidently, the counterpart to the overt narrator is the covert narrator and, as will be seen later in the chapter on narrative modes, the narrator in *The Sea* is one who chooses to reveal or hide himself just as he pleases. Moreover, there are different degrees of covertness or overtness, respectively; just as it was the case with the pair of *unreliability* and *reliability*, they do not form a binary opposition. The novel, therefore, has to be split up into various parts which have to be considered in isolation because, at times, the narrator is fairly covert, and at times, he is more overt. However, the above-mentioned embodiment of the narrator is highly essential because it hinders the narrator to withdraw completely. As has already been said above, Max Morden does not narrate the story as much as he paints it, and he also literally paints himself by giving such a detailed description of his physical appearance. Obviously, by definition, a completely covert narrator never reveals himself and remains an abstract figure throughout the whole narrative. Max Morden, in contrast, is anything but an abstract figure and he is rather like a real person standing in front of us.

Clearly, the passages in which the narrator withdraws are the parts which are rendered by the experiencing self and, therefore, seem unmediated. However, although he does not openly mediate the story, the reader always knows that there is a narrator and that, therefore, the story is highly mediated, even though there is no explicit evidence for it.

This embodiment of the narrator and the consequent open mediation have some serious implications for a reading of the novel. First of all, as has already been said above, the narrator is overt to a high degree and even the passages which are not rendered by the narrating self are clearly mediated. Therefore, we have even more reason to doubt the narrator's reliability because we know that the passages rendered by the experiencing self are also influenced by the narrating self. Hence, although it might seem that there are many passages which are textually represented in just the way the events happened, we know that this is not the case and that, although not explicitly, the narrating self could intervene with the experiencing self, resulting in a rendering of the story that does not completely adhere to the facts.

This is an effect which does not really evoke sympathy in the reader and which, therefore, is hardly intentional on the part of the narrator. As a matter of fact, however, this is an unintended but inevitable by-product of Max Morden's self-construction as an embodied narrator. The reasons for his doing so are, although not textually indicated, not hard to see due to the other facets of his personality. As has been discussed at great

length, Max Morden is an unreliable narrator who uses Chloe's and his wife's deaths as an excuse for not managing to cope with his life. The underlying motivation for this is, of course, that there is hardly a person who does not feel sympathy for other people when hearing about their loss. Obviously, then, he wants us to feel pity for him because he has experienced such terrible loss and he wants our understanding for his retreat to Ballyless, for rejecting his daughter, and for not finishing, not even properly starting, his book on Bonnard. Why he wants to arouse the reader's compassion is, again, not hard to discern: if he did not do it, the reader would not be blinded by his sympathy, but would very quickly detect his questionable value-schemes.

The claims that have been made about the narrator might seem like harsh judgments and a playing down of his loss. Of course, it will never be possible to know the narrator's true intentions, but the aim of the present chapter was to reveal that he is not unlikely to deceive us. Naturally, every reader has to decide for himself how he interprets the character of the narrator and whether he believes him or not; however, personally, I think that there is sufficient explicit textual as well as implicit evidence to claim that the narrator is not completely reliable and that he wants to present himself in a positive light.

As a final comment on this chapter, it has to be mentioned that Max Morden is not the only narrator in the novel. Certainly, on the discourse level, he is the sole narrating instance because the whole story is told by him. However, considering the story level, it can be seen that the other characters in the novel (apart from Myles, who remains silent) act as narrators, too. There is Anna, talking to Max about her illness; Claire, talking about her deceased mother and arguing with her father; Miss Vavasour, making the usual small talk between lodger and landlord with Max; and on the story level fifty years prior to the act of narrating there are Chloe, Mr. and Mrs. Morden who talk. None of the above mentioned aspects are relevant for these characters, however, because their discourse is mediated through Max Morden's eyes and can, therefore, not be analyzed with regard to reliability or the different phases of the narratorial "I".

3. PERSPECTIVE AND FOCALIZATION

After the element person, the second constitutive element of the narrative situation that Stanzel mentions is perspective. The term designates "the way in which [the reader]

perceives the fictional reality” (Stanzel 49). If the point of view is located in the story and in the protagonist, there is internal perspective; and if it is located outside the story, in a narrator who is not the protagonist, but only an “observer or a contemporary of the hero” (Stanzel 49), there is external perspective. As mentioned above, *The Sea* is a quasi-autobiographical novel and, therefore, there can only be internal perspective.

However, due to the fact that Max is a homodiegetic narrator and, therefore, is divided into two phases of the narratorial “I”, we have to differentiate between his narrating self and his experiencing self. Manfred Jahn says that “[w]ith respect to focalization, a first-person narrative can either be told from the hindsight awareness of the narrating I (typical discursal attitude: *Had I known then what I know now*) or from the more limited and naive level of insight of the experiencing I (functioning as an internal focalizer)” (*Narratology* N3.3.2.).

It was already stated above that, although some passages appear to be rendered by the experiencing self, it is not unlikely that the narrating self intervenes, even if this is not textually indicated. Although this aspect has been quite insightful when considering the narrator’s reliability, it has to be approached with more caution pertaining to the element perspective. Of course, the claims made above are merely a product of personal interpretation and can be questioned. However reasonable or unreasonable they might seem to other readers, at this point they become irrelevant anyway. Considering the element perspective, everything that has to be investigated now, according to Stanzel’s definition, is how we perceive the fictional reality. Obviously, if there are no textual indications that the narrating self intervenes, then we perceive the story through the eyes of the experiencing self. Certainly, we know that the narration takes place months and years after certain events and, therefore, the experiencing self is always slightly obscured by the narrating self. However, the narrating self withdraws very skilfully, so that its presence can be neglected at this point. Whether or not the renderings by the experiencing self are reliable is another question and has already been discussed at length.

Considering the element perspective in *The Sea* in more detail, it is evident that the story is told from the perspective of both the narrating self and the experiencing self. There are parts in the novel which are rendered solely by the experiencing self, like the following:

The front door of the house stood wide open, and I could hear voices inside, downstairs, and from upstairs the sound of bare feet running on floorboards and a girl laughing. I had paused by the gate, frankly eavesdropping, and now suddenly a man with a drink in his hand came out of the house. He was short and top-heavy, all shoulders and chest and big round head, with close-cut, crinkled, glittering-black hair with flecks of premature grey in it and a pointed black beard likewise flecked. He wore a loose green shirt unbuttoned and khaki shorts and was barefoot. His skin was so deeply tanned by the sun it had a purplish sheen. Even his feet, I noticed, were brown on the insteps; the majority of fathers in my experience were fish-belly white below the collar-line. He set his tumbler – ice-blue gin and ice cubes and a lemon slice – at a perilous angle on the roof of the car and opened the passenger door and leaned inside to rummage for something under the dashboard. In the unseen upstairs of the house the girl laughed again and gave a wild, warbling cry of mock-panic, and again there was the sound of scampering feet. They were playing chase, she and the voiceless other. The man straightened and took his glass of gin from the roof and slammed the car door. Whatever it was he had been searching for he had not found. As he turned back to the house his eye caught mine and he winked. He did not do it in the way that adults usually did, at once arch and ingratiating. No, this was a comradely, a conspirational wink, masonic, almost, as if this moment that we, two strangers, adult and boy, had shared, although outwardly without significance, without content, even, nevertheless had meaning. He went back inside then, already talking before he was through the door. ‘Damned thing,’ he said, ‘seems to be...’ and was gone. I lingered a moment, scanning the upstairs windows. No face appeared there. (7-8)

Although quite long, this passage is nevertheless worth quoting for two reasons. Firstly, there are no obvious intrusions of the narrating self (although, of course, it might have intervened implicitly and without the reader noticing). There is a great emphasis on detail, which makes the passage very authentic and immediate. In fact, the novel is characterized by longish passages exclusively rendered by the experiencing self, which reveals some skill on the part of the narrating self. For this phase of the narratorial “I”, which has more experience of life, it must cost a certain effort to withdraw so much and exclude any reflections.

The second interesting aspect about the quotation above is the reference to the glass of gin that Mr. Grace is drinking. The fact that Max could see the ice cubes and the lemon slice is obvious, but why exactly a ten-year-old child would know that the drink inside the glass is gin is not that apparent. As Max himself says, he had paused at the gate, so he was not within a distance to smell alcohol and for all that he knows, it could have been a non-alcoholic beverage. In fact, throughout the whole novel there is no indication that Mr. Grace might be a fond drinker, and it seems like young Max is making judgments that he cannot prove.

Coming back to the perspective of the experiencing self, it has to be considered that the action of the novel takes place on several temporal levels. The complex temporality of the novel is subject of chapter five; however, it is already obvious at this point that the narrator remembers different parts of his life. Therefore, the experiencing self is set in various points in time and the passage quoted above took place about fifty years prior to the act of narrating.

Below is another long passage rendered by the experiencing self:

When Anna and I were shown in my eyes were dazzled by a blaze of early-autumn sunlight falling down through those vast panes. The receptionist, a blonde blur in a nurse's coat and sensible shoes that squeaked – *on such an occasion who would really notice the receptionist* [emphasis added]? – laid Anna's file on Mr Todd's desk and squeakingly withdrew. Mr Todd bade us sit. I could not tolerate the thought of settling myself on a chair and went instead and stood at the glass wall, looking out. Directly below me there was an oak, or perhaps it was a beech, *I am never sure of those big deciduous trees, certainly not an elm since they are all dead, but a noble thing, anyway* [emphasis added], the summer's green of its broad canopy hardly silvered yet with autumn's hoar. Car roofs glared. A young woman in a dark suit was walking away swiftly across the car park, even at that distance I fancied I could hear her high heels tinnily clicking on the tarmac. Anna was palely reflected in the glass before me, sitting very straight on the metal chair in three-quarters profile, being the model patient, with one knee crossed on the other and her joined hands resting on her thigh. Mr Todd sat sideways at his desk riffling through the documents in her file; the pale-pink cardboard of the folder made me think of those shivery first mornings back at school after the summer holidays, the feel of brand-new schoolbooks and the somehow bodeful smell of ink and pared pencils. (14-15)

The experiencing self which renders this passage is set in a completely different point in time, namely at the beginning of Anna's illness, which is about one and a half or two years before the time of the main action. Again, there is a strong emphasis on details and the narrator describes the scene so elaborately that the reader feels as if he were directly present. However, this passage is not rendered completely without the occasional intrusion of the narrating self. The parts italicized are reflections or general statements that can only be made by the narrating self.

Another passage rendered by the experiencing self is the following:

The kettle came to the boil and switched itself off and the seething water inside settled down grumpily. I marvelled, not for the first time, at the cruel complacency of ordinary things. But no, not cruel, not complacent, only indifferent, as how could they be otherwise? Henceforth I would have to address things as they are, not as I might imagine them, for this was a new version of reality. I took up the teapot and the tea, making them rattle – *my hands were*

shaking [emphasis added] – but she said no, she had changed her mind, it was brandy she wanted, brandy, and a cigarette, she who did not smoke, and rarely drank. She gave me the dull glare of a defiant child, standing there by the table in her coat. Her tears had stopped. She took off her glasses and dropped them to hang below her throat on their string and rubbed at her eyes with the heels of her hands. I found the brandy bottle and tremblingly poured a measure into a tumbler, the bottle-neck and the rim of the glass chattering against each other like teeth. There were no cigarettes in the house, where was I to get cigarettes? She said it was no matter, she did not really want to smoke. The steel kettle shone, a slow furl of steam at its spout, vaguely suggestive of genie and lamp. Oh, grant me a wish, just the one.

‘Take off your coat, at least,’ I said.

But why at least? What a business it is, the human discourse [emphasis added]. (20-21)

Again, it is possible to observe the intrusion of the narrating self in the phrases italicized and it can be seen that the narrating self has two reasons for intervening. Either it makes present reflections on a past event, as in the quotation about the receptionist above, or it performs an explanatory function for the reader.

A third point in time where the experiencing self is set is the present. The following passage describes the night before the time of narrating:

It was night by now, but instead of staying in my room and going to bed I put the bottle under my coat and went out again. *Of what happened after that I have only jagged and ill-lit flickers of recollection. I remember* [emphasis added] standing in the wind under the shaking radiance of a street light awaiting some grand and general revelation and then losing interest in it before it could arrive. Then I was on the beach in the dark, sitting in the sand with my legs stuck out before me and the brandy bottle, empty now or nearly, cradled in my lap. There seemed to be lights out at sea, a long way from shore, bobbing and swaying, like the lights of a fishing fleet, but I must have imagined them, there are no fishing boats in these waters. I was cold despite my coat, the thickness of which was not enough to protect my hindparts from the chill dampness of the sand in which I was sitting. It was not the damp and the chill, however, that made me struggle to my feet at last, but a determination to get closer to those lights and investigate them; *I may even have had some idea* [emphasis added] of wading into the sea and swimming out to meet them. (253)

As can be easily seen, the perspective of the narrating self has become predominant here because the experiencing self, due to too much alcohol consumption, cannot adequately narrate what happened. However, the state of insobriety of the experiencing self is not the only reason for the predominance of the narrating self. In the following citation, the reader gets to know the perspective of the narrating self almost as much as the one of the experiencing self:

Just now I caught myself at it again, that thin, wintry whistling through the front teeth that I have begun to do recently. *Deedle deedle deedle*, it goes, like a dentist's drill. My father used to whistle like that, am I turning into him? In the room across the corridor Colonel Blunden is playing the wireless. *He favours the afternoon talk programmes, the ones in which irate members of the public call up to complain about villainous politicians and the price of drink and other perennial irritants* [emphasis added]. 'Company,' he says shortly, and clears his throat, looking a little abashed, his protuberant, parboiled eyes avoiding mine, even though I have issued no challenge. Does he lie on the bed while he listens? Hard to picture him there in his thick grey woollen socks, twiddling his toes, his tie off and shirt collar agape and hands clasped behind that stringy old neck of his. *Out of his room he is vertical man itself, from the soles of his much-mended glossy brown brogues to the tip of his conical skull. He has his hair cut every Saturday morning by the village barber, short-back-and-sides, no quarter given, only a hawkish stiff grey crest left on top. His long-lobed leathery ears stick out, they look as if they had been dried and smoked; the whites of his eyes too have a smoky yellow tinge* [emphasis added]. I can hear the buzz of voices on his wireless but cannot make out what they say. I may go mad here. *Deedle dedle.* (8-9)

As was already said above, the experiencing self and the narrating self become identical in the present and, therefore, it is not possible to distinguish their perspective any longer.

Coming back to matters more theoretical, it needs to be said that Stanzel has met some criticism for his term "perspective". Gérard Genette uses the term "focalization" to refer to the same phenomenon, which is explained by Mieke Bal in the following way:

The term focalization is preferable to the traditional terms because it is more "technical" and thereby can be used in a way that is both more restricted and more extensive. The term excludes the psychological meanings of point of view, which is the reason Genette prefers it. At the same time, it can extend to any object of the "gaze," whether that object be a character, a place, or an event. Each of these elements is thus granted comparable status in the structures of narrative. (*On Story-Telling* 91)

In the case of *The Sea*, a replacement of the term "perspective" by the term "focalization" has a significant advantage, but also a considerable disadvantage. The advantage is, of course, that the term "focalization" is more technical and that it works in two directions. According to Bal, it is necessary to distinguish "focalization on" from "focalization through" (see *On Story-Telling* 84). "Focalization through" is equivalent to Stanzel's "perspective". "Focalization on", however, is a phenomenon often neglected and can be compared to Rick Altman's concept of "following". In his *Theory of Narrative*, one of the most recent publications on narratology, he claims that "[t]o

analyze [...] texts as narratives, we need to be able to conceive them as a succession of “following-units”: that is, as a series of segments each made up of that portion of the text where a character (or group of characters) is followed continuously” (22).

As has become obvious from the examples above, focalization in *The Sea* is very complex because it seems at first glance like a definite case of internal fixed focalization. However, it is not completely fixed but constantly shifts between the different experiencing selves. The complexity of focalization is, therefore, probably best visualized by the following table. Since Altman uses his term “following-unit” exclusively for characters, the more general term “focalization on” is used here because focalization is quite often on the weather, a building, or the landscape. Furthermore, the term “experiencing self 1” refers to Max’s childhood, especially the summer he spent with the twins and the time he was alone with his mother; “experiencing self 2” designates the time of his marriage to Anna, and “experiencing self 3” refers to the period after Anna’s death. The column on the very right can be disregarded for the time being because modulations will be considered in more detail below.

Part I

Pages / length	Focalization on	Focalization through	Modulation
3-4 (18 lines)	The sea; birds	Experiencing self 1	hyperbolic
4 (one line)	Max	Experiencing self 3	hyperbolic
4-5 (51 lines)	The Cedars	Experiencing self 3	metonymic
5 (3 lines)	Seafarer	Experiencing self 3	metonymic
5-6 (18 lines)	Lodgers of the Cedars	Experiencing self 1	metonymic
6 (7 lines)	The Graces’ car	Experiencing self 1	metonymic
6 (3 lines)	Chloe	Experiencing self 1	metonymic
6-7 (15 lines)	Mr. Grace	Experiencing self 1	metonymic
7 (4 lines)	Chloe	Experiencing self 1	metonymic
7 (14 lines)	Mr. Grace	Experiencing self 1	
8 (5 lines)	The Graces	Narrating self	hyperbolic
8 (5 lines)	Himself	Experiencing self 3	metonymic
8-9 (20 lines)	Colonel Blunden	Experiencing self 3	hyperbolic
9 (3 lines)	The Graces’ car	Experiencing self 1	metonymic
9 (2 lines)	Bridge	Narrating self	metonymic
9-10 (9 lines)	Mr. and Mrs. Grace	Experiencing self 1	metonymic
10-11 (24 lines)	Myles	Experiencing self 1	metonymic
11 (2 lines)	trees	Narrating self	
11 (4 lines)	Plimsoll	Narrating self	metonymic
11-12 (4 lines)	Colonel Blunden	Experiencing self 3	hyperbolic
12-13 (30 lines)	Ballyless	Experiencing self 1	hyperbolic
13 (3 lines)	Mr. Todd	Narrating self	metonymic
13-14 (9 lines)	Building	Experiencing self 2	metonymic

14 (3 lines)	Receptionist	Experiencing self 2	metonymic
14 (5 lines)	Tree	Experiencing self 2	metonymic
14 (3 lines)	Young woman	Experiencing self 2	metonymic
15 (4 lines)	Anna	Experiencing self 2	metonymic
15-16 (23 lines)	Mr. Todd	Experiencing self 2	metonymic
16-17 (42 lines)	Anna and Mr. Todd	Experiencing self 2	
18 (6 lines)	Anna	Experiencing self 2	metonymic
18-19 (9 lines)	Their house	Experiencing self 2	metonymic
19-23 (104 lines)	Anna	Experiencing self 2	hyperbolic
23 (2 lines)	Colonel Blunden	Experiencing self 3	metonymic
23 (9 lines)	Bedroom + bed	Experiencing self 3	hyperbolic
23-24 (7 lines)	Anna + her death	Experiencing self 3	hyperbolic
24-26 (55 lines)	Dream	Experiencing self 3	hyperbolic
26-33 (194 lines)	The Graces and Rose	Experiencing self 1	metonymic
34-35 (16 lines)	Chalet	Experiencing self 1	metonymic
35 (16 lines)	Max's parents	Narrating self	
35-37 (37 lines)	Max's parents	Experiencing self 1	metonymic
37 (9 lines)	Chloe and Myles	Experiencing self 1	metonymic
37-38 (17 lines)	Max	Experiencing self 1	hyperbolic
38-39 (31 lines)	Miss Vavasour	Experiencing self 3	metonymic
39 (10 lines)	The Cedars	Experiencing self 3	metonymic
39-40 (3 lines)	Weather	Experiencing self 3	metonymic
39-41 (47 lines)	Himself and his work	Experiencing self 3	
41-42 (15 lines)	Himself	Experiencing self 3	metaphoric
42 (5 lines)	Anna	Experiencing self 2	hyperbolic
42-43 (23 lines)	robin, garden	Experiencing self 3	hyperbolic
43-45 (35 lines)	Claire	Experiencing self 3	
45 (16 lines)	Claire, their jaunts	Experiencing self 2	metonymic
45 (7 lines)	Weather, landscape	Experiencing self 3	metonymic
46 (13 lines)	Claire	Experiencing self 3	metaphoric
46 (8 lines)	Anna	Experiencing self 2	hyperbolic
46-48 (37 lines)	Ballyless	Experiencing self 3	metonymic
48-49 (21 lines)	Dog bite	Experiencing self 1	metonymic
49-50 (17 lines)	Ballyless; the Field	Experiencing self 3	metonymic
50-51 (17 lines)	Claire	Experiencing self 3	metonymic
51-53 (60 lines)	Duignan's lane; Duignan	Experiencing self 1	metonymic
53-54 (18 lines)	Duignan's house	Experiencing self 3	metonymic
54-58 (117 lines)	Avril	Experiencing self 3	hyperbolic
58-59 (26 lines)	Golf Hotel	Experiencing self 3	metonymic
59-60 (7 lines)	Weather, the sea	Experiencing self 3	metonymic
60 (6 lines)	Claire	Experiencing self 3	metonymic
60-61 (23 lines)	Max	Experiencing self 3	metonymic
61 (7 lines)	Claire	Experiencing self 3	metaphoric
61 (7 lines)	Myles	Experiencing self 1	hyperbolic
61-62 (11 lines)	Claire; her teddy bears	Experiencing self 2	
62 (9 lines)	Claire	Experiencing self 3	
62-63 (29 lines)	Claire as a teenager and adolescent	Experiencing self 2	

63-64 (23 lines)	Claire	Experiencing self 3	metonymic
64-65 (17 lines)	Waiter	Experiencing self 3	metonymic
65 (9 lines)	Man in the lobby	Experiencing self 3	hyperbolic
65-67 (50 lines)	Claire; their house	Experiencing self 3	metonymic
67-68 (11 lines)	Max	Experiencing self 3	metonymic
68 (13 lines)	Miss Vavasour	Experiencing self 3	hyperbolic
68-69 (10 lines)	Claire	Experiencing self 3	
69 (6 lines)	Claire as a child	Experiencing self 2	
69 (6 lines)	Claire	Experiencing self 3	metonymic
69 (5 lines)	Max	Experiencing self 3	metaphoric
69-70 (21 lines)	Max's body	Experiencing self 2 + 3	hyperbolic
71 (18 lines)	Silence at night; sickness	Experiencing self 3 + 1	metonymic
72 (13 lines)	Miss Vavasour and Colonel Blunden	Experiencing self 3	hyperbolic
72-73 (26 lines)	The Graces; Max's parents fighting	Experiencing self 1	hyperbolic
73-74 (32 lines)	Gods; Greek myths	Experiencing self 1	metaphoric
74-76 (36 lines)	"love among the big people" (75)	Experiencing self 1	hyperbolic
76-77 (23 lines)	The Cedars + garden	Experiencing self 1	metonymic
77-84 (178 lines)	Chloe and Myles	Experiencing self 1	metaphoric
84 (6 lines)	Max's dog	Experiencing self 1	metaphoric
84-85 (18 lines)	Myles	Experiencing self 1	metonymic
85-90 (120 lines)	Mrs. Grace	Experiencing self 1	metonymic
90-92 (71 lines)	The Graces	Experiencing self 1	hyperbolic
92-96 (99 lines)	Max	Experiencing self 1-3	hyperbolic
96-99 (77 lines)	Anna and her illness	Experiencing self 2	
99-101 (52 lines)	Anna and Max	Experiencing self 2	metonymic
101-103 (49 lines)	Anna's father	Experiencing self 2	
103-104 (22 lines)	Anna	Experiencing self 2	metonymic
104-105 (21 lines)	Max	Experiencing self 2	metonymic
105-106 (33 lines)	Wedding guests	Experiencing self 2	hyperbolic
106-107 (25 lines)	Anna; her illness	Experiencing self 2	metaphoric
107 (2 lines)	Anna's father	Experiencing self 2	hyperbolic
107-108 (9 lines)	Chloe, Myles, Max	Experiencing self 1	other
108 (10 lines)	Max's mother	Experiencing self 1	metaphoric
108-109 (27 lines)	Social structure	Experiencing self 1	metaphoric
109-119 (261 lines)	The Graces	Experiencing self 1	other
119-121 (44 lines)	Religion, priest	Experiencing self 1	other
121-127 (168 lines)	The Graces	Experiencing self 1	hyperbolic
127-132 (132 lines)	Max and his physical appearance	Experiencing self 3	

Part II

135-136 (18 lines)	Chloe, Myles, Max	Experiencing self 1	
136 (16 lines)	Chloe	Experiencing self 1	metonymic
136 (8 lines)	Chloe, Myles, Max	Experiencing self 1	

137 (13 lines)	Chloe, Myles, Max	Narrating self	
137-140 (73 lines)	Chloe	Experiencing self 1	metaphoric
140 (5 lines)	Death	Experiencing self 3	hyperbolic
140 (3 lines)	Anna	Experiencing self 2	hyperbolic
140-141 (30 lines)	Chloe	Experiencing self 1	other
141-142 (11 lines)	Kisses	Narrating self	metonymic
142-143 (30 lines)	Cinema and its proprietor	Experiencing self 1	metonymic
143-144 (18 lines)	Chloe and Myles	Experiencing self 1	other
144-145 (8 lines)	Happiness	Narrating self	
145 (23 lines)	Chloe and Max	Experiencing self 1	hyperbolic
146 (26 lines)	Max and Anna	Experiencing self 3	metonymic
147-148 (52 lines)	Miss Vavasour and Colonel Blunden	Experiencing self 3	metonymic
149 (10 lines)	Max	Experiencing self 3	other
149 (7 lines)	Claire	Experiencing self 3	other
149-150 (17 lines)	Max	Experiencing self 3	metonymic
150-151 (24 lines)	Colonel Blunden and Miss Vavasour	Experiencing self 3	hyperbolic
151-153 (56 lines)	Pierre Bonnard	Experiencing self 3	metaphoric
153-155 (53 lines)	Anna	Experiencing self 2	hyperbolic
155-157 (48 lines)	Miss Vavasour, Colonel Blunden, the Cedars	Experiencing self 3	hyperbolic
157-158 (16 lines)	Birds	Experiencing self 3	other
158-160 (50 lines)	Max	Experiencing self 1	metaphoric
160 (3 lines)	Anna	Experiencing self 1	hyperbolic
160-172 (328 lines)	Chloe and Max	Experiencing self 1	hyperbolic
172-176 (88 lines)	Anna	Experiencing self 2	other
176 (8 lines)	Max	Experiencing self 2	metonymic
176 (11 lines)	Anna	Experiencing self 2	metaphoric
177-179 (58 lines)	Serge	Experiencing self 2	metaphoric
179 (11 lines)	Anna	Experiencing self 2	metonymic
179-180 (31 lines)	Hospital rooms	Experiencing self 3	metonymic
180-182 (56 lines)	Anna's photographs	Experiencing self 2	other
182-183 (24 lines)	Anna	Experiencing self 2	hyperbolic
184 (4 lines)	Chloe	Experiencing self 3	hyperbolic
184-185 (43 lines)	Max	Experiencing self 3	metonymic
185-186 (6 lines)	Max's bed	Experiencing self 3	hyperbolic
186-195 (234 lines)	Miss Vavasour and Colonel Blunden	Experiencing self 3	metonymic
195 (21 lines)	Elephant herds	Experiencing self 3	hyperbolic
196 (4 lines)	Anna	Experiencing self 3	hyperbolic
196-199 (89 lines)	Max's mother and the houses they lived in	Experiencing self 1	hyperbolic
199 (10 lines)	Colonel Blunden and Miss Vavasour	Experiencing self 3	other
199-200 (16 lines)	Colonel Blunden and Max at Pier Head Bar	Experiencing self 3	other
200 (10 lines)	Max and his drinking	Experiencing self 3	metaphoric

200-201 (15 lines)	Pecker Devereux	Experiencing self 3	hyperbolic
201-202 (42 lines)	Miss Vavasour's friend Bun and Colonel Blunden	Experiencing self 3	hyperbolic
203-204 (26 lines)	Max after Anna's death	Experiencing self 3	other
204-206 (74 lines)	Bun, Colonel Blunden, Miss Vavasour, Max	Experiencing self 3	
207 (24 lines)	Max	Experiencing self 3	
207-208 (22 lines)	Max during lunch at the Cedars	Experiencing self 1	other
208-209 (24 lines)	Anna	Experiencing self 2	metonymic
209-211 (55 lines)	Max's mother, Anna, Max	Experiencing self 2	other
211-212 (7 lines)	Anna	Experiencing self 2	other
212-214 (74 lines)	Bun, Colonel Blunden, Miss Vavasour	Experiencing self 3	other
214-218 (87 lines)	Max and Anna	Experiencing self 3 + 2	other
218-219 (22 lines)	Max	Experiencing self 3	metonymic
219-220 (35 lines)	Miss Vavasour	Experiencing self 3	hyperbolic
220-221 (31 lines)	Water butt	Experiencing self 1	metonymic
221-222 (31 lines)	Mrs. Grace and Rose	Experiencing self 1	
223-225 (58 lines)	Rose	Experiencing self 3	metonymic
225-226 (33 lines)	Chloe, Myles, Rose	Experiencing self 1	other
226-227 (37 lines)	The twins, Mr Grace	Experiencing self 1	metonymic
227-228 (28 lines)	Max	Experiencing self 1	metonymic
229-232 (97 lines)	Rose and Mrs. Grace	Experiencing self 1	other
232-233 (13 lines)	Chloe and Max	Experiencing self 1	other
233-235 (63 lines)	Rose, the Graces	Experiencing self 1	hyperbolic
235-237 (49 lines)	Chloe, Myles, Max	Experiencing self 1	metaphoric
237-240 (66 lines)	Anna	Experiencing self 2	hyperbolic
240-242 (50 lines)	Chloe, Myles, Max	Experiencing self 1	metonymic
242-244 (75 lines)	Chloe, Myles, Rose	Experiencing self 1	metonymic
244-247 (65 lines)	Rose, men trying to save the twins	Experiencing self 1	hyperbolic
247-248 (24 lines)	Anna	Experiencing self 3	hyperbolic
248-249 (23 lines)	Miss Vavasour	Experiencing self 3	metonymic
249-251 (47 lines)	Colonel Blunden, Miss Vavasour	Experiencing self 3	metonymic
251-254 (86 lines)	Max	Experiencing self 3	metonymic
254-255 (37 lines)	Colonel Blunden, Max	Experiencing self 3	metonymic
256 (24 lines)	Miss Vavasour and Colonel Blunden	Experiencing self 3	metonymic
256-257 (15 lines)	Max	Experiencing self 3	metonymic
257-258 (39 lines)	Jerome	Experiencing self 3	metonymic
259-260 (27 lines)	Claire	Experiencing self 3	metonymic
260 (16 lines)	Max	Experiencing self 3	metonymic

260-261 (34 lines)	Miss Vavasour	Experiencing self 3	metonymic
261-262 (21 lines)	Colonel Blunden	Experiencing self 3	metonymic
262-263 (11 lines)	Miss Vavasour	Experiencing self 3	hyperbolic
263-264 (36 lines)	the sea	Experiencing self 2	

A thorough analysis of the table yields some interesting results. For one, it is possible to see that Max devotes more following-units to his childhood, and especially to Chloe, than to Anna and his daughter. In fact, apart from minor characters like waiters and Mr. Todd, Claire is the person who is the one textually least represented. In part one, the narrator spends some time on describing her and talking about her childhood, but in part two, Claire is hardly present at all. Anna is mentioned more frequently than Claire, but still not as frequently as Chloe, which can be explained in two ways. Either Chloe was more important to Max, or Anna was more important to him, but he cannot cope with her death and, therefore, mentally and textually represses her. Concluding from textual evidence, the first reason seems more likely because Max openly admits: “What Anna proposed to me, there in the dusty summer dusk on the corner of Sloane Street, was not so much marriage as the chance to fulfil the fantasy of myself” (105). As this quote reveals, Max seems to be a rather egocentric person and Anna is more a means to an end than an end herself.

Another interesting fact about the novel is that Chloe’s following-units are not only greater in number, but considerably longer than Anna’s. In part one, the textual space devoted to Max’s childhood is almost thrice as large as the one about his marriage to Anna, and in part two, it is still twice as large. In part one, five following-units over a hundred lines focus on Chloe or other things about Max’s childhood, whereas only one following-unit of similar length centres on Anna. The longest following-unit takes up some twelve pages and focuses, not surprisingly, on Chloe.

Finally, it can be seen that part one generally has longer and fewer following-units than part two. Because the following-units in part two are shorter and alternate more frequently, this part has a very strong dynamics. The first part seems calm and easeful, whereas the second part hastily constructs itself, brings together all the loose threads by revealing information that has been withheld so far, and finally reaches the dramatic climax with the twins’ death.

After the identification of the following-units, the transitions between them have to be investigated more closely. Rick Altman terms such transitions “modulations” and

claims that there are three main types. The first type, called metonymic modulations, “[...] bring characters into contact within the diegetic space” (23). The second type, metaphoric modulations, “depend on a quality shared by the characters followed in successive following-units” (25). Lastly, hyperbolic modulations “simply jump to a new character without any obvious justification for the introduction of a new following-unit” (24).

Each type of modulation can be found in *The Sea*. A particularly obvious example of a metonymic modulation is the following:

With an impatient gesture she took my hand and pressed it to the barely perceptible mound of one of her breasts the tip of which was cold and hard. On her other side Myles sat with his legs loosely splayed before him, leaning his head back against the wall with his eyes closed. Blindly Chloe reached out sideways and found his hand laying palm-upwards on the bench and clasped it, and as she did so her mouth tightened against mine and I felt rather than heard the faint mewling moan that rose in her throat.

I did not hear the door opening [emphasis added], only registered the light altering in the little room. Chloe stiffened against me and turned her head quickly and said something, a word I did not catch. Rose was standing in the doorway. (241-242)

The following-unit which centres on Chloe and on Myles is brought to an end when Rose enters the hut they are in. From this point on, there is a new following-unit which focuses on the twins and on Rose; and the metonymic modulation is strongly evident, as can be seen in the phrase italicized.

Below are three further examples of metonymic modulations which are, although textually not as evident as the one above, quite easy to identify:

I stumbled out of the waves to find that Chloe had waited for me, on the shore, all the time that I was in the water. She stood huddled in a towel, shivering in spasms; her lips were lavender. ‘There’s no need to show off, you know,’ she said crossly. Before I could reply – and what would I have said, anyway, since she was right, I had been showing off – Myles came leaping down from the dunes above us on wheeling legs and sprayed us both with sand [...] (136)

So there they were, the Graces: Carlo Grace and his wife Constance, their son Myles, the girl or young woman who I was sure was not the girl I had heard laughing in the house that first day, with all their things around them, their folding chairs and tea cups and tumblers of white wine, and Connie Grace’s revealing skirt and her husband’s funny hat and newspaper and cigarette, and Myles’s stick, and the girl’s swimsuit, lying where she had tossed it, limply wadded and stuck along one wet edge with a fringe of sand, like something thrown up drowned out of the sea.

I do not know for how long Chloe had been standing on the dune before she jumped. She may have been there all that time, watching me watching the others. (28-29)

For Anna in her illness the nights were worst. That was only to be expected. So many things were only to be expected, now that the ultimate unexpected had arrived. [...] But she was not in pain, not yet; there was only what she described as a general sense of agitation, a sort of interior fizzing, as if her poor, baffled body were scrabbling about inside itself, desperately throwing up defences against an invader that had already scuttled in by a secret way, its shiny black pincers snapping.

In those endless October nights, lying side by side in the darkness, toppled statues of ourselves, we sought escape from an intolerable present in the only tense possible, the past, that is, the faraway past. (98-99)

There are also variations of metonymic modulations, where the modulation does not work by bringing characters into contact within the same diegetic space, but by shifting the focus from a certain character to the place he or she is in:

Miss Vavasour downstairs is playing the piano. [...] Nowadays she wears her long grey hair, that formerly was so black, gathered into a tight loop behind her head and transpierced by two crossed pins as big as knitting needles, a style that is to my mind suggestive, wholly inappropriately, of the geisha-house. The Japanese note is continued in the kimono-like belted silk dressing-gown that she wears of a morning, the silk printed with a motif of brightly coloured birds and bamboo fronds. At other times of the day she favours sensible tweeds, but at dinner-time she may surprise us, the Colonel and me, coming rustling to the table in a calf-length confection of lime-green with a sash, or in Spanish-style scarlet bolero jacket and tapered black slacks and neat little shiny black slippers. She is quite the elegant old lady, and registers with a muted flutter my approving glance.

The Cedars has retained hardly anything of the past, of the part of the past that I knew here. (38-39)

As could be seen in the table above, metonymic modulations are quite frequent in *The Sea* and together with hyperbolic modulations, they are usually quite easy to recognize. Metaphoric modulations, although not hard to identify either, are fairly rare in the novel, and if they occur, they mostly do not really introduce a new following-unit, which can be seen in the following example:

I find the autumn stimulating, as spring is supposed to be for others. Autumn is the time to work, I am at one with Pushkin on that. Oh, yes, Alexandr and I, Octobrists both. A general costiveness has set in, however, most unPushkinian, and I cannot work. [...] No, I cannot work, only doodle like this.

Anyway, work is not the word I would apply to what I do. Work is too large a term, too serious. Workers work. The great ones work. As for us

middling men, there is no word sufficiently modest that yet will be adequate to describe what we do and how we do it. (40-41).

According to Altman's definition, metaphoric modulations depend on a quality shared by several characters. In the quotation above, the narrator explicitly compares himself to Pushkin, but then immediately continues talking about himself. In the same vein, he likens himself to the "middling men" who do not work; but again this modulation does not introduce a new following-unit.

A similar example is the following, where there is a very quick shift in focus from Max to Anna and back to Max: "Ouch. There is that pricking sensation again. I cannot help wondering if it might presage something serious. Anna's first signs were of the subtlest. I have become quite the expert in matters medical this past year, not surprisingly" (41-42).

However, there are also examples of "real" metaphoric modulations:

Claire drew her head tortoise-fashion deep into the shell of her coat and kicked off her shoes and braced her feet against the edge of the little table. There is always something touching in the sight of a woman's stockinged feet, I think it must be the way the toes are bunched fatly together so that they might almost be fused. Myles Grace's toes were naturally, unnaturally, like that. When he splayed them, which he could do as easily as if they were fingers, the membranes between them would stretch into a gossamer webbing, pink and translucent and shot through leaf-like with a tracery of fine veins red like covered flame, the marks of a godling, sure as heaven. (61)

Neither parent could do proper sign language, and spoke to Myles by way of an improvised, brusque dumb-show that seemed less an attempt at communication than an impatient waving of him out of their sight. Yet he understood well enough what it was they were trying to say, and often before they were halfway through trying to say it, which only made them more impatient and irritated with him. Deep down they were both, I am sure, a little afraid of him. That is no wonder either. It must have been like living with an all too visible, all too tangible poltergeist.

For my part, although I am ashamed to say it, or at least I should be ashamed, what Myles put me most in mind of was a dog I once had, an irrepressibly enthusiastic terrier of which I was greatly fond but which on occasion, when there was no one about, I would cruelly beat, poor Pongo, for the hot, tumid pleasure I derived from its yelps of pain and its supplicatory squirmings. (84)

Finally, there is an example of an explicit metaphoric modulation:

“‘I hope she gets drowned,’ Chloe said, speaking through the window, and gave one of her sharp little nicking laughs. ‘I hope she does’ – *nick nick* – ‘I hate her.’ Last words. It was early morning, just before dawn, when Anna came to consciousness” (237).

However, the fact that this modulation is metaphoric becomes obvious only at the end of the novel. The following-unit which focuses on Chloe stops with the sentence “Last words,” which simultaneously forms the beginning of a new following-unit, centring on Anna. The characteristic shared by Chloe and Anna, therefore, is the fact that they are both about to utter their last words. With Anna, this is immediately obvious because the reader has known from the very beginning of the novel that she is mortally ill. However, a reader not familiar with the novel does not know that Chloe is going to die a few minutes after the quotation above, which makes the modulation seem hyperbolic at first glance.

Hyperbolic modulations are the most frequent ones and occur in several variations. There might be a parenthetical paragraph which sums up the preceding following-unit and then makes place for a new following-unit which has nothing to do with the earlier one, as in:

His eyes were an extraordinary pale transparent shade of blue. He went back inside then, already talking before he was through the door. ‘Damned thing,’ he said, ‘seems to be...’ and was gone. I lingered a moment, scanning the upstairs windows. No face appeared there.

That, then, was my first encounter with the Graces: the girl’s voice coming down from on high, the running footsteps, and the man here below with the blue eyes giving me that wink, jaunty, intimate and faintly satanic.

Just now I caught myself at it again, that thin, wintry whistling through the front teeth that I have begun to do recently. (7-8)

There are also instances of immediate changes, without any transition whatsoever:

Plimsoll. Now, there is a word one does not hear any more, or rarely, very rarely. Originally sailor’s footwear, from someone’s name, if I recall, and something to do with ships. The Colonel is off to the lavatory again. Prostate trouble, I bet. Going past my door he softens his tread, creaking on tiptoe, out of respect for the bereaved. A stickler for the observances, our gallant Colonel. (11-12)

In both of the cases above, the modulation is accompanied by a shift from “experiencing self 1” to “experiencing self 3” which is equivalent to the narrating self. Obviously, this is the case because the narrator remembers a phase of his life, but is then interrupted by

something that happens in the present. A similar example of this is the following quotation, where the narrating self does not intervene to comment on an event in the present, but to provide a general reflection:

‘Listen to this advertisement,’ her father said to no one in particular, and read aloud, laughing, from the newspaper. ‘*Live ferrets required as venetian blind salesmen. Must be car drivers. Apply box twenty-three.*’ He laughed again, and coughed, and, coughing, laughed. ‘Live ferrets!’ he cried. ‘Oh, my.’

How flat all sounds are at the seaside, flat and yet emphatic, like the sound of gunshots heard at a distance. It must be the muffling effect of so much sand. Although I cannot say when I have had occasion to hear a gun or guns being fired.

Mrs Grace poured wine for herself, tasted it, grimaced, and sat down in a folding chair and crossed one firm leg on the other, her beach shoe dangling. (30-31)

Apart from the intrusion of the narrating self, there are other types of hyperbolic modulations. The following quotation shows a shift from “experiencing self 1” to “experiencing self 2”, which is hyperbolic because there is no textual transition:

If the people in the car were his parents had they left the boy on his own in the house? And where was the girl, the girl who had laughed?

The past beats inside me like a second heart.

The consultant’s name was Mr Todd. This can only be considered a joke in bad taste on the part of polyglot fate. (13)

Along the same line, the quotation below shows a shift from “experiencing self 1” to “experiencing self 3” to “experiencing self 2” and finally back to “experiencing self 3”:

How could she be with me one moment and the next not? How could she be elsewhere, absolutely? That was what I could not understand, could not be reconciled to, cannot still. Once out of my presence she should by right become pure figment, a memory of mine, a dream of mine, but all the evidence told me that even away from me she remained solidly, stubbornly, incomprehensibly herself. And yet people do go, do vanish. That is the greater mystery; the greatest. I too could go, oh, yes, at a moment’s notice I could go and be as though I had not been, except that the long habit of living indisposeth me for dying, as Doctor Browne has it.

‘*Patient,*’ Anna said to me one day towards the end, ‘that is an odd word. I must say, I don’t feel patient at all.’

When exactly I transferred my affections – how incorrigibly fond I am of these old-fashioned formulations! – from mother to daughter I cannot recollect. (140)

In the table above, not every following-unit is described with a modulation. This is due to the fact that Altman only uses the term “following-unit” when focalization is on a character. By implication, it follows that, according to his theory, there is only a change in following-units if the focalized character changes. However, for the purposes here, it is more suitable to make supplementary differences between the different times of focalization. So, for example, on pages sixty-one to sixty-four, focalization is always on Claire, but the focalizing character (the experiencing self) changes. Therefore, this passage has been listed in the table by means of four following-units, but due to the fact that Altman’s theory is not strictly followed here, there are no adequate terms for modulations which might describe the transitions between these following-units.

At other instances, Altman’s modulations are not suitable either, although the focalized character changes. Thus, for instance, there is a change in following-units when the narrator says:

By then we were going about everywhere together, Chloe and Myles and I. How proud I was to be seen with them, these divinities, for I thought of course that they were the gods, so different were they from anyone I had hitherto known. My former friends in the Field, where I no longer played, were resentful of my desertion. ‘He spends all his time now with his grand new friends,’ I heard my mother one day telling one of their mothers. (107-108)

In this quotation, the focalized characters are at first Chloe, Myles and Max, but then there is focalization on Max’s mother. Clearly, when the focus is on Max’s mother, there is a new following-unit, but the transition is not describable by either of Altman’s modulations, which is why the ‘modulation’ column has the entry ‘other’ in the table above.

What remains to be discussed is the disadvantage of the term “focalization”. As Genette and Bal say, the term “focalization” does not include any psychological facets, and in the case of *The Sea*, therefore, it can be seen that “perspective” is more adequate because the narrator’s psychological condition is at the heart of the novel. Rimmon-Kenan speaks of “subjective focalization” (80) and indeed, we can see that focalization in *The Sea* is anything but objective. One of the most illustrative examples for this is the opening passage of the novel:

They departed, the gods, on the day of the strange tide. All morning under a milky sky the waters in the bay had swelled and swelled, rising to unheard-of heights, the small waves creeping over parched sand that for years had known no wetting save for rain and lapping the very bases of the dunes. The rusted hulk of

the freighter that had run aground at the far end of the bay longer ago than any of us could remember must have thought it was being granted a relaunch. I would not swim again, after that day. The seabirds mewled and swooped, unnerved, it seemed, by the spectacle of that vast bowl of water bulging like a blister, lead-blue and malignantly a gleam. They looked unnaturally white, that day, those birds. The waves were depositing a fringe of soiled yellow foam along the waterline. No sail marred the high horizon. I would not swim, no, not ever again. Someone has just walked over my grave. Someone. (3-4)

Phrases like “malignantly a gleam” and “unnaturally white” show that there is a strong focus on Max’s individual perception and psychological condition because other characters possibly would not have perceived the sea as malignant and the birds as unnatural. Obviously, then, the term “focalization” alone would be far too technical for this novel because it does not account for the narrator’s state of mind and complex personality.

A final aspect has to be considered which closes the circle to the first chapter. In his *Theory of Narrative*, Stanzel discusses the concept of focusing, a means with which the narrator can direct the readers’ attention to the most essential elements of the narrative. These elements can be themes and motifs, but in a first-person context, “[s]hifting the greater part of presentation either to the narrating or to the experiencing self [...] is also to be understood as focusing” (Stanzel 114). As has already been extensively discussed, the perspective in *The Sea* mainly focuses on the experiencing self and, as will be shown in detail in the next chapter, the narrator largely performs the function of a reflector-character. In this context, it is interesting to consider Stanzel’s claim that “[...] focus can also be observed in the rendering of consciousness. The focus of a reflector-character and, by implication, that of the reader can be directed chiefly either to the perception of events in the external world or to his inner world” (114). Again, it has already been shown above that the focus in *The Sea* is on the narrator’s “inner world.” Considering Mieke Bal’s claim that focalization is “the most important, most penetrating, and most subtle means of manipulation” (171), we can say that this is definitely true of *The Sea*. In the first chapter, it has been elucidated that the narrator very skilfully controls our sympathy, and with the findings of the current chapter, it is now possible to say why he is so successful in doing so. Even though the perspective shifts between the different experiencing selves, it is nevertheless fixed in that it always stays within the narrator. Because of this internal fixed focalization, the narrator manages to manipulate the reader in a very subtle way. Every event is focalized through

the narrator's mind and, consequently, we never get to know the perspective of the other characters which might destroy our sympathy for the narrator.

4. NARRATIVE MODES

The third and last of the constitutive elements of the narrative situation that Stanzel discusses, the element *mode*, is concerned with the mediacy of presentation, that is, with the question "Who is narrating?" (Stanzel 47). As mentioned above, there are two different types of narrator, namely one who reveals himself to the reader and who has an independent personality, and one who withdraws and stays invisible. In the first case, the narrator is overt and the story is rendered in 'reportorial narration' or 'telling' and in the second case, the narrator is covert and there is 'scenic presentation' or 'showing' (see Stanzel 47). Obviously, the term 'showing' has to be approached with care because we do not really see the action presented to us, but only imagine how it could be. Real "showing" can only take place on stage, and as long as we are concerned with written narratives, independently of their genre, 'showing' is just a particular way of telling (see Genette, *Narrative Discourse* 166).

Scenic presentation, then, mainly consists of dialogue and only features some comments to provide the context, as in:

'Look at you, poor Max,' she said to me one day, 'having to watch your words and be nice all the time.' She was in the nursing home by then, in a room at the far end of the old wing with a corner window that looked out on a wedge of handsomely unkempt lawn and a restless and, to my eyes, troubling stand of great tall blackish-green trees. The spring that she had dreaded had come and gone, and she had been too ill to mind its agitations, and now it was a damply hot, glutinous summer, the last one she would see. 'What do you mean,' I said, 'having to be nice?' She said so many strange things nowadays, as if she were already somewhere else, beyond me, where even words had a different meaning. She moved her head on the pillow and smiled at me. Her face, worn almost to the bone, had taken on a frightful beauty. 'You are not even allowed to hate me a little, any more,' she said, 'like you used to.' She looked out at the trees a while and then turned back to me again and smiled again and patted my hand. 'Don't look so worried,' she said. 'I hated you, too, a little. We were human beings, after all.' (154-155)

Another example of scenic presentation, this time rendered by means of indirect discourse, is the following:

On the way home she insisted on taking the wheel, despite my vigorous resistance. [...] I said she should let me drive. She said I was too drunk to drive. I said I was not drunk. She said I had finished the hip-flask, she had seen me empty it. I said it was no business of hers to rebuke me in this fashion. She wept again, shouting through her tears. I said that even drunk I would have been less of a danger driving than she was in this state. So it went on, hammer and tongs, tooth and nail, what you will. I gave as good, or as bad, as I got, reminding her, merely as a corrective, that for the best part, I mean the worst part – how imprecise the language is, how inadequate to its occasions – of the year that it took her mother to die, she had been conveniently abroad, pursuing her studies, while I was left to cope as best I could. This struck home. She gave a hoarse bellow between clenched teeth and thumped the heels of her hands on the wheel. Then she started to fling all sorts of accusations at me. She said I had *driven Jerome away*. [...] How, pray, I asked, controlling myself, how had I *driven him away*? (66-67)

However, scenic presentation can also be achieved if “the action is presented as it is reflected in the consciousness of a fictional character” (Stanzel 143), as in the very beginning of the novel:

They departed, the gods, on the day of the strange tide. All morning under a milky sky the waters in the bay had swelled and swelled, rising to unheard-of heights, the small waves creeping over parched sand that for years had known no wetting save for rain and lapping the very bases of the dunes. The rusted hulk of the freighter that had run aground at the far end of the bay longer ago than any of us could remember must have thought it was being granted a relaunch. I would not swim again, after that day. The seabirds mewled and swooped, unnerved, it seemed, by the spectacle of that vast bowl of water bulging like a blister, lead-blue and malignantly a gleam. They looked unnaturally white, that day, those birds. The waves were depositing a fringe of soiled yellow foam along the waterline. No sail marred the high horizon. I would not swim, no, not ever again. Someone has just walked over my grave. Someone. (3-4)

Stanzel deplors this ambiguity of the term ‘scenic presentation’ and, therefore, draws another distinction, namely one “in terms of the agent of transmission, who generally can be identified more easily and more clearly” (Stanzel 144). In analogy to the terms ‘reportorial narration’ and ‘scenic presentation, or ‘telling’ and ‘showing’, the agent of transmission can either be a ‘teller-character’ or a ‘reflector-character’:

A *teller-character* narrates [...], informs, [...] refers to his own narration, addresses the reader [...], and so on. [...] By contrast, a *reflector-character* reflects, that is, he mirrors events of the outer world in his consciousness, perceives, feels, registers, but always silently, because he never ‘narrates’, that is, he does not verbalize his perceptions, thoughts and feelings in an attempt to communicate them. (Stanzel 144)

Moreover, a teller-character is always aware of the fact that he is standing before an audience and continually reveals this awareness to the readers. In other words, he is a 'transmitter' – he knows that there is a reader and he conveys a message to him. The teller-character can also be seen as "the master of the story" (Stanzel 169). That is to say, he presents the narrated events in an orderly sequence, so that the reader can easily follow the story, and he does not focus on irrelevant aspects. He just renders the most essential facts and, therefore, he has a tendency toward abridgement, whereas a reflector-character might include unnecessary aspects in great detail, which often results in a stream of consciousness. A reflector-character is, furthermore, characterized by his complete withdrawal behind the narrated events. He does not include any comments or evaluations and, therefore, the reader entertains the illusion of witnessing the action directly.

Although teller-characters and reflector-characters are in theory easily separable, they are not so in practice and most narrators exhibit characteristics of both a teller- and a reflector-character. This is precisely the case in *The Sea* as well. Generally, reflector-characters have a certain affinity with internal perspective and having already established the perspective above, we can say that Max Morden is a reflector-character. Moreover, the very storyline suggests that Max is a reflector-character because the whole novel is concerned with him wallowing in his misery and reminiscing and reflecting on events in his life.

However, to some extent Max is also a teller-character. Although he does not present the action in an orderly sequence, he gives us information which we need for a thorough understanding of the story, but which a reflector-character would not remember in this way. For example, before talking about the Graces, he introduces us to the Cedars and says that he spent several summers there as a child. Along the same line, it crosses his mind that the reader might be interested in a description of Chloe's physical appearance: "I have not yet described Chloe. In appearance there was not much difference between us, she and I, at that age, I mean in terms of what of us might have been measured" (137).

Still, he does not provide us with all the information that he knows immediately. In fact, he is continually on a fine line deciding which information he needs to impart in order to make the story understandable and not to make the reader frustrated, and which information to withhold so as to keep the narrative suspenseful. Thus, he tells us quite at

the beginning that his wife was terminally ill so that we can understand his reason for coming to Ballyless, but he does not tell us until the very end that Miss Vavasour and the governess Rose are one and the same person. In that sense, even though his narration is not chronological, he is very clearly the “master of the story” because he processes it in a very good way for his audience. This implies that he knows that there is a reader, although this awareness is never textually indicated, apart from the following two quotations:

“Mark, the issue was not the fact of her being a late-comer in my affections, but her ignorance of that fact” (166).

“Imagine somehow knowing intimately, from the inside, as it were, what another’s body is like, its different parts, different smells, different urges” (80).

A further characteristic of Max as a teller-character is his tendency toward abridgement, which is often the case when he quotes conversations, as in: “Mr Todd launched into a forceful disquisition, polished from repeated use, on promising treatments, new drugs, the mighty arsenal of chemical weapons he had at his command; he might have been speaking of magic potions, the alchemist’s physic” (17). However, abridgement is also noticeable when he talks about aspects that are not particularly relevant to the story:

The journey down reminded me a little of the old days, for she and I were always fond of a jaunt. When she was a child and could not sleep at night – from the start she was an insomniac, just like her Daddy – I would bundle her in a blanket into the car and drive her along the coast road for miles beside the darkling sea, crooning whatever songs I knew any of the words of, which far from putting her to sleep made her clap her hands in not altogether derisory delight and cry for more. One time, later on, we even went on a motoring holiday together, just the two of us, but it was a mistake, she was an adolescent by then and grew rapidly bored with vineyards and chateaux and my company, and nagged at me stridently without let-up until I gave in and brought her home early. (45)

Still, there are also parts which are irrelevant, but narrated in great detail, which makes him again a reflector-character. For example, he talks at length about Pierre Bonnard’s habit of painting Marthe de Mélny in the bathroom, only to draw a comparison to Anna’s fondness for taking extended baths, a fact he could have mentioned without making this digression about Bonnard. In a similar way, he describes the weather in great detail, although it is not relevant to the story: “It was a sumptuous, oh, truly a sumptuous autumn day, all Byzantine coppers and golds under a Tiepolo sky of

enamelled blue, the countryside all fixed and glassy, seeming not so much itself as its own reflection in the still surface of a lake” (45).

Generally, in a first-person narrative situation, a teller-character can be equated with the narrating self, whereas a reflector-character has the function of the experiencing self (see Stanzel 149). As shown in the previous chapters, a large part of the novel is rendered by the experiencing self and, therefore, in scenic presentation. More often than not, the narrating self just appears to insert evaluations or comments during scenic presentations. However, there are also some cases when reportorial narration is predominant for longer passages:

In those days I was greatly taken with the gods. I am not speaking of God, the capitalised one, but the gods in general. Or the idea of the gods, that is, the possibility of the gods. I was a keen reader and had a fair knowledge of the Greek myths, although the personages in them were hard to keep track of, so frequently did they transform themselves and so various were their adventures. (73)

Often, the narrating self appears as an introduction to a scenic presentation:

It was at the end of one of these sad little gala displays that I had my first inkling of a change in Chloe’s regard for me, or, should I say, an inkling that she had a regard for me and that a change was occurring in it. Late in the evening it was, and I had swum the distance – what, a hundred, two hundred yards? – between two of the green-slimed concrete groynes that long ago had been thrown out into the sea in a vain attempt to halt the creeping erosion of the beach. I stumbled out of the waves to find that Chloe had waited for me [...]. (136)

After the traditional distinction between “telling” and “showing”, it is necessary to investigate the narrative modes more closely. A particularly insightful investigation into this area has been made by the German scholar Helmut Bonheim, who claims that description, report, speech and comment are “the staple diet of the short story and the novel” (“Theory of Narrative Modes” 329).

Speech is the easiest aspect to identify; it includes direct and indirect speech, as well as “substitutionary speech” like narrated monologue and stream of consciousness (see Bonheim, “Mode Markers” 543). If the narrator makes personal statements or judgments, there is comment. Description and report are quite similar with the difference that “the depiction of things at rest is *description*, of things in motion,

especially if they move by their own volition, *report*” (Bonheim, “Theory of Narrative Modes” 330).

In comparison to the other narrative modes, speech is quite rare in *The Sea*. However, it occurs in many different varieties and is, therefore, the subject of the next chapter.

As was already adumbrated at various points, comment is quite frequent because the narrating self often interrupts the rendering of the experiencing self, as in: “The girl under the towel – *Rose, give her a name too, poor Rosie* [emphasis added] – uttered a little shriek of fright” (29). However, there are also longer passages of comment:

Plimsoll. Now, there is a word one does not hear any more, or rarely, very rarely. Originally sailors’ footwear, from someone’s name, if I recall, and something to do with ships. The Colonel is off to the lavatory again. Prostrate trouble, I bet. Going past my door he softens his tread, creaking on tiptoe, out of respect for the bereaved. A stickler for the observances, our gallant Colonel. (11-12)

Happiness was different in childhood. It was so much then a matter simply of accumulation, of taking things – new experiences, new emotions – and applying them like so many polished tiles to what would someday be the marvellously finished pavilion of the self. And incredulity, that too was a large part of being happy, I mean that euphoric inability fully to believe one’s simple luck. (144-145)

The most frequent mode in *The Sea* is report. The first time that Max sees Mr. Grace and the first time he sees the whole family on the beach, two examples already quoted in the second chapter, are reports, as well as the following quotations:

I walked down Station Road in the sunlit emptiness of afternoon. The beach at the foot of the hill was a fawn shimmer under indigo. At the seaside all is narrow horizontals, the world reduced to a few long straight lines pressed between earth and sky. I approached the Cedars circumspectly. How is it that in childhood everything new that caught my interest had an aura of the uncanny, since according to all the authorities the uncanny is not some new thing but a thing known returning in a different form, become a revenant? So many unanswerables, this the least of them. As I approached I heard a regular rusty screeching sound. A boy of my age was draped on the green gate, his arms hanging limply down from the top bar, propelling himself with one foot slowly back and forth in a quarter circle over the gravel. (10)

One day when we were walking along the beach at the water’s edge searching after a particular kind of pink shell she needed to make a necklace she stopped suddenly and turned and, ignoring the bathers in the water and the picnickers on the sand, seized me by the shirt-front and pulled me to her and kissed me with such force that my upper lip was crushed against my front teeth and I tasted

blood, and Myles, behind us, did his throaty chuckle. In a moment she had pushed me away, in high disdain, it seemed, and was walking on, frowning, her eyes as before moving sharply along the waterline where the bland, packed sand greedily inhaled the outrun of each encroaching wave with a sucking sigh. (168-169)

A frequent feature of report in *The Sea* is that it is rendered in the present tense, as exemplified by the following citation:

Here is Mrs Grace in a clearing in the ferns crouched on one knee like a sprinter waiting for the off, who, when I surprise her, instead of fleeing, as the rules of the game say that she should, beckons to me urgently and makes me crouch at her side and puts an arm around me and draws me tight against her so that I can feel the softly giving bulge of her breast and hear her heart beating and smell her milk-and-vinegar smell. (126)

However, this aspect is part of the novel's complex temporality and will be considered in more detail in the fifth chapter.

After report, description is the most frequent mode in *The Sea*. It is used to describe buildings or rooms, as can be seen when Max talks about Mr. Todd's office, or in the following two quotations:

The name of the house is the Cedars, as of old. A bristling clump of those trees, monkey-brown with a tarry reek, their trunks nightmarishly tangled, still grows at the left side, facing across an untidy lawn to the big curved window of what used to be the living room but which Miss Vavasour prefers to call, in landladyese, the lounge. The front door is at the opposite side, opening on to a square of oil-stained gravel behind the iron gate that is still painted green, though rust has reduced its struts to a tremulous filigree. (4)

It was a barn-like structure set on a bit of scrubby waste-land between the Cliff Road and the beach. It had a steeply angled roof and no windows, only a door at the side, hung with a long curtain, of leather, I think, or somesuch stiff heavy stuff, to keep the screen from being whited-out when late-comers slipped in during matinees or at evening while the sun was shooting out its last piercing rays from behind the tennis courts. For seating there were wooden benches – we called them forms – and the screen was a large square of linen which any stray draught would set languorously asway, giving an extra undulation to some heroine's silk-clad hips or an incongruous quiver to a fearless gunslinger's gun-hand. (142)

However, the narrator not only describes objects, but also himself and other people:

My temples where the greying hair has gone sparse are flecked with chocolatey, Avricaleous freckles, or liver spots, I suppose they are, any one of which, I am well too aware, might in a moment turn rampant at the whim of a rogue cell. I

note too that my rosacea is coming on apace. The skin on my brow is marked all over with rubescent blotches and there is an angry rash on the wings of my nose, and even my cheeks are developing an unsightly red flush. (129)

Chloe Grace and her brother were standing on the hard sand at the water's edge, looking on. They wore shorts as usual and were barefoot. I saw how strikingly alike they were. They had been collecting seashells, which Chloe was carrying in a handkerchief knotted corner-to-corner to make a pouch. They stood regarding us without expression, as if we were a show, a comic turn that had been laid on for them but which they found not very interesting, or funny, but peculiar only. (37)

It was the size of her that first caught my attention. Not that she was so very large, but she was made on a scale different from that of any woman I had known before her. Big shoulders, big arms, big feet, that great head with its sweep of thick dark hair. She was standing between me and the window, in cheesecloth and sandals, talking to another woman, in that way that she had, at once intent and remote, *dreamily twisting a lock of hair around a finger* [emphasis added], and for a moment my eyes had difficulty fixing a depth of focus, since it seemed that, of the two of them, Anna, being so much the bigger, must be much nearer to me than the one to whom she was speaking. (100)

As becomes obvious from this last citation, the narrative modes can hardly be found in isolation because they constantly intermingle. The second sentence, for example, is clearly a comment, whereas the phrase italicized is actually a report. These other modes, however, are so short in the quotation above that their presence can be neglected, and the quotation as a whole can be considered a description.

The relationship between the different modes is interesting insofar as Bonheim says that “[d]escription is thought boring except in small doses; *comment* of a particular kind, namely moralistic generalizing, is almost taboo, even where imbedded in speech; and even *report* is preferred in the dress of, or at least heavily interlarded with, speech” (“Theory of Narrative Modes” 332).

Obviously, then, *The Sea* would have to be considered a fairly boring novel because the dose of description is quite large, and report is mostly made without speech. However, it is precisely this predominance of description and report which make the novel so fascinating because in this way, there is no great external action which distracts the reader from the most important element in *The Sea*, namely the depiction of the narrator's inner life. The importance of description is also recognized by Mieke Bal, who says that “[d]escription is a privileged site of focalization, and as such it has great

impact on the ideological and aesthetic effect of the text” (*Narratology* 36). And indeed, *The Sea* establishes a remarkable aesthetic effect because the detailed descriptions of the weather or the landscape might not be particularly relevant to the development of the story as such, but they create a very vivid picture in the reader’s mind and transport us directly to the scene.

In this respect, it is interesting that Stanzel divides Bonheim’s modes into two categories, namely into narrative modes, which include report, description and comment, and into a non-narrative or dramatic mode, which consists only of speech. Moreover, he discusses a fifth mode, which he calls dramatized scene. This mode consists of dialogue and some narrative elements, such as explanatory comments. Depending on which element is predominant, the dramatized scene is either a non-narrative or a narrative form.

The very first quotation in this chapter, the one that takes place in Anna’s nursing home, is a dramatized scene and, because explanatory comments are predominant, it is a narrative mode. The second quotation, which shows Claire and Max going home in the car, is also a dramatized scene, but non-narrative because here it is the dialogue that is predominant.

Considering Stanzel’s distinction between narrative and non-narrative modes in more detail, *The Sea* proves to be a very interesting novel because, as already hinted at above, report and description are not always purely narrative. In fact, all the reports and descriptions quoted above are highly mimetic; not in the traditional sense because the action is not literally “shown”, but, as was established at the beginning of this chapter, “showing” is always only a way of telling anyway, and in this sense, the reports and descriptions are scenic. Rendered by the experiencing self, they produce a strong effect of immediacy and authenticity and can, therefore, not be considered as purely narrative modes.

This already hints at another important aspect in connection with the narrative modes, namely the narrative profile, which is concerned with the amount of narrative and non-narrative parts (see Stanzel 67). A large part of *The Sea* is rendered in modes which are traditionally narrative, but to some extent also mimetic. Another important notion is that of narrative rhythm, which investigates the succession of report, commentary, description and speech (see Stanzel 69). If there is a significant alternation between

these forms and if the narrative situation varies throughout the story, narratives are said to have a strong rhythm (see Stanzel 69). Although the narrative situation does not vary, *The Sea* has quite a strong narrative rhythm because report, comment and description alternate fairly frequently.

5. DISCOURSES

After the chapter on modes, which was mainly concerned with the “narrative of events” (see Genette, *Narrative Discourse* 164), this chapter is concerned with the “narrative of words”, or in Manfred Jahn’s words, with “representations of speech, thought and consciousness” (*Narratology* N8.).

The first distinction that has to be made here is one between the narrator’s discourse and the characters’ discourse. The narrator’s discourse includes his own speech and thought at the story level, as well as evaluations and comments on the discourse level. Such evaluative or commentatorial statements are not made by the other characters. Apart from Myles, every character in the novel speaks at some point. However, most of this is set in the past and, therefore, we do not observe it directly, but as mediated by the narrator. As with the narrative modes above, then, there are several degrees of mimesis or diegesis, respectively.

The most mimetic form of discourse is direct discourse, defined as “[a] direct quotation of a character’s speech (‘direct speech’) or (verbalized) thought (‘direct thought’)” (Jahn, *Narratology* N8.5.). Apparently, a character’s utterance is represented as it really was; however, we still find ourselves at the mercy of the narrator and have to trust that he really renders it accurately. A further distinction has to be made with direct discourse: “**Tagged direct discourse** is framed by a clause of attributive discourse; **untagged direct discourse** (alternatively, **free direct discourse**) is free of attributive discourse” (ibid.). Although in tagged direct discourse a character’s speech is rendered directly, it is always stylized by the attributive discourse and, therefore, less mimetic than free direct discourse (see Rimmon-Kenan 110).

As far as the representation of speech is concerned, tagged direct speech is the most frequent form in *The Sea*. It is also the one most easily to be identified and, therefore, will only be discussed here exemplarily with the following two citations:

“‘Well, Doctor,’ she said, *a little too loudly, putting on the bright, tough tone of one of those film stars of the Forties* [emphasis added], ‘is it the death sentence, or do I get life?’” (16).

“‘Daddy,’ she said again, *with a note of testiness now* [emphasis added], ‘do you want dinner or not?’” (69).

These quotations were chosen especially to reveal the stylized nature of tagged direct discourse. Most of the attributive discourse in *The Sea* is neutral; however, in the phrases italicized, the narrator’s subjective impression has a great impact on the rendering of the characters’ discourse.

Another feature of tagged direct speech in *The Sea*, apart from its stylization, is the retention of intonational peculiarities:

“Then the last letter came, from a strange woman – Maureen Strange, her name! – announcing *the very sad news I have to tell you*. My mother’s bitter tears were as much of anger as of grief. ‘Who’s this,’ she cried, ‘this *Maureen?*’” (199).

“‘Ma,’ I said. ‘Don’t *Ma* me.’” (211).

In contrast to tagged direct speech, free direct speech is quite rare in the novel and only occurs when the context has already been established, so that the reader knows for sure who is talking:

‘Morden?’ she said. ‘What sort of a name is that?’ We walked slowly up Station Road, Chloe and I in front and Myles behind us, gambolling, I nearly said, at our heels. They were from the city, Chloe said. That would not have been hard for me to guess. She asked where I was staying. I gestured vaguely. ‘Down there,’ I said. ‘Along past the church.’ *‘In a house or a hotel* [emphasis added]?’ (78)

“Her Daddy, old Charlie Weiss – ‘Don’t worry, it’s not a Jew name’ – took to me at once” (101).

‘Is there a bird called a baldicoot?’ she asked. ‘There is a bandicoot,’ I said cautiously, ‘but I don’t think it’s a bird. Why?’ *‘Apparently I shall be as bald as a coot in a month or two.’ ‘Who told you that?’ ‘A woman in the hospital who was having treatment, the kind I am to have. She was quite bald, so I suppose she would know* [emphasis added].’ For a while she watched the houses and the shops progressing past the car window in that stealthily indifferent way that they do, and then turned to me again. *‘But what is a coot?’ ‘That’s a bird.’ ‘Ah* [emphasis added].’ She chuckled. *‘I’ll be the spitting image of Charlie when it has all fallen out* [emphasis added].’ (106-107)

Free indirect discourse is an intermediary degree between mimesis and diegesis, but is not used for speech presentation in *The Sea* and will be considered later, when the representation of thought is investigated.

Coming closer and closer to the diegetic end, the next type of speech representation is indirect discourse which is to some degree still mimetic, defined as “[a] form of indirect discourse which creates the illusion of ‘preserving’ or ‘reproducing’ aspects of the style of an utterance, above and beyond the mere report of its content” (Rimmon-Kenan 109).

This type is very rare in *The Sea*. In fact, the three examples quoted below are the only instances of such a kind of speech presentation:

“I asked again about the Duignans and Avril said yes, Christy Duignan had died [...]” (56).

“Then she started to fling all sorts of accusations at me. She said I had *driven Jerome away*. [...] How, pray, I asked, controlling myself, how had I *driven him away*?” (67).

“By the time she entered the room Mrs Grace had introduced me to her husband [...] and he was shaking my hand with a show of mock solemnity, addressing me as *My dear sir!* and putting on a cockney accent and declaring that any friend of his children’s would always be welcome in *our ’umble ’ome*” (91).

A type of speech presentation a bit more diegetic than the one just mentioned is indirect discourse, also called indirect content paraphrase (see McHale 195), which is defined by Jahn as

[a] form of representing a character’s words (‘indirect speech’) or (verbalized) thoughts (‘indirect thought’) which uses a reporting clause of introductory attributive discourse, places the discourse quoted in a subordinate clause bound to the deictic orientation of the narrator, and generally summarizes, interprets, and grammatically straightens the character’s language. (*Narratology* N8.7.)

This type can again be identified easily and it features quite widely in *The Sea*. Therefore, it need not be discussed in more detail apart from the following examples:

“She said she would wait for me in the car, and walked away with her head bowed [...]” (64).

“I asked her if she remembered me” (68).

This leaves only two further types of speech presentation to be discussed, which are generally subsumed under the terms “narratized discourse” or “narrative report of discourse”, which is “a type of discourse whereby a character’s utterances or verbal thoughts are represented, in words that are the narrator’s [...]” (Prince, *Dictionary* 64). McHale, however, distinguishes between “summary, less “purely” diegetic” and “diegetic summary”. The first type is a “summary which to some degree represents, not merely gives notice of, a speech event in that it names the topics of conversation” (McHale 195) and can be found in the following quotations:

“Mr Todd launched into a forceful disquisition, polished from repeated use, on promising treatments, new drugs, the mighty arsenal of chemical weapons he had at his command; he might have been speaking of magic potions; the alchemist’s physic” (17).

“He would engage the postman, who was halfway to being a halfwit, in earnest consultation about the prospects for the weather or the likely outcome of an upcoming football match, nodding and frowning and fingering his beard, as if what he was hearing were the purest pearls of wisdom [...]” (122-123).

“[...] Chloe planted herself in front of him and at her most imperious demanded to know his name and what he was doing here” (171).

The last remaining type is the most diegetic form of speech presentation and “involv[es] only the bare report that a speech event has occurred, without any specification of what was said or how it was said” (McHale 195):

“Anna would allow no one to be told of her illness” (146).

“It was by chance that I caught Claire smuggling the camera out of the house. She tried to pass it off casually, but Claire is not good at being casual” (175).

“Claire wanted afternoon tea and when I had ordered it we were directed to a deserted cold conservatory at the rear that looked out on the strand and the receding tide” (59).

A common feature of the novel is that a lot of discourse is rendered in italics, which has several reasons. For one, italics are used to represent discourse not actually uttered, but only imagined by the narrator, as in the following quotations:

“*We came here for our holidays*, that is what we would have said” (34).

“*Let me alone, I cried at her in my mind, let me creep past the traduced old Cedars, past the vanished Strand Café, past the Lupins and the Field that was, past all this past, for if I stop I shall surely dissolve in a shaming puddle of tears*” (50-51).

“‘You’re mad,’ Claire had said, ‘you’ll die of boredom down there.’ It was all right for her, I retorted, she had got herself a new nice flat – *wasting no time*, I did not add” (149).

Italicized parts also refer to discourse that was uttered more than once, as in:

“Anna used to laugh at me for my hypochondriacal ways. *Doctor Max*, she would call me. *How is Doctor Max today, is he feeling poorly?* She was right, of course, I have always been a moaner, fussing over every slightest twinge or ache” (42).

‘*Any news of Annie,*’ he warbled to himself, making a jingle of it, and gave another snuffly laugh down his nostrils” (178).

“After our tea she would clear away the tea things and spread out the *Evening Mail* on the table under the wan glow of a sixty-watt bulb and run a hairpin down the columns of job ads, ticking off each ad and muttering angrily under her breath. ‘*Previous experience essential ... references required ... must be university graduate ... Huh!*’” (197).

Furthermore, italics are used if the narrator quotes only parts of the other characters’ discourse:

“Mine is the one bedroom in the house which is, as Miss Vavasour puts it with a demure little moue, *en suite*” (23).

“Miss Vavasour says she will miss me, but thinks I am doing *the right thing*” (260).

“Breakfast he takes alone, at a small table in the ingle-nook in the kitchen [...] solitude being the preferred mode in which to partake of what he frequently and portentously pronounces *the most important meal of the day*” (188).

Far more interesting than the representation of speech, however, is the representation of thought and consciousness because *The Sea* is, after all, mostly a portrayal of the

narrator's state of mind. The most mimetic form of thought presentation, tagged direct thought, is quite rare in the novel and fairly easily to be identified:

“What did she imagine I was weeping for, I wondered, and wonder again now. Had she somehow recognized my rapturously lovesick grief for what it was?” (89).

“Miss V. is vague on dates but thinks a cottage was first put up here early in the last century, I mean the century before last, I am losing track of the millennia, and then was added on to haphazardly over the years” (5).

Another type of thought representation that is easy to identify is indirect thought, which is the most diegetic form, and can be seen in the following quotations:

“I wonder if he really is an old army man” (147).

I wonder if I could rent one, a hospital room, that is, and work there, live there, even. There would be the cheery wake-up call in the mornings, meals served with iron regularity, one's bed made up neat and tight as a long white envelope, and a whole medical team standing by to cope with any emergency. Yes, I could be content there, in one of those white cells, my barred window, no, not barred, I am getting carried away, my window looking down on the city, the smokestacks, the busy roads, the hunched houses, and all the little figures, hurrying endlessly, to and fro. (180)

However, apart from the two types just mentioned, representation of thought and consciousness in *The Sea* is quite complicated. The intermediary degree between direct and indirect discourse, free indirect discourse, was traditionally used only in third-person narratives and is defined as

[a] representation of a character's words ('free indirect speech') or verbalized thoughts ('free indirect thought') which is (a) 'indirect' in the sense that pronouns and tenses of the quoted discourse are aligned with the pronoun/tense structure of the current narrative situation, and (b) 'free' to the extent that the discourse quoted appears in the form of a non-subordinate clause. (Jahn, *Narratology* N8.6.)

However, this exclusiveness of free indirect style to third-person narratives was contracted and it can occur in first-person narratives “when mental events rather than verbal utterances are represented” (Stanzel 219). Still, there are an amazingly small number of theoretical studies about free indirect discourse outside third-person past tense narratives and in novels such as *The Sea*, it is quite hard to identify free indirect thought and to distinguish it from free direct thought. Only very rarely is the

identification of free indirect style obvious. In the following three examples, the parts italicized are clearly free indirect style, because they are rendered in the past tense, whereas direct thought would have to be rendered in the present tense, and because there is no reporting clause of introductory attributive discourse, which would be obligatory for indirect thought:

“There were no cigarettes in the house, *where was I to get cigarettes* [emphasis added]? She said it was no matter, she did not really want to smoke.” (21)

“I felt over-sized, clumsy, constrained, like a big delinquent child sent by its despairing parents into the country to be watched over by a pair of elderly relatives. *Was it all a hideous mistake? Should I mumble some excuse and flee to a hotel for the night, or go home, even, and put up with the emptiness and the echoes* [emphasis added]? (149)”.

Avril, the young woman said her name was. Avril. She did not volunteer a surname. Dimly, like something lifting itself up that for a long time had seemed dead, there came to me the memory of a child in a dirty smock hanging back in the flagged hallways of the farmhouse [...] *But this person before me could not have been that child, who by now would be, what, in her fifties? Perhaps the remembered child was a sister of this one, but much older, that is, born much earlier? Could that be? No, Duignan had died young, in his forties, so it was not possible, surely, that this Avril would be his daughter, since he was an adult when I was a child and* [emphasis added] ... (55-56)

Apart from the use of the narrative past and the lack of attributive discourse, there are other factors for a classification of free indirect thought. Monika Fludernik, for example, mentions clause-initial co-ordinating conjunctions (220) which are usually not accepted in written language, but allowed in free indirect discourse. The most frequent of these is *for*, and can be found in the following quotation:

Again I thought of her mother, and this time I felt briefly something sharp and burning in my breast, as if a heated needle had touched my heart. *Was it a twinge of guilt? For what would Mrs Grace feel, what would she say, if she were to spy me here at this table ogling the mauve shading in the hollow of her daughter's cheek as she sucked up the last of her ice-cream soda* [emphasis added]? (163)

This quote (the parts underlined) also reveals another indicator for free indirect discourse, namely the repetition of sentence constituents (see Fludernik 215), which can also be found in the following citation: “The room was much as I remembered, for memories are always eager to match themselves seamlessly to the things and places of a

revisited past. *The table, was that the one where Mrs Grace had stood arranging flowers that day, the day of the dog with the ball [emphasis added]?*” (148).

Clause-initial adjuncts such as *oh, yes, no, why, well, alas, or nay* can also be an indication for free indirect discourse (see Fludernik 217): “How is it we have allowed them to survive so long? Those sad little knowing eyes seem to invite one to pick up a blunderbuss. Yes, put a big bullet through there, or into one of those huge absurd flappy ears. Yes, yes, exterminate all the brutes, lop away at the tree of life until only the stump is left standing, then lovingly take the cleaver to that, too. Finish it all off” (195).

Furthermore, free indirect style is often characterized by incomplete sentences (see Fludernik 214): “Chloe, her cruelty. The beach. The midnight swim. Her lost sandal, that night in the doorway of the dancehall, Cinderella’s shoe. All gone. All lost. It is no matter. Tired, tired and drunk. No matter” (184).

However, this quotation is hard to categorize because it is written in the narrative present and, therefore, might be free direct thought. Although the incomplete sentences suggest that it is free indirect thought, the narrator is probably drunk at this point of his narration, which could make him unable to utter complete sentences and again speaks for a reading as free direct thought.

There are also instances where free direct thought is more obvious than in the example above, as in the following quotations:

“By the way, that dog. I never saw it again. *Whose can it have been [emphasis added]?*” (92).

“My father used to whistle like that, am I turning into him?” (8).

The world in which I live now would have been, in my imagining of it then, for all my perspicacity, different from what it is in fact, but subtly different; would have been, I see, all slouched hats and crombie overcoats and big square motor cars with winged manikins bounding from the bonnets. *When had I known such things, that I could figure them so distinctly [emphasis added]?* (95)

“He does a good job of hiding his Belfast accent but hints of it keep escaping, like trapped wind. *And anyway, why hide it, what does he fear it might tell us [emphasis added]?*” (147-148).

One of the most important aspects with regard to the presentation of consciousness is the difference between dissonant self-narration, which prevails when an “enlightened

and knowing narrator [...] elucidates his mental confusions of earlier days” (Cohn 143), and consonant self-narration, which is the case when the narrator “closely identifies with his past self, betraying no manner of superior knowledge” (Cohn 143). As was already said at various points, the narrating self frequently intervenes in the narration of the experiencing self, which is an indication for dissonant self-narration. However, the renderings of the experiencing self are also often uninterrupted, and in these passages, the self-narration is rather consonant. Generally, there are few texts which are clearly consonant or dissonant (see Cohn 158) and most narratives exhibit characteristics of both forms of self-narration. In *The Sea*, a further indication for consonant self-narration is the fact that the present tense is often used to describe a past event which results in a “quasi-annulment of the narrative distance” (Cohn 157).

The strong presence of free indirect style is important for another characteristic of the novel, namely for its generic categorization as a stream-of-consciousness novel. The term *stream of consciousness* is quite ambiguous and has been used to designate both a technique and a genre. The most detailed account of stream-of-consciousness has been given by Robert Humphrey, who says that the term refers to a genre preoccupied with a character’s inner life:

The stream-of-consciousness novel is identified most quickly by its subject matter. This, rather than its techniques, its purposes, or its themes, distinguishes it. Hence, the novels that are said to use the stream-of-consciousness *technique* to a considerable degree prove, upon analysis, to be novels which have as their essential subject matter the consciousness of one or more characters; that is, the depicted consciousness serves as a screen on which the material in these novels is presented. (2)

According to him, there are several techniques for a presentation of the stream of consciousness, the four basic ones of which are direct interior monologue, indirect interior monologue, omniscient description, and soliloquy (23).

Interior monologue, defined by Jahn as “[a]n extended passage of ‘direct thought’” (*Narratology* N8.9.), is quite prominent in the novel:

But who is it that lingers there on the strand in the half-light, by the darkening sea that seems to arch its back like a beast as the night fast advances from the fogged horizon? What phantom version of me is it that watches us – them – those three children – as they grow indistinct in that cinereal air and then are gone through the gap that will bring them out at the foot of Station Road? (137)

Does he notice those brassy beams of sunlight falling through the leaded panes of the bay window, the desiccated bunch of sea-blue and tenderly blood-brown hydrangea occupying the grate where even yet the first fire of the season has not needed to be lit? Does he notice that the world he reads about in the paper is no longer the world he knew? Perhaps these days all his energies, like mine, go into the effort of not noticing. (190)

There are also instances of self-quoted monologue, defined by Cohn as “quotations of past thoughts” (161):

“If the people in the car were his parents had they left the boy on his own in the house? And where was the girl, the girl who had laughed?” (13).

“Mr Todd was a burly man, not tall or heavy but very broad: one had an impression of squareness [...] I realised with a mild shock that despite these calculatedly venerable effects he could not be much more than fifty. *Since when did doctors start being younger than I am* [emphasis added]?” (15-16).

Clearly, all of these examples are instances of direct interior monologue because there is no authorial intervention (see Humphrey 25). Indirect interior monologue is presented by an omniscient author who also comments on the character’s thoughts. The fact that there is no indirect interior monologue in *The Sea* is easy to establish because, as a homodiegetic novel, all the interior monologues are rendered in the first person, whereas indirect interior monologues are characterized by the use of the third or second person (see Humphrey 29).

The technique “description by an omniscient author” is not used either in *The Sea* because everything is presented through Max Morden’s limited perspective and the author never intervenes.

The last technique for a presentation of the stream of consciousness, the soliloquy, “differs from the interior monologue primarily in that, although it is spoken *solus*, it nevertheless is represented with the assumption of a formal and immediate audience” (Humphrey 35). A soliloquy is, therefore, always presented for the information of the audience, and although it was already established above that Max Morden is definitely aware that there is a reader, he informs him by reports or summaries rather than by soliloquies, which are, as a result, quite rare in the novel. In fact, the following quotation is the only example that can be read as a soliloquy. However, it is ambiguous

because the imperative *wait* in the first sentence can be directed at the reader, but also at Max himself, which would make it again a direct interior monologue:

But wait, this is wrong. This cannot have been the day of the kiss. When we left the picture-house it was evening, an evening after rain, and now it is the middle of an afternoon, hence that soft sunlight, that meandering breeze. And where is Myles? He was with us at the pictures, so where would he have gone, he who never left his sister's side unless driven from it? (162-163)

The four techniques just discussed are, however, not the only devices that represent a character's stream of consciousness. The stream of consciousness is characterized by its incoherence and fluidity and there are many rhetorical figures which indicate discontinuity, such as epanodos, ellipsis, anaphora, anacoluthon, dislocated parenthesis, and brachylogy (see Humphrey 73). Indeed, rhetorical figures are very frequent in *The Sea* and will be considered in more detail below.

The main principle of the stream of consciousness is free association:

The primary facts of free association [...] are simple. The human psyche, which is almost continuously active, cannot be concentrated for very long in its processes, even when it is most strongly willed; when little effort is exerted to concentrate it, its focus remains on any one thing but momentarily. Yet the activity of consciousness must have content, and this is provided for by the power of one thing to suggest another through an association of qualities in common or in contrast, wholly, or partially – even to the barest suggestion. (43)

Free association can be seen in the following two quotations and, in general, features very frequently in the metaphoric modulations discussed in the second chapter.

“‘I hope she gets drowned,’ Chloe said, speaking through the window, and gave one of her sharp little nicking laughs. ‘I hope she does’ – *nick nick* – ‘I hate her.’

Last words. It was early morning, just before dawn, when Anna came to consciousness” (237).

“Chloe, her cruelty. The beach. The midnight swim. Her lost sandal, that night in the doorway of the dancehall, Cinderella's shoe. All gone. All lost. It is no matter. Tired, tired and drunk. No matter” (184).

Another important feature of the stream-of-consciousness novel is that it does not have a conventional plot of action and, therefore, is a rather disorderly narrative. However,

some sort of order must be imposed on the novel so that the reader can understand and interpret it. This is mainly done by the use of several patterns (see Humphrey 86), out of which only two are of relevance for *The Sea*, namely the unities (of place, character, and action), and motifs.

Traditionally, the unity of time is, along with the unities of place and action, one of the three principles of dramatic structure. However, the unity of time is not given in *The Sea* because the framing action takes place not in a single day, but in a few days or weeks. Still, the novel preserves the unity of place because on the discourse level, every event takes place in the seaside village of Ballyless. Equally, although this is not as obvious, the unity of action is given because, despite the achronological structure and the numerous flashbacks, *The Sea* actually has a very simple plot with a beginning, a middle, and an end: the narrator's wife dies whereupon he spends some time in Ballyless indulging in too much alcohol and, ultimately, after nearly drowning in the sea, his daughter plans to take care of him. Additionally, there is a unity of character in *The Sea* because everything is presented from Max Morden's perspective.

Finally, there are quite a few themes and motifs which act as unifying devices in the novel. The central themes, death and grief, are ubiquitous in *The Sea*, as are the symbol of the sea, which can even be regarded as a leitmotif, and the motif of art.

A further method of controlling the stream of consciousness is the cinematic device of montage, temporal or spatial, which is explained by Robert Humphrey in the following way:

[...] [t]he quality of consciousness itself demands a movement that is not rigid clock progression. It demands instead the freedom of shifting back and forth, of intermingling past, present, and imagined future. In representing this montage in fiction [...] there are two methods: one is that in which the subject can remain fixed in space and his consciousness can move in time – the result is time-montage or the superimposition of images or ideas from one time on those of another; the other possibility, of course, is for time to remain fixed and for the spatial element to change, which results in space-montage. (50)

Clearly, *The Sea* is an example of time-montage because during his narration, Max is always in Ballyless. Said time-montage is very complex in the novel, which is why a separate chapter will now be devoted to it.

6. TEMPORALITY

Considering temporality in *The Sea*, there are three important elements to be investigated. Firstly, it is essential to establish the temporal setting of the action in order to know the background of the novel. Secondly, the technical notions of order, duration and frequency as discussed by Gérard Genette, are highly essential. Thirdly, and perhaps most importantly, the psychological condition of Max Morden has to be considered because it has an enormous impact on the way that time is experienced.

As far as the temporal setting is concerned, this is very hard to establish because there are no explicit references in the novel. However, there are some indicators which make a setting of the long-ago summer when Max got to know the Grace family, possible. On page 143, the reader learns that the makeshift cinema in Ballyless shows only black and white movies. Colour movies were produced from the early twentieth century onwards; however, they only achieved their commercial breakthrough in the 1950s. The fact that the cinema in Ballyless shows only black and white movies indicates that the summer in question is set in a time when colour movies had not yet achieved their commercial breakthrough, or when they had only very recently done so. Accordingly, this information allows a temporal setting of this significant summer either before the 1950s, or in the early 1950s.

Another indication is the Grace family's motor car, a "low-slung, scarred and battered black model with beige leather seats and a big spoked polished wood steering wheel" (6). Low-slung cars, or lowriders, were typical for the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s. Therefore, the summer must be set sometime in these three decades; and with the information already gained from above, the fact that the Graces had a motor car confirms a possible temporal setting in the 1950s. Moreover, the reader learns that "few [people] in the Field even had a motor car" (108), and again this speaks for a setting in the 1950s, because in the middle of the century, the class distinction was much more prominent than nowadays and many people could not afford to have a car.

One more indication which confirms such a temporal setting is the fact that Max "would walk down every morning, barefoot and bearing a dented billycan, on [his] way to buy the day's milk from Duignan the dairyman [...]" (51). Having a personal milkman and buying fresh milk every morning might be a practice still in use in rural areas, but was certainly more widespread fifty years ago.

Although the references just mentioned can by no means provide a definite proof as far as the temporal setting is concerned, it is not unlikely that the summer of the twins' death is set in the beginning of the 1950s. Considering that Max is now in his sixties, the present action can only be set in the first years of the twenty-first century. A last indication to prove this is the reference to the East End of London on page 101. This part of London is famous for its art scene; however, it only developed its reputation in the 1980s. Considering that Max's wife Anna was an aspiring photographer before their daughter Claire was born and that Claire is now (thus, in the beginning of the twenty-first century) "twenty-something" years old (43), we can infer that she was probably born in the beginning of the 1980s, which is a time when the East End already had a name and could have "called to [Anna]" (101).

The undertaking to establish a temporal setting has been somewhat tedious, but is definitely worthwhile because the background of the action is much clearer now and insights are provided that might not be immediately obvious to a non-academic reader. Quite frequently, Max says that he is ashamed of his parents and of their way of life. Moreover, he is embarrassed about having to confess to Chloe and Myles that he spends his holidays in a chalet instead of a fashionable hotel. Of course, the reader can try to put himself in Max's place and imagine how he feels; but only when setting this summer in the 1950s can we get a clearer picture of Max's situation. The middle of the century was a time when, for one, the class distinction was more prominent than nowadays, and secondly, greater importance was attached to it. People will always have different incomes, and there will always be persons who can afford fancy cars and frequent holidays in fashionable hotels, whereas others cannot do so, but such differences do not seem as essential nowadays as they still did half a century ago. As Max says, the people who stayed at the Golf Hotel did not mix with other, less wealthy people (see Banville 108), and apparently, members of the lower class could never gain full recognition from people who belonged to the upper class. In a way, it is unimaginable how a ten-year old child can already have developed such an aversion to his origins and be so deeply ashamed of his parents. However, reading the novel against the established background, it becomes immediately clear how Max feels because he does not want to be ridiculed for not belonging to the upper class and, therefore, he would be willing to do everything in order to climb up the social ladder.

Another aspect that is not immediately understandable is the following: “We came for our holidays here every summer, for many years, many years, until my father ran off to England, as fathers sometimes did, in those days, and do still, for that matter” (34), Max says. A reader without any knowledge of the temporal setting and the social background might not understand why Max’s parents just separated and did not divorce. After analyzing the setting, however, we know that “those days” means the middle of the twentieth century, and when looking into the history of the country, the reader learns that divorce in Ireland was only legalized in 1995.

One more aspect that only becomes obvious to a reader familiar with the history of Ireland is the topic of homosexuality. Overhearing a conversation between Rose and Mrs. Grace, young Max jumps to conclusions and thinks that Rose is in love with Mr. Grace. Fifty years later, however, when he talks to her again, Rose tells him that it was the mother and not the father of the Grace family who she was in love with:

‘It’s her I miss,’ she says, ‘Connie – Mrs Grace – that is.’ I suppose I stare, and she gives me another of those pitying glances. ‘It was never him, with me,’ she says. ‘You didn’t think that, did you?’ I thought of her standing below me that day under the trees, sobbing, her head sitting on the platter of her foreshortened shoulders, the wadded hankie in her hand. ‘Oh, no,’ she said, ‘never him.’ And I thought, too, of the day of the picnic and of her sitting behind me on the grass and looking where I was avidly looking and seeing what was not meant for me at all. (262-263)

Reading this passage, it becomes immediately obvious why Rose did not pursue her relationship to Connie at that time; after all, she could not possibly destroy a happy family. However, the question arises why she stayed alone for all the years to come and why she does not have a partner in the present. In order to understand this, it is necessary to know that homosexuality was illegal in Ireland until the summer of 1993.

As has already been elucidated, *The Sea* is a first-person narrative and is, basically, constituted by a series of flashbacks. A reader of the novel will immediately notice that Max alternately remembers different passages of his life, and this is where the Genettian notion of order comes in. Since the narrated events are not presented in the order of succession they really happened, the novel is achronological.

A large part of Max’s recollections is made up by memories of the long-ago summer in which he got to know the Grace family. However, he also reminisces about the year of his wife’s illness, about the summer when he got to know and married his wife, about

the time when he lived alone with his mother, and about different phases of his daughter's childhood. Between descriptions of the present, various memories of the past spring up, and it is not always easy to identify when exactly the events took place. However, flashbacks or analepses are not the only anachronies in the novel because there are also flashforwards or prolepses.

Although the complexity of the novel's temporality only develops later; the very beginning is already worth investigating. At first glance, the first two pages might seem to be chronological because a past event is narrated and is followed by a description of the present. However, on page five, the narrator already jumps back to the past and, as becomes obvious when reading further, the past at this point is more distant than the past at the very beginning. Therefore, the novel has a beginning *in medias res* because it does not start with the event that happened first.

Similar to the beginning of the novel, there are many simple anachronies which are more or less easy to date with precision. For instance, on page five, the narrator states: "When I was here all those years ago, in the time of the gods, the Cedars was a summer house [...]." For people who read *The Sea* for the first time, it is impossible to know to which time exactly the narrator is referring. However, having read the whole novel and knowing that Max Morden is, at the time of his narration, in his sixties, and was ten or eleven years old when he met the Grace family, it is quite easy to infer that with "the time of the gods," he means about fifty years ago. Therefore, we can say that this particular anachrony has a "reach" of about fifty years, with reach being defined as the temporal distance between the moment when the narrative was interrupted and the moment when the narrated event took place (see Genette, *Narrative Discourse* 48).

Another technical term, which is equally important as reach, is extent, which is the duration of story that the anachrony covers (see Genette, *Narrative Discourse* 48). The flashback cited above has an extent of several months because it refers to the months of July and August for a period of several years.

Another analepsis that is not too hard to date is the time of Anna's illness, which is referred to, for example, on page thirteen: "The consultant's name was Mr Todd. [...] This Todd addressed Anna as Mrs Morden but called me Max." We know that this meeting took place at the beginning of Anna's illness, and that she was ill for a year before she died. It is not clear how much time exactly passed between Anna's death and

Max's return to Ballyless, but it is possible to infer that this is only a matter of a few weeks or maybe months. Therefore, the reach of this flashback is a year and several weeks or months and the extent is as long as the time that their appointment with Dr. Todd lasted.

However, in this passage it already becomes clear just how complex the novel is and how the narrative tenses intermingle. Reading this passage as a whole, it says:

The consultant's name was Mr Todd. *This can only be considered a joke in bad taste on the part of polyglot fate* [emphasis added]. It could have been worse. *There is a name De'Ath, with that fancy medial capital and apotropaic apostrophe which fool no one* [emphasis added]. This Todd addressed Anna as Mrs Morden but called me Max. I was not at all sure I liked the distinction thus made, or the gruff familiarity of his tone. *His office, no, his rooms, one says rooms, as one calls him Mister not Doctor* [emphasis added], seemed at first sight an eyrie, although they were only on the third floor. (13-14)

The sentences in italics show that, although a past event is narrated, the tense used is not exclusively the narrative past. Very frequently throughout the whole novel, the narrator inserts reflections and comments in a past tense context and lets his narrating self intervene with the experiencing self.

Apart from such simple analepses, there are also more complex analepses, as in:

We went back over our earliest days together, reminding, correcting, helping each other, like two ancients tottering arm-in-arm along the ramparts of a town where they had once lived, long ago. We recalled especially the smoky London summer in which we met and married. I spotted Anna first at a party in someone's flat one chokingly hot afternoon [...]. (99-100)

The first analepsis has a reach of a year and several weeks because the narrated event (the nights in which they remember their past) took place at the beginning of Anna's illness, which has, as was already established, a narrative distance of a bit more than a year. The second anachrony, the analepsis within the analepsis, has a reach of about twenty years because we know that Anna was an aspiring photographer at the beginning of their relationship and, therefore, Max and Anna must have met in the 1980s. The extent of the first analepsis is several nights for a period of a year, and the extent of the second analepsis is a few minutes or hours, when Max had already seen Anna, but not yet talked to her.

As has become obvious by now, there are uncountable anachronies in the novel, and although most of them are analepses, there are also some prolepses. However, for a first-person narrator, it is of course impossible to look into the future and, therefore, the prolepses only occur in a past tense context.

A good example of this is the following: “Abruptly Chloe loses interest in the game and turns aside and flops down in the sand. How well I will come to know these sudden shifts of mood of hers, these sudden sulks. Her mother calls to her to come back and play but she does not respond” (33). This quotation is taken from a passage which is rendered in the historical present, a characteristic feature of the novel that will be considered below. However, for the second sentence, the narrator uses a future tense, although at that time, he did not yet know much about Chloe. He uses knowledge that he has only developed later, and this passage is, therefore, an example of a prolepsis on an analepsis.

When establishing the reach of this anachrony, the reader has to be wary, because the departing point is already in the analepsis, that is, fifty years prior to the narration. From the moment of this game onwards, we do not know exactly how much time it takes Max to really get to know Chloe, but the reach can only be a matter of a few days or weeks because the summer did not last longer. The extent, likewise, is a few weeks because the prolepsis refers to the whole summer to come.

Another instance of a prolepsis in a historical present context is the following:

What was it she had been doing at the table? Arranging flowers in a vase - or is that too fanciful? There is a multi-coloured patch in my memory of the moment, a shimmer of variegated brightness where her hands hover. Let me linger here with her a little while, before Rose appears, and Myles and Chloe return from wherever they are, and her goatish husband comes clattering on to the scene; she will be displaced soon enough from the throbbing centre of my attentions. (86)

Again, Max’s experiencing self, a ten- or eleven-year-old child, is not able to foresee the future and, therefore, this is another good example of how the narrating self can intervene with the experiencing self.

A further example can already be found on page three, when the narrator says: “I would not swim again, after that day.”

After analyzing the order of the novel, the next technical element that needs to be investigated is the duration, which is a comparison between the story time and the discourse time of a narrative. As has already been established above, the story time of *The Sea* covers about fifty years, and the discourse time is 264 pages.

Dramas are prototypical examples of narratives where the story time is roughly as long as the discourse time. Of course, this is not an absolute equality, and analyzing the duration of a narrative is not easy because it is impossible to measure.

The relationship of story time and discourse time constitutes a narrative's speed or tempo, which occurs in four canonical forms. If story time and discourse time are approximately equal, then there is isochronous narration, and the respective passage of a text is called a scene. In speed-up or acceleration, the discourse time is shorter than the story time and the episode is called a summary. An episode is called a pause if there is no story time and the discourse time elapses on description or comment. The opposite of a pause, with no discourse time passing, is called an ellipsis.

There is a fifth form, called slow-down or deceleration, which is characterized by an episode's discourse time being longer than its story time. Genuine deceleration is very rare, however, and does not occur in *The Sea* either.

In *The Sea*, all of the four major tempos can be found. As has already been extensively discussed, to a large extent, *The Sea* is a retrospective novel, and because it is hardly possible to narrate fifty years in great detail, the retrospective sections lend themselves particularly to acceleration. Accordingly, many passages of the novel are summaries, as in:

When I was here all those years ago, in the time of the gods, the Cedars was a summer house, for rent by the fortnight or the month. During all of June each year a rich doctor and his large, raucous family infested it – we did not like the doctor's loud-voiced children, they laughed at us and threw stones from behind the unbreachable barrier of the gate – and after them a mysterious middle-aged couple came, who spoke to no one, and grimly walked their sausage dog in silence at the same time every morning down Station Road to the strand. August was the most interesting month at the Cedars, for us. The tenants then were different each year, people from England or the Continent, the odd pair of honeymooners whom we would try to spy on, and once even a fit-up troupe of itinerant theatre people who were putting on an afternoon show in the village's galvanised-tin cinema. And then, that year, came the family Grace. (5-6)

What follows after this passage is a detailed report of how Max first met Mr. Grace and then, after a short digression to the present, he describes how he first met Myles. Obviously, it is impossible for the narrator to achieve equality between story time and discourse time in these passages because firstly, in order to do this, he would have to remember every little second and secondly, such a description would be beyond the scope of any narrative. What can also be observed is that, if the story were narrated isochronously, then the narrative would be quite repetitive because the narrator would have to tell us about the doctor's raucous family and the mysterious middle-aged couple as many times as the number of summers he spent in Ballyless. This aspect, however, falls in the category of frequency and will be considered in detail below.

It is obvious, then, that the retrospective sections are rendered almost exclusively in acceleration, if only for the human limitations of the first-person narrator who is hardly able to remember every detail of his childhood some fifty years later. Summary can, therefore, very easily be identified in *The Sea*.

More interesting than analyzing summary on its own, however, is an investigation of pauses within summaries. *The Sea* is a very introspective novel and the narrator frequently inserts comments and descriptions in his summaries. Therefore, although summary is very frequent in *The Sea*, it is not easy to find instances of pure summary, because far more frequent are passages which start with a summary, continue with a reflection about a certain event, and return to the summary, as in:

Mr Todd sat sideways at his desk riffling through the documents in her file; the pale-pink cardboard of the folder made me think of those shivery first mornings back at school after the summer holidays, the feel of brand-new schoolbooks and the somehow bodeful smell of ink and pared pencils. How the mind wanders, even on the most concentrated of occasions.

I turned from the glass, the outside become intolerable now.

Mr Todd was a burly man, not tall or heavy but very broad: one had an impression of squareness. He cultivated a reassuringly old-fashioned manner. He wore a tweed suit with a waistcoat and watch chain, and chestnut-brown brogues that Colonel Blunden would have approved. His hair was oiled in the style of an earlier time, brushed back sternly from his forehead, and he had a moustache, short and bristly, that gave him a dogged look [emphasis added]. I realised with a mild shock that despite these calculatedly venerable effects he could not be much more than fifty. Since when did doctors start being younger than I am? On he wrote, playing for time; I did not blame him, I would have done the same, in his place. (15-16)

Most of the first paragraph is, clearly, a summary because the discourse time does not even amount to half a minute, whereas the act of riffling through the paper (the story time) probably took longer than a few seconds. What follows is a sentence in present tense; a reflection on the part of the narrating self about the experiencing self. The most interesting part about this passage is the third paragraph, when the narrator describes the doctor's appearance to the reader. Obviously, this description is not a thought-process that is simultaneous to the visit in the doctor's office, but one that takes place later by the narrating self, as is indicated by the reference to Colonel Blunden, in order to fill the reader in. As can be seen quite easily, no story time passes during this description and, therefore, it is a pause. What follows is a connective sentence that links the pause and the return to the summary because the experiencing self talks about his feeling of shock upon the doctor's appearance that was just described by the narrating self. Another little pause follows - a sentence of narrated interior monologue - and then the action returns to the summary as if nothing had happened.

Scenes are not so frequent in the novel and the few ones present are quite short, as in:

Claire gave a colourless laugh. 'Which left the more lasting mark,' she asked, 'the dog's teeth or the doctor's paw?' I showed her my wrist where in the skin over the ulnar styloid are still to be seen the faint remaining scars from the pair of puncture marks made there by the canine's canines. 'It was not Capri,' I said, 'and Doctor French was not Tiberius.' (49)

Lastly, there are many ellipses, obviously so, because it is not possible to narrate some fifty years in detail, as has already been said above. Therefore, there are large periods of story time that are not textually present. Apart from the summer when he met the Grace family and the year of Anna's illness, there is not much about Max's life that we get to know in detail. Apparently, this is the case because the other parts of his life are not so significant for him and, as *The Sea* is largely a novel about death and loss, Max only recounts the traumatizing episodes of his life and everything else would be a bit out of place. However, to a large extent the reader has to infer the ellipses himself as most of them are not made explicit. The following quotation is one of the few examples where the ellipsis is explicit and definite because it refers to a specific amount of time: "One day when she was young, twelve or thirteen, I suppose, and poised on the threshold of puberty, I barged in on her in the bathroom [...] *Ten years later* [emphasis added] she abandoned her studies in art history [...]" (62-63).

Far more frequent are implicit ellipses, which are not announced and have to be inferred by the reader:

“What Anna proposed to me, there in the dusty summer dusk on the corner of Sloane Street, was not so much marriage as the chance to fulfil the fantasy of myself.

The wedding party was held under a striped marquee in the mansion’s unexpectedly spacious back garden” (105).

Although not made explicit, the ellipsis just quoted is nevertheless quite easy to identify because obviously, Max and Anna did not get married immediately after her proposal and, moreover, the ellipsis is textually indicated because of the new paragraph.

The most frequent form of ellipsis in *The Sea*, and the most implicit one, is the hypothetical ellipsis, which is impossible to localize (see Genette, *Narrative Discourse* 109) and is only revealed by analepses. We can infer, for example, that there are many hypothetical ellipses in Max’s description of the summer when he met the Grace family because the Graces were at the Cedars for the whole month of August but obviously, Max does not describe thirty-one days in detail. In fact, he does not even know himself when exactly what happened and the reader never learns whether the twins died at the end of the holidays or, for instance, already in mid-August. We can only say, therefore, that there are many ellipses, but it is impossible to date them with precision.

The last technical aspect that needs to be considered before embarking on the psychological condition of the narrator is the notion of narrative frequency which is defined by Genette as “the relations of frequency (or, more simply, of repetition) between the narrative and the diegesis [...]” (*Narrative Discourse* 113). On the story level, an event can occur one or several times, whereas on the discourse level, an event can be recounted one or several times. Accordingly, “a narrative [...] may tell once what happened once, n times what happened n times, n times what happened once, once what happened n times” (Genette, *Narrative Discourse* 114). The second and third relationship need not be considered in any more detail because they do not occur in *The Sea*. The most common relationship in the novel, and the most common relationship in narratives in general, is singulative telling, which recounts once what happened once.

To a large extent, *The Sea* is a singulative narrative because it would be quite repetitive if everything were narrated several times. The interesting passages are the iterative ones, because they occur in several forms. When talking about the Cedars in his childhood,

for example, the narrator says: “During all of June each year a rich doctor and his large, raucous family infested it [...]” (5). In a similar way, the narrator talks about Colonel Blunden: “He has his hair cut every Saturday morning [...]” (9). Often, the iteration is also expressed by the habitual ‘would’, as in:

My mother would only bathe far up the beach, away from the eyes of the hotel crowds and the noisy encampments of day trippers. Up there, past where the golf course began, there was a permanent sandbank a little way out from shore that enclosed a shallow lagoon when the tide was right. In those soupy waters she would wallow with small, mistrustful pleasure [...].”(35-36)

Interestingly enough, there is a relationship in *The Sea* which Genette did not account for in *Narrative Discourse*, namely the following: “We holidayed here every summer, my father and mother and I. We would not have put it that way. *We came here for our holidays*, that is what we would have said. How difficult now it is to speak as I spoke then. We came for our holidays here every summer, for many years, many years, until my father ran off to England [...]” (34).

On the discourse level, the narration in this quotation happens twice with slight stylistic variations: “We holidayed here every summer,” and “We came for our holidays here every summer.” However, on the story level, the event happens neither once (and therefore, it is not a repetitive telling), nor twice (and, therefore, it is not a singulative telling). What we are confronted with here is a phenomenon that recounts, if we put it in the style of Genette’s formulae, n times what happens m times, with n and m being different.

What remains to be discussed is the psychological aspect of the novel’s temporality. As has already been mentioned above, it is striking that Max’s flashbacks are not always narrated in the past tense. Sometimes, the present tense is employed to establish a link between the past and the present, as in: “I am in the Strand Café, with Chloe, after the pictures and that memorable kiss. We sat at a plastic table drinking our favourite drink [...]” (160). Although Max sometimes does not remember the past very clearly, this is obviously an event he recalls in great detail. And evidently, it is an event that is still of great significance for him in the present, so that thinking about it makes him almost feel like being there again.

Another instance of this “evocative present” (see Cohn 198) is the following quotation: “They played a game, Chloe and Myles and Mrs Grace, the children lobbing a ball to each other over their mother’s head and she running and leaping to try to catch it, mostly in vain. When she runs her skirt billows behind her and I cannot take my eyes off the tight black bulge at the upside-down apex of her lap” (31-32). Here, the past tense is employed to describe a past event, but then there is a sudden shift to the present tense. Again, the present tense is used to make a past event seem more immediate and to render the great significance that this event has for the narrator. Max only remembers Mrs. Grace, but by the use of the present tense makes evident that he can literally see her again.

The two examples just quoted reveal the immense impact that the past has on the narrator. Although the twins’ death occurred some fifty years ago, the memory of it is still very traumatic for the narrator, as could already be seen in the second chapter, because he dedicates more narrating time to Chloe and Myles than to Anna. What *The Sea* depicts, then, is a psychological conception of time that describes time as it is experienced, rather than a conventional and linear view of time. In the 1980s, the French philosopher Paul Ricoeur widely discussed this phenomenon of “internal time” and described it as being “[...] freed from chronological constraints” (Vol. 3, 137). The rejection of a linear chronology has already been elucidated throughout the current chapter and is one of the novel’s most distinguishing qualities. Throughout the whole novel, we can observe, therefore, that the narrator explodes temporal barriers and strings along the reader by not making important information available.

Such a psychological conception of time has already featured strongly in modernist narratives. Speaking about Virginia Woolf’s novel *Mrs. Dalloway*, Ricoeur says that “[a]s the narrative is pulled ahead by everything that happens – however small it may be – in the narrated time, it is at the same time pulled backward, delayed so to speak, by ample excursions into the past, which constitute so many events in thought, interpolated in long sequences, between the brief spurts of action” (Vol. 2, 103). In fact, this description is also very fitting for *The Sea*, which is characterised by “ample excursions into the past” as well.

In this context, it is interesting to see what Virginia Woolf herself has to say about the concept of time. Through the figure of her androgynous time-travelling hero Orlando, she reveals her rejection of a conventional view of time in the eponymous novel. We

can observe the protagonist wondering: “For what more terrifying revelation can there be than that it is the present moment? That we survive the shock at all is only possible because the past shelters us on one side and the future on another” (206). Again, it is possible to draw a direct comparison to *The Sea* because these words describe very accurately how Max Morden is feeling. He takes refuge in his memories and in his imagined future, rather than face the intolerable present and try to come to terms with his life.

7. LANGUAGE AND STYLE

After the precedent analysis of the figure of the narrator and his way of rendering the story – achronologically and by employing a variety of narrative modes – the following two chapters are concerned with the surface structure of the novel, that is, with the system of language itself. *The Sea* is a novel which is extraordinarily rich in terms of levels of style and, taking John Banville’s ambition to give his prose “the kind of denseness and thickness that poetry has” (see Steinberg) into account, the present chapter will analyze the poetic characteristics of the novel, whereas the seventh and last chapter will be concerned with a discussion of the various intermedial references.

Before embarking on a detailed analysis of language and style in *The Sea*, it is important to mention the intrinsic difficulty of the word *style* because hardly another literary theoretical term has such a wide range of use. For centuries, the term *stylistics* referred to a set of rules for correct and appropriate language use. Only in the twentieth century was this prescriptive conception given up in favour of so-called analytic stylistics, the only aim of which was to describe and analyze language without any predefined rules which had to be followed. Since then, style has been considered to be a game in which every author can play around with items of language according to his preferences, without having to consider any norms that have to be achieved. However, the normative definition of the term has left its traces, and the word is still used as a notion of evaluation in everyday language.

Although the analysis undertaken here is meant to be purely descriptive, it will be seen that the traditional prescriptive norms apply to *The Sea* as well and, therefore, the antique virtues of style as defined by the early Greeks are worth mentioning.

The first virtue, correctness, means that a narrative has to be grammatically correct in order to be stylistically acceptable. Clearly, this is the case in *The Sea* and need not be analyzed in detail. However, the aspect of correctness is important insofar as it confirms the narrator's self-characterization as an academic and reveals that he is a would-be writer for whom correct language use is indispensable.

The second virtue is clarity and generally, a narrative is said to be clear if it is understandable. Tests have revealed that the intelligibility of narratives decreases with the length of sentences and indeed, *The Sea* features a large number of very long sentences:

I recalled how on a deserted, silent, sun-dazed afternoon half a century ago there had sidled up to me on the graveled patch outside Myler's a small and harmless-seeming dog which when I put out my hand to it bared its teeth in what I mistakenly took to be an ingratiating grin and bit me on the wrist with an astonishingly swift snap of its jaws and then ran off, sniggering, or so it seemed to me; and how when I came home my mother scolded me bitterly for my foolishness in offering my hand to the brute and sent me, all on my own, to the village doctor who, elegant and urbane, stuck a perfunctory plaster over the rather pretty, purplish swelling on my wrist and then bade me take off all my clothes and sit on his knee so that, with a wonderfully pale, plump and surely manicured hand pressed warmly against my lower abdomen, he might demonstrate to me the proper way to breathe. (48)

It was at night especially that I thought about the Graces, as I lay in my narrow metal bed in the chalet under the open window, hearing the monotonously repeated ragged collapse of waves down on the beach, the solitary cry of a sleepless seabird and, sometimes, the distant rattling of a corncrake, and the faint, jazzy moanings of the dance band in the Golf Hotel playing a last slow waltz, and my mother and father in the front room fighting, as they did when they thought I was asleep, going at each other in a grinding undertone, every night, every night, until at last one night my father left us, never to return. (72-73)

However, there are also many short sentences in the novel, as in "They did not tell each other what was in the dream. There was no need. They knew" (82), and in the already frequently cited example: "Chloe, her cruelty. The beach. The midnight swim. Her lost sandal, that night in the doorway of the dancehall, Cinderella's shoe. All gone. All lost. It is no matter. Tired, tired and drunk. No matter" (184).

A third example is the beginning of the following quotation: "Her hands. Her eyes. Her bitten fingernails. All this I remember, intensely remember, yet it is all disparate, I cannot assemble it into a unity" (139).

This constant interplay of long and short sentences not only provides diversion for the reader, who would be overstrained by constantly having to read long sentences and bored by a narrative constituted exclusively by short sentences, but also reveals an interesting aspect about the narrator's personality. For one, such a construction reveals great stylistic skills and shows that the narrator is clearly an educated person who knows how to ensure greater memorability of his story by short sentences on the one hand, and how to fascinate his audience by the artistic construction of long sentences on the other. On closer investigation, however, it can be observed that the short sentences quoted above describe Max's memories of other people, whereas in the long sentences, he talks about himself as a young boy. At another point in the novel, Max says: "I see the game as a series of vivid tableaux, glimpsed instants of movement all rush and colour [...]" (125). As a matter of fact, he does not only see the game of chase, but the whole summer he spent with Chloe and Myles as a series of vivid tableaux. Chloe is especially affected by his inability to remember this summer not only partially, because he does not see her as a complete person, but as constituted by various parts of her body – hands, eyes, fingernails – which he cannot assemble.

The importance of the imagery of painting was already adumbrated above and will be considered in more detail in the chapter on intermediality. However, it reveals again at this point that Max paints the past rather than narrates it and that the reader experiences the story more as a sequence of tableaux than as presented by narrative modes. This experience is heightened by precisely the short sentences just mentioned because they create the impression of discontinuity and fragmentation, just as a sequence of tableaux can only ever be fragmented and not assembled "into a unity."

Despite the great number of excessively long sentences in *The Sea*, length cannot be considered an absolute criterion for clarity because the intelligibility of narratives also depends on the construction of the sentences. In this respect, the action of *The Sea* is sometimes fairly hard to follow because there are a large number of nested sentences and of parenthetical comments made by the narrating self, as in the following two quotations:

"One night towards the end of that summer we came back from the park – I liked to walk with her at dusk through the dusty shadows under the trees that were already beginning to make that fretful, dry, papery rustle that harbinges autumn – and before we

had even turned into the street we heard the sounds of tipsy revelry from the flat” (103-104).

“Miss V. is vague on dates but thinks a cottage was first put up here early in the last century, I mean the century before last, I am losing track of the millennia, and then was added on to haphazardly over the years” (5).

However, *The Sea* is not only hard to follow because of the construction and the length of the sentences, but also because of other characteristics already discussed, like the frequent time shifts and the use of free indirect style. Still, the complexity of the novel only arises from the syntactical and temporal level because on a lexical level the novel is very clear and concrete. The narrator uses very precise language and always searches for the most adequate word, an aspect which will be considered in more detail below.

The third traditional virtue of style, propriety, postulates that the language has to be apt for the situation which is portrayed. In contemporary fiction, this virtue is the one which can be disregarded most easily because it can also create an extraordinary effect if the language does not fit the subject matter. In *The Sea*, however, this virtue is given because the novel is concerned with the very serious topics of death and loss and is written in high style.

The fourth and last virtue, ornateness, is concerned with the use of rhetorical figures and, therefore, links to the statement made by Banville which was quoted at the beginning of this chapter. In general, poetry is considered to be linguistically more aesthetic than prose, which is suggested by Leech and Short when they say: “Whereas in poetry, aesthetic effect cannot be separated from the creative manipulation of the linguistic code, in prose, it tends to reside more in other factors (such as character, theme, argument) which are expressed through, rather than inherent in, language” (2). In *The Sea*, however, the aesthetic effect resides as much in the language itself as in anything else. As already said above, the numerous descriptions and techniques for the presentation of the narrator’s consciousness contribute largely to the aesthetic effect of the novel. Still, the language is just as relevant for the aesthetics of the novel as the other aspects mentioned because it is very artistic, poetic, suggestive and precise. Generally, there are many adjectives and images which make the language very figurative and symbolic. The aesthetic effect of the language, however, resides mostly in the use of rhetorical figures, as usually employed in poetry. “The poet more

obviously than the prose writer, does ‘interesting’ things with language,” Leech and Short say (2), and in this respect, Banville is much more of a poet than a novelist. Rhetorical figures can be analyzed on several levels, namely on a phonological, morphological, syntactical, semantic and pragmatic level, and figures on all of these levels are fairly frequent in *The Sea*.

Among the phonological or sound-oriented figures, alliteration features especially widely:

“The pitchpine floors sound a *nautical note* [emphasis added] [...]” (5).

“[...] I would bundle her in a blanket into the car and drive her along the coast road for miles beside the darkling sea, crooning whatever songs I knew any of the words of, which far from putting her to sleep made her clap her hands in not altogether *derisory delight* [emphasis added] [...]” (45).

“To be concealed, protected, guarded, that is all I have ever truly wanted, to burrow down into a place of *womby warmth* [emphasis added] [...]” (60).

“The God I venerated was Yahweh, destroyer of worlds, not *gentle Jesus meek and mild* [emphasis added]” (119).

“As I approached I heard a *regular rusty screeching sound* [emphasis added]” (10).

The last two quotations show that there are sometimes even two consecutive instances of alliteration, and the last quotation reveals another common feature of *The Sea*, namely the large number of adjectives used.

There are even instances where the initial consonant is repeated three times, as can be seen when the narrator talks about Colonel Blunden’s “long-lobed leathery ears” (9), or in the following quotation: “In fact, we are frenetically energetic, in spasms, but we are *free, fatally free* [emphasis added], of what might be called the curse of perpetuance” (41).

Assonance is not as frequent as alliteration, but can already be observed in the very first sentence of the novel, where the diphthong [ei] is repeated: “They departed, the gods, on the day of the strange tide” (3). Another instance of assonance can be found on page three as well, when the narrator mentions “[t]he *rusted hulk* [emphasis added] of the freighter.”

Consonance occurs most frequently as its subtype alliteration, but there are also instances of initial consonant repetition where the respective words are not uninterruptedly successive:

“The seabirds mewled and swooped, unnerved, it seemed, by the spectacle of that vast bowl of water *bulging* like a *blister* [emphasis added], lead-blue and malignantly agleam” (3).

“The *sky* was hazed over and not a breeze *stirred* the *surface* of the *sea* [emphasis added] [...]” (263).

“We swam in sunshine and in rain; we swam in the morning, when the *sea* was *sluggish* as *soup*, we swam at night, the water flowing over our arms like undulations of black satin [...] [emphasis added]” (135).

As a matter of fact, the phonological figures of alliteration, consonance and assonance are the most frequent figures overall in *The Sea*. This can be explained easily by the fact that they all share the element of repetition, which creates great phonetic harmony. Not surprisingly, these figures are very frequent in poetry precisely because of this harmony which gives poems an almost musical touch and makes them unforgettable for the reader. Poetry, however, is meant to be read aloud because only then can this harmony fully unfold itself. In the same vein, the figures in *The Sea* do not really work until the novel is read aloud, at which point it unleashes all its aesthetic potential and shows that Banville’s aim was achieved.

When read aloud, another aspect that might be easily missed otherwise becomes immediately obvious. The very first sentence, “They departed, the gods, on the day of the strange tide” (3), already cited above, not only excels through the use of assonance. When the most important syllables are stressed, this sentence has an anapaestic metre and this aspect is also highly reminiscent of poetry. The use of a metrical scheme in the first sentence is very skilfully placed because the first sentence is often decisive as far as the reader’s judgment of a text is concerned. Accordingly, in *The Sea*, the first sentence is thematically excellent because it evokes the reader’s curiosity, but it is also phonologically exceptional because it sounds very lyrical.

As the last rhetorical figure on the phonological level, there is also an instance of onomatopoeia, when the narrator imitates his whistling:

“Just now I caught myself at it again, that thin wintry whistling through the front teeth that I have begun to do recently. *Deedle deedle deedle*, it goes, like a dentist’s drill. [...] I may go mad here. *Deedle deedle*” (8-9).

On the morphological level, the use of rhetorical figures is not as abundant as on the phonological level. Still, although the morphological rhetorical figures are quite rare, there is a great variety of them. For instance, the following quotations are examples of anaphoras: “This was not supposed to have befallen her. It was not supposed to have befallen us, we were not that kind of people” (19).

“We swam in sunshine and in rain; we swam in the morning, when the sea was sluggish as soup, we swam at night, the water flowing over our arms like undulations of black satin [...]” (135).

An epiphora is used in the following quotation: “Try as I may, pretend as I may, I am unable to conjure her as I can her mother [...]” (139).

With the word *plimsoll* on page eleven, an archaism is employed, and a figura etymologica, defined as “[t]he repetition of a word’s root, involving different word categories” (Jahn, *Poetry* P4.2.) can be seen in the following quotations:

“Reckett’s or Rickett’s Picture-House had an invitingly *disreputable reputation* [emphasis added] [...]” (143).

“It was true I had considered him an *unsuitable suitor* [emphasis added] [...]” (67).

Moreover, there are instances of *geminatio*, or doublings of words:

“All morning under a milky sky the waters in the bay had swelled and swelled [...]” (3).

“But then, at what moment, of all our moments, is life not utterly, utterly changed, until the final, most momentous change of all?” (33-34).

Lastly, there are quite a few examples of enallages, or “[u]nusual combination[s] of words” (Jahn, *Poetry* P4.2.). On page 145, the narrator mentions “big-bellied clouds”, an expression which is, although not totally new, quite rare.

On page four, he writes: “A bristling clump of those trees, monkey-brown with a tarry reek, their trunks nightmarishly tangled, still grows at the left side [...]”, which is again

an enallage because there is nothing nightmarish about tangled tree trunks. However, examples like this are spread throughout the whole novel and reveal the narrator's, and also the author's, great imaginative capacity and extraordinary narrative skill because such examples are likely to stay in the reader's mind and leave an unforgettable impression.

Another instance of an enallage is the narrator's description of Colonel Blunden's "parboiled eyes" (8). As with the example of the big-bellied clouds mentioned above, this combination of words is not completely new either. As a matter of fact, a Google search for this phrase delivers some four hundred results (as of March 27th, 2009). Most of them, however, refer either to Banville's novel, or to Joyce's *Ulysses*, where parboiled eyes are mentioned in the eighth chapter.² Whether this is an intentional intertextual reference or just a description that inadvertently quotes Joyce we do not know. However, the first possibility is not unlikely because this reference, which is quite easy to read over, would be a good technique of revealing the narrator's education and knowledgeableness.

Apart from the use of morphological rhetorical figures, the lexical system in *The Sea* is striking in quite a few other ways. For one, the narrator creates new words, such as "landladyese" (4), or "landlubbered" (5), which is actually a noun, but transformed into a verb. Moreover, he uses words from other languages, like "moue" (23) and "chatelaine" (72).

The most striking feature, however, is the narrator's habit of employing very precise colour descriptions:

"[...] the majority of fathers in my experience were fish-belly white below the collar-line" (7).

"His [Mr. Grace's] eyes were an extraordinary pale transparent shade of blue" (7).

"Even though the sun would be long up the night's moist coolness would cling on in the cobbled yard, where hens picked their way with finical steps among their own chalk-and-olive-green droppings" (51).

"Her hair, dyed the colour of brown boot polish and permed into a mass of tight, shiny waves, was too voluminous for her little pinched face [...]" (54).

² See <http://www.doc.ic.ac.uk/~rac101/concord/texts/ulysses/> (30 March 2009).

“The boy-waiter came back, tentative as a fox cub, and made to take the tray, a carrotty lock falling limply forward from his brow” (64).

“The mud shone blue as a new bruise, and there were stands of bulrushes, and forgotten marker buoys tethered to slimed-over rotting wooden posts” (112).

“Her ash-and-silver hair was done in an old-fashioned style, parted down the centre and pulled back into an eponymous bun” (202).

The sentences just quoted are also indicative of other features of language. The second citation, for instance, reveals again that the narrator employs a great number of adjectives in order to make his descriptions as precise and accurate as possible, and the first clause of the second to last quotation is another example of consonance.

The next category, syntactical rhetorical figures, is the least frequent one in *The Sea*. A parallelism can be found on page 249: “But what a day it was yesterday, what a night, and, heavens! what a morning-after.” Apart from this, there are no syntactical rhetorical figures to be found except some instances of asyndeta, as in: “Her hands. Her eyes. Her bitten fingernails” (139), and “What was most striking to me about the people pictured was the calmly smiling way in which they displayed their wounds, their stitches, their suppurations” (181).

Despite the lack of rhetorical figures on this level, *The Sea* displays some other syntactical characteristics. For one, there are many instances of dislocation, as in: “They departed, the gods, on the day of the strange tide” (3), “They looked unnaturally white, that day, those birds” (3), and “It is still there, that bridge, just beyond the station” (9). The frequent occurrence of dislocation, especially right dislocation, as in the examples just quoted, serves two important functions. Either they create the important element of suspense because for the fraction of a second the reader wonders who the narrator is referring to with the personal pronoun. Alternatively, if the referee has already been established before, as in the second and third quotations, the dislocation functions as a clarification so that the reader does not misinterpret the personal pronoun. Another syntactical characteristic of *The Sea* has already been mentioned above, namely the fact that there are very many long and nested sentences on the one hand, and quite a few very short and incomplete sentences on the other.

On the semantic level, personification is one of the most prominent rhetorical figures:

“There was an impression of general, tight-lipped awkwardness, of all these homely things – jars on the shelves, saucepans on the stove, that breadboard with its jagged knife – averting their gaze from our all at once unfamiliar, afflicted presence in their midst” (18-19).

“The rusted hulk of the freighter that had run aground at the far end of the bay longer ago than any of us could remember must have thought it was being granted a relaunch” (3).

“The kettle came to the boil and switched itself off and the seething water inside it settled down grumpily” (20).

“The car was parked on the gravel. It had been out recently, the cooling engine was still clicking its tongue to itself in fussy complaint” (79).

“When she tottered to her feet the wicker chair cried out in excruciated relief” (202).

In the first quotation, the narrator treats inanimate objects as if they were capable of sense perceptions. Furthermore, objects are also presented as capable of thinking, as seen in the second example, and of showing emotions, namely relief, complaint, and grumpiness. As with other aspects already mentioned above, the result of personification is that these examples stay in the reader’s mind and make it impossible to forget the novel.

Apart from personification, there are not many semantic rhetorical figures. There is one instance of a euphemism, when the narrator talks about his late wife and avoids the word *died*: “It was an evening just like that, the Sunday evening when I came here to stay, after Anna had gone at last” (146).

There is also an example of synesthesia, when the narrator talks about “the brownish odour of women’s hair” (46) and combines the olfactory noun with the visual adjective.

Antonomasia, defined as “(a) Use of a proper name in place of an ordinary word; (b) use of a descriptive phrase in place of a proper name” (Jahn, *Poetry* P4.4.) is not used in its strict sense, but the following quotation can be seen as related to it because the word *Sergesses* functions as a descriptive term for all the women in Max’s life: “Then there was Serge and his ilk, not to mention my Sergesses, no, not to mention” (217).

There are two examples of paronomasia, which is “[a] play on words exploiting similarity in writing or sound” (Jahn, *Poetry* P4.4.):

“‘*Patient*,’ Anna said to me one day towards the end, ‘that is an odd word. I must say, I don’t feel patient at all’ (140).

“I showed her my wrist where in the skin over the ulnar styloid are still to be seen the faint remaining scars from the pair of puncture marks made there by the canine’s canines” (49).

The sentence “Mr Grace, Carlo Grace, Daddy, was wearing shorts again [...]” on page twenty-seven is a pleonasm because the triple reference to Mr. Grace is superfluous.

The most frequent semantic figures are metaphors and similes, as in:

“His office, no, his rooms [...] seemed at first sight an eyrie, although they were only on the third floor” (13-14).

“For all his remoteness and amused indifference, he was the one who appeared to be in command over us all, a laughing deity, the Poseidon of our summer [...]” (123).

“Miss Vavasour came in, a moving wraith in the shadows of the twilit room” (219).

“We were waiting in our as yet unfashioned world, scanning the future as the boy and I had scanned each other, like soldiers in the field, watching for what was to come” (12).

“She [Mrs. Grace] had been in the sea and was wearing a black swimsuit, tight and darkly lustrous as sealskin [...]” (28).

“How strong his hands were, like manacles of cold, pliant iron, I feel even yet their violent grip” (37).

“The Japanese note is continued in the kimono-like belted silk dressing-gown that she wears of a morning [...]” (39).

Lastly, there is an instance of metonymy: “She plays Chopin very nicely. I hope she does not start on John Field, I could not bear that. Early on I tried to interest her in Fauré, the late nocturnes in particular, which I greatly admire” (38).

The last level to be investigated is the pragmatic one, which features only three rhetorical figures, namely apostrophe, which is “[t]he addressing an absent person or a personified object” (Jahn, *Poetry* P4.5.), rhetorical questions, and irony.

Apostrophes occur four times in the novel, and the narrator always addresses an absent or imagined person rather than a personified object. In the first example, he talks to an imagined genie: “The steel kettle shone, a slow furl of steam at its spout, vaguely suggestive of genie and lamp. Oh, grant me a wish, just the one” (21).

The second instance of apostrophe is not that clear because the narrator does not indicate whom he addresses: “You cunt, you fucking cunt, how could you go and leave me like this, floundering in my own foulness, with no one to save me from myself. *How could you*” (196). Obviously, Max can only be addressing Chloe, Anna, and his parents because they are the only persons who left him. His parents, however, are unlikely to be addressed because the narrator does not seem particularly sad about having lost them. The shock about Anna’s death is most recent, which makes it likely that he feels angrier about her death than about Chloe’s. The citation below also reveals a certain anger and desperation on the part of the narrator about Anna’s death and, therefore, he is probably addressing his deceased wife. In this quotation, it is very easy to identify that the addressee is Anna because of the reference to Mr Todd:

Why have you not come back to haunt me? It is the least I would have expected of you. Why this silence day after day, night after interminable night? It is like a fog, this silence of yours. First it was a blur on the horizon, the next minute we were in the midst of it, purblind and stumbling, clinging to each other. It started that day after the visit to Mr Todd when we walked out of the clinic into the deserted car park, all those machines ranked neatly there, sleek as porpoises and making not a sound, and no sign even of the young woman and her clicking high heels. Then our house shocked into its own kind of silence, and soon thereafter the silent corridors of hospitals, the hushed wards, the waiting rooms, and then the last room of all. Send back your ghost. Torment me, if you like. Rattle your chains, drag your cerements across the floor, keen like a banshee, anything. I would have a ghost. (247-248)

At the end of the first part of the novel, there is another instance of an apostrophe, where the addressee is not identified either: “I am there. I hear your siren’s song. I am there, almost there” (132). Although the addressee is not indicated, he or she is not hard to identify because of the repeated references the narrator makes to Greek mythology. The sirens were three beautiful and seductive yet very dangerous female creatures who lured sailors into death. Considering the women in Max’s life, there was only one who

had such a seductive quality, namely Chloe. Moreover, in the second part of the novel, the narrator delves ever more deeply into the past until he reaches the tragic climax of the twins' death, which he has still suppressed in part one. The siren's song can, therefore, be interpreted as a calling for Max to face the past and deal with this traumatic event.

There are also some rhetorical questions, where the answer is already implicit in the narrator's statement: "But then, at what moment, of all our moments, is life not utterly, utterly changed, until the final, most momentous change of all?" (33-34).

"The receptionist, a blonde blur in a nurse's coat and sensible shoes that squeaked – on such an occasion who would really notice the receptionist? – laid Anna's file on Mr Todd's desk and squeakingly withdrew" (14).

At the very end of the novel, there is an instance of irony, when the narrator lists all the things he could do in his life. Still, from the context it becomes clear that he does not really mean any of these options seriously:

There are other things I can do. I can go to Paris and paint. Or I might retire into a monastery to pass my days in quiet contemplation of the infinite, or write a great treatise there, a vulgate of the dead. I can see myself in my cell, long-bearded, with quill-pen and hat and docile lion, through a window beside me minuscule peasants in the distance making hay, and hovering above my brow the dove refulgent. Oh yes, life is pregnant with possibilities. (260)

Leaving the area of rhetorical figures, there is another highly important aspect of stylistics in *The Sea* that will make the transition to the next chapter, namely telling names. The high regard that young Max holds the Grace family in is reflected by their surname, and the name Chloe is an epithet of the Greek goddess Demeter, who was very cunning and deceitful. Therefore, Chloe's devious nature is revealed by her very name, before the reader even sees how cruel she sometimes is.

Colonel Blunden's surname can be seen as derived from the verb *blunder*, which does not shed positive light on him. In the same vein, Miss Vavasour's surname does not sound very nice, whereas her first name Rose evokes the image of a gracile and elegant person. The fact that the narrator only refers to her as Rose when talking about the long-ago summer and as Miss Vavasour when narrating the present is, as already mentioned above, important because it makes the novel very suspenseful. However, also on the story level the change of names is revealing because it reinforces the impression that the

previously young and beautiful governess has become filled with bitterness at life's disappointments.

Not only the names of persons are of relevance, however, as can be seen when considering the village Ballyless, which incorporates the adjective *bally*, meaning *damned* or *cursed*. The fact that the twins drowned in a village called Ballyless, therefore, is important insofar as the narrator's life was somewhat damned ever since this traumatic summer because he could never forget about it and still cannot manage to live a happy life.

Two further names remain to be investigated, Mr. Todd and Max Morden, which are a good proof of Banville's originality and creative use of language. These references, however, are not immediately conspicuous because they require the reader to understand German or at least, to know that "Tod" means "death" and "morden" means "to kill" or "to murder". These names are hard to interpret because the reader does not learn that the narrator speaks German, which would make it easier to infer the meaning of these references. Therefore, for a reader who is not familiar with the German language, Mr. Todd and Morden just seem like ordinary names and it is quite hard to understand why the narrator reacts so strangely upon Mr. Todd's name, and why he changed his own name into Max.

Another important aspect pertaining to style is the notion of metafiction. In *The Sea*, there are many examples that show how inadequate the narrator considers language to be. In fact, the narrator's strained relationship to language is precisely why he resorts to using pictures when talking about the past because images serve his purposes better than a language which is, for him, never precise enough. The narrator's problems with language can be observed at various points throughout the whole novel:

"I gave as good, or as bad, as I got, reminding her, merely as a corrective, that for the best part, I mean the worst part – *how imprecise the language is, how inadequate to its occasions* [emphasis added] – of the year that it took her mother to die, she had been conveniently abroad [...]" (66).

"They meant so much then, kisses, they could set the whole kit and caboodle going, flares and firecrackers, fountains, gushing geysers, the lot. This one took place – *no, was exchanged – no, was consummated, that is the word* [emphasis added], in the corrugated-iron picture house [...]" (141-142).

“I mean she [Anna] was wilful, secretive, and deeply resentful of the slightest interference or objection. I can talk, I know. I think it must be that we were both only children. *That sounds odd* [emphasis added]. I mean that we were both the only children of our parents. *That sounds odd too* [emphasis added]” (175-176).

The narrator’s relationship to language is so strained that he even calls into question idiomatic expressions and wants to invent new words:

“Have I spoken already of my drinking? I drink like a fish. No, not like a fish, fishes do not drink, it is only breathing, their kind of breathing. I drink like one recently widowed – widowered? – a person of scant talent and scantly ambition [...]” (200).

In *Transitions: Narratives in Modern Irish Culture*, Richard Kearney says of Irish writers:

For Joyce and Beckett – and the Irish modernists that succeeded them – it is not what one writes about that is of primary importance but the process of writing itself. Or as Beckett said of Joyce, ‘his writing is not *about* something, it *is* that something’. What matters, in other words, is less the content than the form of language. The modes of communication are more significant than the message communicated, since there no longer exists any inherited reservoir of meaning which can be taken for granted. Not surprisingly then, the very notion of culture as a transmission of collective experience is itself at issue. Language becomes self-conscious, reflexive; it begins to question its own conditions of possibility. (13)

As could be seen before, for Banville, it is also rather the form than the content of language that is important. The above-quoted process of writing is also described, for example, in the following quotation, where the narrator shows how language constructs itself word for word: “The café. In the café. In the café we” (145).

As was elucidated throughout this chapter, *The Sea* is a finely crafted novel that excels through outstanding stylistic qualities. Taking all the factors discussed into account, it is immediately obvious that the “story deficiency” does not matter because the novel offers so much more than that. As a matter of fact, it was never Banville’s aim to entertain with a breathtaking story. Talking about writing, he says: “It’s a serious business for us; we don’t see it as primarily providing entertainment or being fashionable” (Kampen 343). Indeed, fashionable he is not. *The Sea* is anything but light fare. It is not meant to be a quick pastime or amusement, but requires the reader’s total

concentration, as will also be seen in the next chapter about intermedial references, which are at times fairly inconspicuous.

8. INTERMEDIALITY

The issue of telling names discussed above paves the way for this ultimate chapter, which is concerned with intertextuality and, in extension, with intermediality. *Intertextuality* is a term coined by Julia Kristeva in 1967; however, the concept behind it is much older. In fact, Judith Still and Michael Worton claim that the phenomenon “is at least as old as recorded human society” (2). They mention the examples of Plato, Aristotle, and other Greek philosophers, according to whom poetic creation is always an act of imitation.

The concept of intertextuality as it is used nowadays originated in twentieth-century linguistics. The underlying view of language, which served as the basis for theories of intertextuality, was articulated by the Russian literary theorist Mikhail M. Bakhtin. Bakhtin’s work is largely a response to and a criticism of the theories of Ferdinand de Saussure from the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, which were highly influential and important, but neglected one important dimension of language, namely the fact that it always exists in specific social situations. Bakhtin criticizes Saussure for this abstract view of language and claims that its social and interactive dimension is its most important characteristic. In such a conception of language, it is obvious that language can never be considered in isolation because it always responds to previous utterances. As Bakhtin and Volosinov say:

Orientation of the word toward the addressee has an extremely high significance. In point of fact, *word is a two-sided act*. It is determined equally by *whose* word it is and for whom it is meant. As word, it is precisely *the product of the reciprocal relationship between speaker and listener, addresser and addressee*. Each and every word expresses the “one” in relation to the “other.” I give myself verbal shape from another’s point of view, ultimately, from the point of view of the community to which I belong. A word is a bridge thrown between myself and another. If one end of the bridge depends on me, then the other depends on my addressee. A word is territory shared by both addresser and addressee, by the speaker and his interlocutor. (Volosinov 86)

This two-sided conception of language is termed *dialogism* by Bakhtin and it is this idea which influenced Kristeva and laid the groundwork for her theory of intertextuality. In

her view, every text is intertextual because it consists of words which have always already been written or uttered before. In the same vein, Bakhtin says:

When a member of a speaking collective comes upon a word, it is not as a neutral word of language, not as a word free from the aspirations and evaluations of others, uninhabited by others' voices. No, he receives the word from another's voice and filled with that other voice. The word enters his context from another context, permeated with the interpretations of others. His own thought finds the word already inhabited. (qtd. in Allen 27)

In her work, then, Julia Kristeva claims that a text is never the product of its author's creativity and imagination alone, but always consists also of bits and pieces of already existent texts. In her words, a text is "a permutation of texts, an intertextuality in the space of a given text", in which "several utterances, taken from other texts, intersect and neutralize one another" (36).

However, the term *text* in this context is not merely employed in the sense of written language, but refers also to the "cultural (or social) text", which includes "all the different discourses, ways of speaking and saying, institutionally sanctioned structures and systems which make up what we call culture" (Allen 35-36).

Another literary theorist who was very important for the development of theories of intertextuality was Roland Barthes. He claimed that a text is

woven entirely with citations, references, echoes, cultural languages [...], antecedent or contemporary, which cut across it through and through in a vast stereophony. The intertextual in which every text is held, it itself being the text-between of another text, is not to be confused with some origin of the text: to try to find the 'sources', the 'influences' of a work, is to fall in with the myth of filiation; the citations which go to make up a text are anonymous, untraceable, and yet *already read*: they are quotations without inverted commas. (160)

As can be observed easily, Kristeva's and Barthes' ideas are very similar because they both criticize the monological conception of language as established by Saussure. Barthes, however, even takes the theory of intertextuality a step further because he explicitly stresses the role of the reader in the interpretation process. According to him, there are two kinds of readers, namely "consumers" who search for a stable meaning, and readers who are very active and productive in their interpretation. This latter group, in Barthes' terms, are themselves "writers" of the text (see Allen 70).

Barthes even argues that the figure of the author is questionable (see Allen 71). He claims that an author's ideas are never his own, but always "already-read" or "already-written." The modern author, therefore, does not create a work of art by his own original ideas, but is in a constant process of arranging the "already-read" or the "already-written" into a "multi-dimensional space in which a variety of writings, none of them original, blend and clash" (Barthes 146).

With such a conception of intertextuality, we find ourselves in a vicious circle because the intertexts, of course, themselves consist of intertexts and technically, this would mean that there is only one single text which is original and is not constituted by intertexts.

The fact that the term *text* also includes cultural systems has already been mentioned above, but it becomes ever so much more important in Barthes' theory, where the intertextual is less the presence of specific intertexts than the representation of a cultural code (see Allen 73-74).

If intertextuality is employed to a very large extent, Kristeva and Barthes say, the text reaches a state that they call *jouissance*. Plurality, therefore, and the dissolution of previous barriers, is considered to be "the source of liberation and joy" (Allen 56). However, intertextuality does not always necessarily produce *jouissance*, but can also be responsible for a sense of repetition which results in cultural saturation and a feeling of boredom (see Allen 89-90). Not to put too fine a point on it, the author can be considered as not particularly challenged because in such theories of intertextuality, his creation is always seen as an imitation. However, if he consciously employs intertextuality, the author's task is a very difficult one insofar as he must avoid ennui and saturation.

Another problem of intertextuality has been broached by Laurent Jenny, when he says:

What is characteristic of intertextuality is that it introduces a new way of reading which destroys the linearity of the text. Each intertextual reference is the occasion for an alternative: either one continues reading, taking it only as a segment like any other [...], or else one turns to the source text, carrying out a sort of intellectual anamnesis where the intertextual reference appears like a paradigmatic element that has been displaced, deriving from a forgotten structure. (44)

This fundamental characteristic of intertextuality, which is the very headstone of this phenomenon, becomes a source of danger because the writer has to assemble several texts into a harmonious unity without destroying the aesthetics of the new text.

Another theorist who largely contributed to the notion of intertextuality was Gérard Genette who, in 1982, published his seminal work *Palimpsestes: La littérature au Second Degree*, later translated as *Palimpsests: Literature in the Second Degree*. The phenomenon which has so far been discussed under the name of *intertextuality* was now called *transtextuality* by Genette, defined as “all that sets the text in a relationship, whether obvious or concealed” (qtd. in Allen 101). According to Genette, there are five kinds of transtextuality, the first of which is called intertextuality and means “the actual presence of one text within another” (qtd. in Allen 101). In this sense, intertextuality is only present in quotation, plagiarism and allusion and the cultural codes mentioned above are not relevant anymore.

The second type of transtextuality is called paratextuality and is concerned with discourse surrounding the text in question. The paratext is made up by two types of text, namely the peritext, which includes titles, chapter headings, prefaces and notes, and the epitext, consisting of interviews, publicity announcements, reviews, and everything else that is outside the text under consideration (see Allen 103).

Genette’s third type of transtextuality, called metatextuality, “unites a given text to another, of which it speaks without necessarily citing it (without summoning it), in fact sometimes even without naming it” (qtd. in Allen 102).

The fourth type, hypertextuality, is defined by Genette as “any relationship uniting a text B ([...] the *hypertext*) to an earlier text A ([...] the *hypotext*), upon which it is grafted in a manner that is not that of commentary” (qtd. in Allen 107-108).

Architextuality, the fifth and last type of transtextuality, is concerned with “the readers’ expectations, and thus their reception of a work” (qtd. in Allen 102).

A further literary theorist who was important for the concept of intertextuality is the American scholar Harold Bloom. In his study *The Anxiety of Influence*, he claims that a writer constantly strives for originality and tries to detach himself from the influences of writers before him. On the other hand, however, an author also wants to follow his precursors’ example and, therefore, has the desire to imitate them. Each and every

writer is, consequently, permanently torn between the desire to be original and the desire for imitation. Generating his theories from the example of Romantic poetry, Bloom claims that poetry, and literature in general, is always only an imitation of previous texts (see Allen 134).

As already mentioned above, intertextuality, though created by the author, also depends on the reader because he is the one who has to spot intertextual references and interpret them. Bloom also discusses this arbitrary element of intertextuality and admits that it is a big challenge for a reader to find intertexts. The main difference between Bloom and other theorists of intertextuality is that for Bloom, only literary texts can work as intertexts and not cultural codes.

In the course of the development of intertextual theories, scholars have taken two different positions. On the one hand, there are theorists who advocate a broad understanding of the term *intertextuality* and, therefore, tread in Kristeva's footsteps, claiming that every text is intertextual. On the other hand, there are scholars who reject this view and only speak of intertextuality if the references are intentional on the part of the author.

In 1983, the term *intermediality* was coined on the basis of the concept of intertextuality and was at first used exclusively by German researchers (see Wolf, "Intermedialität" 163). Although it was soon integrated into English-speaking scholarship, the terms *intertextuality* and *intermediality* are sometimes still not distinguished, Werner Wolf ("Intermedialität" 164) says with reference to Allen's chapter "Intertextuality in the non-literary arts" ("Intermedialität" 174-181). However, the terms *text* and *medium* are not identical and, therefore, a differentiation between intertextuality and intermediality is indispensable. Moreover, as Wolf outlines in his essay, there is an inherent difference between intertextuality and intermediality, which calls for a clear delineation between these two concepts. Intertextuality transgresses textual boundaries, but always stays within the area of the verbal medium and is, therefore, intramedial. Intermediality, on the other hand, transgresses boundaries between different media and is, as a result, inherently complementary to intramediality and, by consequence, to intertextuality (see Wolf, "Intermedialität" 165).

As said above, the concept of *intermediality* was created as an extension of intertextuality and has become especially prominent since the middle of the nineties.

“Intermediality is in”, Joachim Paech declared in 1998 (see Rajewsky 1), and the previous division of different media was considered obsolete at the latest at this point. Particularly the last years of the twentieth century, as well as the twenty-first century, have seen a rise in literary texts with intermedial references. Despite this new so-called “media awareness” (see Rajewsky 2), *intermediality* is a term which is not properly defined and lacks a uniform underlying theory. A further problem is the fact that the word *intermediality* refers to a number of phenomena because there are uncountable ways in which different media can interact with each other. As a result, the term *intermediality* is not clearly delineated from other terms such as *multimediality*, *plurimediality*, or *transtextuality*, which have been defined in various ways (see Rajewsky 6-7). Phenomena such as ekphrasis, film adaptations, novelizations, musicalisations of literature or narrativisations of music, respectively, are all subcategories of the umbrella terms *intermediality* or *transmediality*. This confusion is mostly due to the fact that the very term *medium* is highly ambivalent and defined in various ways. In accordance with Rajewsky, Wolf’s concept of medium will be cited here:

[...] I here propose to use a broad concept of ‘medium’: not in the restricted sense of a technical or institutional channel of communication but as a conventionally distinct means of communication or expression characterized not only by particular channels (or one channel) for the sending and receiving of messages but also by the use of one or more semiotic systems. (Wolf, “Musicalized Fiction” 40)

Striving for a uniform theory of intermediality, Rajewsky defines the concept as “phenomena which transgress media boundaries and involve at least two media which are conventionally perceived as distinct (my translation, see Rajewsky 13). According to her, the term intermediality refers to three separate phenomena. For one, there exists a combination of media, also referred to as multimediality, plurimediality, or polymediality, which is the basis of photo novels, films, operas, songs, and vaudeville shows. The second phenomenon, change of media or media transformation, refers to the transformation of a fixed text to another medium and occurs in film adaptations, productions of dramatic texts, and novelizations. The last is the phenomenon of intermedial references which is the case when texts belonging to a specific medium refer to texts of another medium. These three phenomena, however, need not necessarily occur in isolation, but can also interact with each other and it will be seen that this is the case in *The Sea* as well.

Werner Wolf distinguishes between a direct or overt, and an indirect or covert form of intermediality. According to him, direct intermediality is

[...] a form in which at least in one instance more than one medium is present in an artifact, whereby each medium appears with its typical or conventional signifiers, remains distinct and in principle separately 'quotable'. In other typologies of intermediality this form corresponds to 'mixed mediality' or 'multimediality' [...]. In any case, the 'intermedial' quality of the artifact is immediately discernible on its surface [...]. ("Musicalized Fiction" 42-43)

In contrast,

indirect or 'covert' intermediality can be defined as the involvement of (at least) two conventionally distinct media in the signification of an artifact in which, however, only one (dominant) medium appears directly with its typical or conventional signifiers, the other one (the non-dominant medium) being only indirectly present 'within' the first medium as a signified [...]. It is, as it were, 'covered' by the dominant medium (though the description of a statue in a novel, for instance, involves a visual art, it still remains literature), and hence the two media cannot be separated from each other, as in the case of overt/direct intermediality. While the medial 'surface' in overt intermediality is heterogenous, in covert intermediality it remains relatively homogeneous [...]. ("Musicalized Fiction" 44)

Wolf's definition, however, does not account for the phenomenon of media change (or at least, not yet, because he supplemented this aspect in another work a couple of years later, as will be seen shortly). There are other definitions which include this aspect, but they have deficiencies in other areas. As a result, it is quite hard to reduce the concept of intermediality with all its complexities to a common denominator.

In a later work ("Intermedialität"), Wolf distinguishes between several kinds of intermediality. The term *transmediality* designates phenomena which are not bound to a particular medium, but occur in several media. Myths, for instance, are transmedial because they appear in many different media, while a transposition from one specific medium into another is not noticeable (see Wolf, "Intermedialität" 170-171). If such a transposition is perceptible, then we are confronted with the second type of intermediality, namely intermedial transposition. In this case, a so-called pre-medium is always present, as well as a post-medium. The most prominent examples of such a kind of intermediality are film adaptations.

Another kind of intermediality, which Wolf ("Intermedialität" 172) calls an 'overt' form, is plurimediality. This concept designates the occurrence of several originally

different media in a piece of art. However, the different media are not assimilated to each other and stay within their own semiotic systems. Therefore, the medial surface of the artefact in question is heterogeneous and hybrid. Examples for such a type of intermediality are the combination of text and image in illustrated novels, as well as the interaction of image, text and music in films (see Wolf, “Intermedialität” 173).

A last type of intermediality is the intermedial reference. In this form of intermediality, a foreign medium is described by means of the semiotic system of the medium under consideration. This type of intermediality is, therefore, covert because the surface structure of the referring medium is homogeneous. Intermedial references can allude to foreign media as such, as well as to particular pieces of art within a foreign medium.

In the case of *The Sea*, intermediality is ubiquitous and occurs in several variations. As already mentioned at various instances throughout this paper, the motifs of art and painting are especially important. The biggest part of the imagery of painting is made up by intermedial references. There are allusions to the foreign medium of visual art as such, when the narrator talks about various painters, such as Pierre Bonnard (41), Edouard Vuillard (41), Maurice Denis (41), Sir John Tenniel (44), Giambattista Tiepolo (45), Michelangelo (74), Van Gogh (130), Jan Vermeer van Delft (222), Duccio di Buoninsegna (223), Picasso (223), Théodore Géricault (256), and Georges de la Tour (256). Moreover, the narrator refers to the *Baignoires*, a series of paintings by Bonnard (see Banville 152) and to “Tenniel’s drawing of Alice” (44).

There is a medium transformation or intermedial transposition when the narrator describes a painting by Pierre Bonnard:

In the *Nude in the bath, with dog*, begun in 1941, a year before Marthe’s death and not completed until 1946, she lies there, pink and mauve and gold, a goddess of the floating world, attenuated, ageless, as much dead as alive, beside her on the tiles her little brown dog, her familiar, a dachshund, I think, curled watchful on its mat or what may be a square of flaking sunlight falling from an unseen window. The narrow room that is her refuge vibrates around her, throbbing in its colours. Her feet, the left one tensed at the end of its impossibly long leg, seem to have pushed the bath out of shape and made it bulge at the left end, and beneath the bath on that side, in the same force-field, the floor is pulled out of alignment too, and seems on the point of pouring away into the corner, not like a floor at all but a moving pool of dappled water. All moves here, moves in stillness, in aqueous silence. One hears a drip, a ripple, a fluttering sigh. A rust-red patch in the water beside the bather’s right shoulder might be rust, or old blood, even. Her right hand rests on her thigh, stilled in the act of supination [...] (152-153)

Other cases of intermedial transpositions can be seen when the narrator compares Miss Vavasour to Whistler's mother (256), and Mrs. Grace to "Vermeer's maid with the milk jug" (222), or when he talks about Bonnard's painting *Table in Front of the Window* (137).

Another intermedial aspect which takes up a large portion of the novel is Greek mythology. Apart from the reference to the sirens already discussed, the narrator uses the characters of Orpheus (214), Poseidon (123), Medusa (182) and Ariadne (245) for a comparison to himself and the people around him. As was mentioned at the end of the last and the beginning of this chapter, telling names are an important aspect of intertextuality. In this context, it is interesting to consider the concept of interfigurality, established by the German scholar Wolfgang G. Müller, who claims that interfigurality is "one of the most important dimensions of intertextuality" (101). According to him, "[n]ames belong to the most obvious devices of relating figures of different literary texts. Interfigural relations are to a large extent internymic [...] relations. The shift of the name of a fictional character, whether in its identical or in a changed form, to a figure in another text is, as far as the linguistic aspect is concerned, comparable to a quotation" (102-103). In the case of *The Sea*, however, there is rather a case of transmediality than a shift of a fictional character to another text. As established above, the phenomenon of transmediality does not have a clear pretext, and this is precisely the case when considering the Greek mythological figures. Although these characters first appeared in Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey* and, therefore, in narratives, which would make the use of their names in *The Sea* clearly intertextual, this subject matter has been employed in various media over the centuries, which makes this aspect of the novel transmedial.

Considering Genette's types of transtextuality, there are two clear cases of intertextuality, more precisely, of quotations, the first of which is even made explicit. The second quotation is not that clear and requires that the reader of the novel is well-read in order to understand the reference to Shakespeare's play *The Tempest*:

"I too could go, oh, yes, at a moment's notice I could go and be as though I had not been, except that the long habit of living indisposeth me for dying, as Doctor Browne has it" (140).

"Was't well done?"(247).

Furthermore, there are intertextual references to the French poet Paul Valéry (41) and to the English poet William Blake (182). There is an allusion to Joyce's short story "Araby" when the narrator says "Even from inside the car we could hear the palms on the lawn in front dreamily clacking their dry fronds, a sound that on purple summer nights long ago had seemed to promise all of Araby" (47-48). Two allusions are made to Joseph Conrad in the following two quotations, the first of which refers to *Heart of Darkness*, and the second to *Lord Jim*: "Yes, yes, exterminate all the brutes [...]" (195), "She could not bring herself to speak his name; he was Gentleman Jim" (198). Moreover, the narrator alludes to Daniel Defoe's novel *A Journal of the Plague Year*, when he talks about "[his] journal of the plague year" on page twenty-four. A further allusion which is quite hard to identify can be found in the following quotation: "Before the pit opened under our feet that day in Mr Todd's rooms – which, come to think of it, did have about them something of the air of a sinisterly superior barber's shop – I was often surprised to ponder how many of life's good things had been granted me" (93). Although this reference might seem inconspicuous at first, the narrator provides the reader with the clue about the barber shop, and with a bit of research, it is possible to identify an allusion to Sweeney Todd, a fictional demonic barber from London, who first appeared in British fiction in the middle of the nineteenth century and has become famous with the film adaptation two years ago.

The third and fourth types of transtextuality, metatextuality and hypertextuality, are not present in *The Sea* and the second type, paratextuality, has already been adumbrated in the introduction with the epitext of a critic's review of the novel. Considering the peritext of *The Sea*, the most important aspect is, of course, the title, which functions as a leitmotif. An important aspect of Genette's fifth category, architextuality, might be the award of the Booker Prize, a fact which is printed on the cover of the novel and which might influence at least some readers' expectations.

In accordance with Barthes' claim that cultural codes form an important aspect of intertextuality, there are also some cultural codes which are essential for this novel. The aspects of homosexuality and divorce have already been mentioned in the fifth chapter, but there are even more cultural codes which are quite prominent in *The Sea*. For one, we can observe that the narrator is very prone to drinking, a problem that is said to be related to the Irish. Another intertext which is mentioned quite frequently is the cultural code of religion. In the following quotation, for example, it can be seen how much

importance is attached by the Irish to religion and churchgoing, or at least, how much importance was attached to religion in the time the novel was set:

Love among the big people [...] How did they justify these dark deeds to their daytime selves? That was something that puzzled me greatly. Why were they not ashamed? On Sunday morning, say, they arrive at church still tingling from Saturday night's frolic [...] They kneel, not minding the mournfully reproachful gaze the statue of their Saviour fixes on them from the cross. (75-76)

The most prominent, yet most implicit, intertext is the position of women. Traditionally, Irish women were seen as very strong and clever, a notion which derived from the national Celtic heritage. However, with the introduction of the English law in Ireland, a number of limitations were imposed on Irish women, which were upheld until the 1960s. This can be seen, for example, in Article 41.2 of the Constitution which was adopted in 1937:

“In particular, the State recognizes that by her life within the home, woman gives to the State a support without which the common good cannot be achieved.”

“The State shall, therefore, endeavour to ensure that mothers shall not be obliged by economic necessity to engage in labour to the neglect of their duties in the home.”³

Women were, therefore, restricted to the private sphere, meaning that their only duty in life was to cater for the needs of their husbands and children without being able to fulfil their own wishes and desires. They were allowed to get jobs, but had no career options except nursing and domestic service, teaching and secretarial work. Although this conception of womanhood is being abandoned, traces of it still remain. As a matter of fact, a study from the year 2006 reveals that the ideal number of children is 2.95 for Irish women (see Testa 30). This number is the second highest in Europe and only Cypriot women desire more children than the Irish, namely 3.04 (ibid.). Considering the actual number of children, Irish women rank number two in Europe with 2.16, outrun only by Turkish women with 2.18 children (see Testa 39). Apparently, getting children is more desirable for Irish than for other women, which suggests that the previous conception of Irish women as wives and mothers is still present in the country's mentality nowadays.

³ See <http://www.taoiseach.gov.ie/upload/static/256.htm> (3 April 2009).

Considering the characters in *The Sea*, then, the marginal position of women in public life and their restriction to the domestic sphere can be best observed in the character of the narrator's mother:

My father worked in Ballymore and came down in the evenings on the train, in a wordless fury, bearing the frustration of his day like so much luggage clutched in his clenched fists. What did my mother do with her time when he was gone and I was not there? I picture her sitting at the oilcloth-covered table in that little wooden house, a hand under her head, nursing her disaffections as the long day wanes. (35)

However, also Anna can be seen to be a typically Irish woman. At the beginning of her relationship to Max, she is an aspiring photographer, which likens her to the traditional independent Celtic woman. Still, she later becomes a wife and mother and her professional aspirations are not mentioned in the least from this point onwards. The fact that Max never took her ambition seriously is also important in this respect and has already been discussed above.

A further instance of the marginal position of women is Mrs. Grace. She is the first object of veneration for the young Max, and she is deeply sexualized. Max always describes her in terms of her body which is extremely seductive and which makes him feel very lustful:

My hitherto hardly less than seemly dreams of rescue and amorous dalliance had by now become riotous fantasies, vivid and at the same time hopelessly lacking in essential detail, of being voluptuously overborne by her, of sinking to the ground under all her warm weight, of being rolled, of being ridden, between her thighs, my arms pinned against my breast and my face on fire, at once her demon lover and her child. (88)

Considering Mrs. Grace, it is also possible to identify a few important motifs in *The Sea*. When Max is in the Cedars for the first time, Mrs. Grace offers him an apple (see Banville 86), which likens her to Eve. Accordingly, the apple is "associated with sexual love" (Ferber 12), and it is indeed purely sexual desire that Max feels for her. Furthermore, the apple can also symbolize the female breasts (see De Vries 18) and indeed, it can be seen that young Max is somewhat obsessed with Mrs. Grace's breasts:

"Her breasts bounce. The sight of her is almost alarming" (32).

“[...] I wondered, as so often, if they were not sore to carry, those big twin bulbs of milky flesh [...]” (115).

Another important cultural intertext is constituted by the national mythological heritage. The Irish are claimed to be a very superstitious, other-worldly and spiritual people (see Craig vii) and this is reflected in *The Sea* as well. In the following quotations, there are references to leprechauns, banshees and the hawthorn tree:

“[...] [B]ehind the huddle of the Lupins’ leprechaun houses, here was Duignan’s lane, rutted as it always was, ambling between tangled hedges of hawthorn and dusted-over brambles” (51).

“Send back your ghost. Torment me, if you like. Rattle your chains, drag your cerements across the floor, keen like a banshee [...]” (248).

Leprechauns are very small male fairies and the reference to them suggests that the houses Max talks about are very small. A banshee is a female spirit who visits households and portends the death of a family member. The narrator’s desire to see a banshee might, therefore, indicate his longing to be foretold his own death and to be with his wife again in the other-world. The mythological element of the hawthorn is related to the figure of the banshee because it is also considered to be a harbinger of death.

After the analysis of pictorial, literary and cultural intertexts, there is one last medium which lends itself for intermedial references, namely music. However, intermedial references to the field of music are very rare. On page thirty-eight, the narrator alludes to the composers Frédéric Chopin, John Field and Gabriel Fauré, and on page 220, he refers to Robert Schumann and his *Kinderszenen*.

All of the instances of intermediality in *The Sea* are covert because the surface structure of the novel is homogeneous. As a last aspect of this chapter, the reference to the painter Jean Vaublin (63) has to be investigated. A reader not familiar with painters might just overlook this allusion because the novel is sprinkled with references to visual art and due to the subtle manner that Banville integrates the name Vaublin, there is no reason to suspect that his character might be fictitious. However, close research reveals that Vaublin is fictional indeed and that, moreover, he appears in several of Banville’s novels. Even more interesting is the fact that “Jean Vaublin” is a near anagram of “John

Banville” and this aspect reinforces the impression already discussed at various points, namely that Banville paints the story rather than narrates it.

9. CONCLUSION

After the analysis of pivotal characteristics of the novel – the chronological chaos, the foregrounding of the style of the text, linguistic and stylistic inventiveness, and the use of intermediality – the first thought that springs to mind is that *The Sea* is clearly a postmodern novel. Granted, all of these features of the novel are said to be constitutive of postmodernist fiction; however, it also needs to be taken into account that Banville does not want to be considered a postmodernist writer. His refusal to be categorized like this can be dated already to the 1980s, when he declared that

[m]odernism has run its course. So also, for that matter, has post-modernism. I believe, at least I hope, that we are on the threshold of a new *ism*, a new synthesis. What will it be? I do not know. But I hope it will be an art which is honest enough to despair and yet go on; rigorous and controlled, cool and yet passionate, without delusions, aware of its own possibilities and its own limits; an art which knows that truth is arbitrary, that reality is multifarious, that language is not a clear lens. Did I say *new*? What I have defined is as old as Homer. (Murphy xi)

Indeed, *The Sea* is a novel to which the description above applies very well – it is rigorous, passionate, and language is presented in all its complexities and not at all like a “clear lens”. As yet, a new *ism* has not been defined, but Banville’s novel might be a part of it. Coming back to the review quoted at the beginning of this paper, the fact that “there’s lots of lovely language” has already been discussed at length, particularly in the sixth chapter. The claim that there is “not much novel” remains somewhat vague because it is not clear which conception of the term “novel” the critic employs. Although the action might be considered boring by some readers, a statement like this testifies of an utter misconception of the stream-of-consciousness genre. And, of course, a consideration of the author’s aims and objectives is indispensable. As stated above, Banville does not want to entertain his readership and, accordingly, for readers who merely want to be entertained, *The Sea* is the wrong kind of novel. However, to cite another review which fittingly pinpoints the motivation behind this thesis: “[f]or readers who take books and literature seriously, *The Sea* is a must-have. One periodically rereads a sentence just to marvel at its beauty, originality and elegance. [...]

The Sea offers an extraordinary meditation on mortality, grief, death, childhood and memory. It's not a comfortable novel, but it is undeniably brilliant" (Donahue).

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12. APPENDIX

German Summary

John Banvilles Roman *The Sea*, der 2005 mit dem angesehenen Man Booker Prize ausgezeichnet wurde, hat sowohl zahlreiche sehr positive als auch einige durchaus negative Kritiken erhalten. Ausgehend von einer Kritik, laut der dieser Roman zwar durch seine wunderbare Sprache besticht, jedoch einen Mangel an Handlung hat, werden in der vorliegenden Diplomarbeit verschiedene narratologische und stilistische Strategien des Romans analysiert.

Zu Beginn wird die Figur des Erzählers analysiert, der nach Gérard Genettes Klassifikation homodiegetisch ist. Weiters wird auf den Unterschied zwischen dem „erzählenden Ich“ und dem „erlebenden Ich“ des Erzählers eingegangen, der jedoch in der Praxis so gut wie nie eindeutig ist, da diese Funktionen des Erzählers ständig interagieren. Nach den Theorien von Ansgar Nünning und Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan wird dann gezeigt, dass der Erzähler unzuverlässig ist und der Leser nicht alles, was er sagt, unbesehen glauben darf.

Das zweite Kapitel beschäftigt sich mit der Perspektive des Romans, die intern ist, weil der Leser alles durch die Augen des Erzählers wahrnimmt und nichts über die Gedanken und Gefühle der anderen Charaktere erfährt. Die Perspektive in *The Sea* scheint auf den ersten Blick zwar fest zu sein, da nie durch eine andere Figur als Max Morden fokalisiert wird; jedoch ist sie bis zu einem gewissen Grad auch variabel, da das „erlebende Ich“ des Erzählers in verschiedenen Zeitpunkten situiert ist, und die Handlung dadurch einerseits durch die Perspektive eines elfjährigen Jungen, andererseits durch die Perspektive eines erwachsenen Mannes vor beziehungsweise nach dem Tod seiner Frau wahrgenommen wird. Ein weiterer wichtiger Aspekt in diesem Kapitel ist die Frage nach dem Objekt der Fokalisation, und obwohl Max Morden zutiefst betroffen über den Tod seiner Frau scheint, ist es auffallend, dass seinen Kindheitsfreunden Chloe und Myles, sowie deren Mutter, die Max's erste Liebe war, mehr Erzählzeit eingeräumt wird.

Im Anschluss an die Perspektive wird auf die Erzählmodi des Romans eingegangen. Nach Franz K. Stanzel wird hier gezeigt, dass Max Morden sowohl die Funktion eines Erzählers als auch eines Reflektors hat, denn einerseits ist ihm bewusst, dass es einen Leser gibt und er versucht, die Handlung mehr oder weniger nachvollziehbar

darzustellen, andererseits jedoch spielt sich ein Großteil des Romans im Inneren von Max ab: er durchlebt noch einmal den traumatischen Sommer vor fünfzig Jahren und reflektiert über bestimmte Ereignisse, wie sie ihm gerade einfallen, und nicht in der Reihenfolge, wie sie passiert sind. Diese Tatsache deutet schon das vierte Kapitel an, das sich neben der Darstellung der Figurenrede hauptsächlich mit der Repräsentation von Gedanken beschäftigt. Wichtige Aspekte hier sind die erlebte Rede, sowie der sogenannte Bewusstseinsstrom, die sich durch unvollständige und abgehackte Sätze, innere Monologe und die schon erwähnten Zeitsprünge äußern.

Im fünften Kapitel wird genauer auf die Temporalität des Romans eingegangen. Wie schon angedeutet, ist diese sehr komplex, da ein Großteil des Romans aus Retrospektiven besteht. Diese sind jedoch achronologisch angeordnet, das heißt, der Erzähler reflektiert, zum Beispiel, über seine Ehe mit Anna, springt dann zurück in seine Kindheit, nur um sofort wieder von der Gegenwart zu erzählen. Wenn man die verwendeten Tempora im Roman betrachtet, ist auffallend, dass nicht alle vergangenen Ereignisse in der Vergangenheitsform erzählt werden. Durch die Verwendung dieses evokativen Präsens wird klar, welche große Bedeutung die Vergangenheit noch für den Erzähler hat.

Das sechste Kapitel beschäftigt sich mit dem Stil des Romans und im Speziellen mit der Verwendung von rhetorischen Figuren. Allgemein finden sich in *The Sea* sehr viele solcher Figuren, wodurch die Sprache des Romans sehr poetisch wird. Die häufigsten Figuren sind jedoch Alliteration, Konsonanz und Assonanz, die alle eine sehr große Harmonie erzeugen und die Lektüre des Romans zu einem unvergesslichen ästhetischen Erlebnis machen.

Im letzten Kapitel geht es schließlich um Intermedialität, und nach einem Überblick über die Entstehung der Konzepte Intertextualität und Intermedialität werden intertextuelle und intermediale Bezüge des Romans, wie zum Beispiel die zahlreichen Referenzen auf die Malerei, analysiert.

All diese Aspekte machen *The Sea* zu einem Roman, der den Booker Prize zu Recht gewonnen hat, da er sprachlich außergewöhnlich gestaltet ist und die äußere Handlung bei typischen Bewusstseinsstrom-Romanen wie diesem berechtigterweise in den Hintergrund treten darf, da seelische Prozesse und Gedanken, und die Art *wie* etwas geschrieben wird, wichtiger sind.

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