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The interaction of subjectivity and ideology in the novel

Ebert, Martina, Ph.D.
The Ohio State University, 1989

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THE INTERACTION OF
SUBJECTIVITY AND IDEOLOGY
IN THE NOVEL

DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate
School of The Ohio State University

By
Martina Ebert, M.A

* * * *

The Ohio State University
1989

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Julian Markels
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To the women of my family:
my mother, my aunts, and my daughter, Hannah;
and to the memory of my father
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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INTRODUCTION

The debate around subjectivity, the way in which human subjects experience and live their selfhoods, has been a heated one in modern literary theory. Interestingly, it has been the "left" literary critics both in Europe and the United States who have been most attracted to this problematic. Such critics as Althusser, Bakhtin, Derrida, and Jameson have made seminal contributions to the cultural and literary analysis of subjectivity. One reason why it has perhaps been easier for left critics to deal with the concept of subjectivity is that they do not readily succumb to the a priori assumption that there is indeed such a thing as subjectivity. This assumption, all too frequent with humanistic critics, typically produces circularity: the critic claims axiomatically the existence of the very phenomenon that he was only going to analyze, and thus closes his eyes to the wide range of theoretical speculation which is opened up when subjectivity itself becomes the subject of analytical inquiry. Critics coming from a left tradition of thought are less likely to commit this mistake: because of the extreme importance Marxists attach to the workings of ideology upon the formation of human subjectivity, the concept of subjectivity has long been an embattled one, and the possibility of an independent subjectivity has often been called into question.
My reflections on the relationship between ideology and the representation of subjectivity in the novel were spawned by my reading of the works of two theoreticians who put forth diametrically opposed, seemingly irreconcilable theses on the nature of subjectivity in the age of capitalism. The first was The Making of the Modern Family by the Canadian historian Edward Shorter, and the second Inwardness and Existence: Subjectivity in/and Hegel, Heidegger, Marx, and Freud by Walter Davis. I will develop in some detail the theses of both these theoreticians because they provided the groundwork for my analysis of the representation of subjectivity in the novel. But first an outline of my methodology and the definition of a few key terms is in order.

This study will focus on the impact on the novel of capitalism's double need both to foster and control human subjectivity—a vital tension which will be analyzed below—and its consequences for the depiction of subjectivity in the novel. However, this is primarily neither a historical, sociological, or political study—it is a literary study which draws on such political-economic terms as "capitalism" merely to denote a historical stage in the development of economic systems without implying any value judgments, and to situate "ideological formations", i.e., unconscious value systems which these economic systems generate and which bear heavily on the formation of human subjectivity.

Since "ideology" and "subjectivity" are the dialectical opposites whose interaction is the key issue in this study, it is crucial to distinguish the popular usage of those terms from their meaning in this
study. The term "subjectivity" is defined as a human being's sense of individual selfhood. Subjectivity is characterized by and simultaneously based upon the creation of "inwardness", an inner space in which critical reflection upon one's life and the society in which it is lived can take place. It is important to note that, while sensitivity, intuition and emotion are crucial components of a finely developed subjectivity, they can by no means constitute it. Subjectivity is defined not merely as the capacity to feel deeply, but as the capacity to stand apart from these feelings, to reflect upon them and to analyze them rationally. The inwardness which is created in the process of this reflection is an interiorized sense of selfhood, but it has immediate consequences for the relation of the individual to the external world.

Before launching into the discussion of the theoretical precepts which set the framework for this study, I would like to add a further note about my use of "subjectivity" and other terms similar in meaning. Particularly in the chapter on Robinson Crusoe, I have frequently used the term "inwardness". This term denotes the inner space within which the critical thought process that is so crucial for the formation of subjectivity can take place. It does not yet—or not necessarily—imply the act of critical reflection which is necessary to create an independent subjectivity out of this inner space. In conjunction with the attribute "critical", however, "inwardness" is used as a synonym for "critical subjectivity." In addition, I have often used "independent selfhood" as a synonym for "independent
subjectivity." Further, it quickly became clear that it is redundant to speak about an "independent, critical subjectivity", since every truly independent subjectivity is also a critical subjectivity.

The term "ideology" was coined in the late 18th century by de Tracy and meant simply "the science of ideas." However, it soon came to be used to designate impractical and illusory ideas. Marx uses the term to denote the schism in society produced by class interests and the division of labor. "Ideology" is set against "reality." In *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*, Marx writes:

As in private life one differentiates between what a man thinks and says of himself and what he really is and does, so in historical struggles one must distinguish still more the phrases and fancies of parties from their real organism and their real interests, their conception of themselves from the reality. (344-45)

Marx defines ideology as a body of ideas which is used to conceal or distort vested interests. Engels later uses the term "false consciousness", which has since become the most commonly cited definition for Marx's concept of ideology.

The most important function of ideology is to conceal the fact that society is structured so as to protect the interests and the power of the ruling class by making it seem as if the existing social order is natural, eternal, and unchangeable. Thus, ideology strives to dehistoricize both social life and the life of the individual, and to tie the existing order to ethical and moral categories which give it eternal validity and divine authority. Ideology functions at a subconscious level as an extremely effective control mechanism in the
interests of the dominant culture. It grips the individual before she can even become an individual, by constituting the very structure of the individual's inwardness. Radical Marxist critics such as Althusser and Derrida go as far as to say that in fact the "I" is always already the "Other", and thus to claim that individuality and personal identity are themselves ideological myths.

For Althusser, there is no area outside ideology and no human subject prior to ideology. He views ideology as comprising the total of social institutions and practices, including art. In For Marx, Althusser argues that it is simplistic to limit ideology to "false" consciousness and that instead consciousness is always constituted by ideology.

Human societies secrete ideology as the very element and atmosphere indispensable to their historical respiration and life. . . So ideology is not an aberration or a contingent excrescence of History: it is a structure essential to the historical life of societies. Further, only the existence and the recognition of its necessity enable us to act on ideology and transform ideology into an instrument of deliberate action on history. (232)

It is the function of ideology to allow the individual to create the illusion of a unified subject by defining an imaginary relationship between himself and his real conditions of existence. Thus, ideology is "the expression of the relation between men and their 'world', that is, the (overdetermined) unity of the real relation and the imaginary relation between them and their real conditions of existence" (233-34). It is this more comprehensive definition of ideology as a representational structure allowing individuals to create an image of themselves as unified subjects, that
has been used in this study.

If this is a literary study, one may ask, what is the relevance of ideology to the novel, and how is it related to the problematic of subjectivity? The writing of literature, as a social practice within a particular economic mode of production, is also part of the ideological apparatus that constitutes a society and contributes to the constitution of an ideological subject. It is therefore the task of the critic to determine the ways in which art expresses an ideological will and to make the reader aware of his ideological "constituted-ness". In this enterprise, Marxist literary criticism again proves a valuable tool: in The Political Unconscious, Fredric Jameson, building upon Northrop Frye's theory of archetypal mythoi, defines narrative as collective dreaming: "All literature must be read as a symbolic meditation on the destiny of community" (70). Jameson argues that the creation of a work of art is itself the ideological solution to an ideological problem:

ideology is not something which informs or invests symbolic production; rather the aesthetic act is itself ideological, and the production of aesthetic or narrative form is to be seen as an ideological act in its own right, with the function of inventing imaginary or 'formal' solutions to unresolvable social contradictions. (79)

In this passage, Jameson postulates that a society's ideological problems at a specific historical moment engender characteristic formal structures in its art which allow this society to find symbolic solutions for its problem. Thus, every literary genre is an ideological matrix for dealing with a real-life problem, and the
history of literary form is inextricably intertwined with history itself, as new historical situations engender new literary forms. Several conclusions follow from these precepts: first, that the novels I propose to analyze in this study are ideological solutions to concrete historical problems of their age; second, that they reflect the authors' subjectivities within the given ideological limitations, and third, that each novel is the vehicle for an ideological message which has the power to modify the reader's subjectivity.

It is no coincidence that the Western European literatures of the late 18th and early 19th centuries—the periods which witnessed the establishment of capitalist economic and political structures in England, France, and Germany—were intensely concerned with individual subjectivity, and it is no coincidence that the first novels were written during this period of early capitalism, for the novel is the literary form which entirely depends upon a developed individual subjectivity for its success. Mikhail Bakhtin, in The Dialogic Imagination, writes that the novel is "the only genre that was born and nourished in a new era of world history and therefore it is deeply akin to that era, whereas the other major genres entered that era as already fixed forms" (4). This new era of world history begins with the rise of capitalism in the Western world, and the novel is the ideological matrix characteristic of this socio-economic system.

Bakhtin contrasts the novel with the epic in order to emphasize the radical innovation of the novel as a genre. The epic presents one singular unitary belief system, whereas in the novel there are many
possible belief systems whose interaction provides a dialogue that is absolutely vital for the genre (335). In fact, the novel develops only where "heteroglossia" exists. A sealed-off interest group cannot produce the novel (Bakhtin 368). Thus, the rise of the novel is a direct response to the dislocation of feudal ways of life and of the feudal economic system through capitalism, and in its later stages of development, it is generated by the inherent class conflicts characterizing capitalist societies. The new genre explodes the one-dimensional unified discourse of the epic through its intense historical self-consciousness and the refraction of the subject by several consciousnesses. The novel includes voices from all strata of society and embraces irony, parody, indeterminacy and open-endedness, which makes it an inherently anti-authoritarian and thoroughly contemporary genre.

This does not mean, however, that all novels are consciously written in opposition to the dominant culture. We know, of course, that novelists can explicitly support the existing power structure, but, as Bakhtin argues, the novel's inherent dialogic structure exposes and undermines authoritative discourse. Along the same lines, Sartre writes in Literature and Existentialism that even a reactionary novelist is potentially subversive, because in writing about society as he sees it, he discloses its man-made and historical nature and calls it into question. This disclosure strips the world of its innocence and thus ushers in change (22), whether or not the writer is consciously "engaged". Thus, although the speaking person in the
novel is with necessity an ideologue, the polyglossic structure of discourse in the novel prevents the total domination of the reader's consciousness by any one voice. The novel thus becomes a medium of aesthetic distancing. Only in the novel is the reader given the possibility to develop the dialogic consciousness which is a prerequisite for the formation of an independent subjectivity. And it is only in the novel, through an analysis of the ideological coping mechanisms that created it, that the critic can trace the dialectic of subjectivity and ideology as it reflects the actual historical subjectivities of the author and the society depicted.

In the following short exposition of the two works by Edward Shorter and Walter Davis which provide the framework for this study, the dialectic of subjectivity and ideology in capitalism begins to take shape. Davis accepts the Marxist rejection of the humanistic axiom of an independent, ahistorical human "nature" and subjectivity as justified. But, he argues, it has led some Marxist theoreticians such as Louis Althusser, to prematurely proclaim the "death of the subject". While Davis agrees with Althusser's precept that "there is no area outside ideology", that is, no subjectivity before the impact of ideology, he modifies this somber recognition by maintaining that "every site of ideological domination is a potential site of liberation". Hence, while Davis acknowledges that subjectivity is not something which can simply be retrieved, since it does not merely preexist ready to be unearthed, he also argues that it can be fought for and created in a constant battle against ideology through
never-ending acts of reflection, which Davis equates with Hegel's act of negation. Through reflection and critical negation of the given, an independent subjectivity can be created.

Shorter, based on his analysis of the development of the modern nuclear family, argues that the rise of capitalism has in fact been the one crucial catalyst in creating both the space and the incentive for an unprecedented validation of individual subjectivity. In traditional societies based on agriculture and an extended family structure, the validation of individual subjectivity is viewed as undesirable and potentially disruptive of the community's coherence and survival. With the rise of capitalism in England in the middle and late 18th centuries and with its concomitant weakening of traditional ways of life and their corresponding value systems, the parameters of communal life that had theretofore seemed "natural" were speedily overthrown, and a new set of values was generated. These new values fostered the creation of a completely new relationship of society to the individual and of man to his own subjectivity.

Capitalism is the first mode of production which critically depends on the development of an individualistic, non-communal subjectivity for its survival. The central factor in a successful capitalist system is the entrepreneurial spirit, which is characterized by a willingness to take risks, an ability to think innovatively, and the necessity to make quick, independent decisions in order to achieve profits. All these qualities are diametrically opposed to the "communal mindset", where the seasons and the
traditional ways of one's ancestors determine the rhythm of planting and harvesting, of work and rest, and where risktaking, novelty, and change are looked at askance. For the capitalist economy to function, a revaluation of these factors has to take place, and it is the capitalist economy itself which both requires and makes this revaluation possible.

Obviously, capitalism's impact on human subjectivity has been described by Davis and Shorter from two very different perspectives: Davis views capitalism as a disruptive and destructive economic structure which fetters the individual's mind and usurps the inner space which might otherwise constitute the individual's subjectivity. Shorter, on the other hand, thinks of capitalism as a liberating force which freed human beings from the often tyrannical control of tradition and community. Thus, it might seem that Davis's and Shorter's theses are mutually exclusive and are indeed impossible to reconcile. But this is not so. It is my contention that Shorter's analysis is correct for the early stages of capitalism and that it would be dangerously simplistic to accuse capitalism in all its historical stages of causing the death of subjectivity; instead, one could rightfully call the beginning of the era of capitalism, the middle and late 18th century, the dawn of the era of the subject. To explore the nature of this new subjectivity as it is depicted in literature, I have chosen one of the earliest novels, Defoe's Robinson Crusoe (1719) with which to open my analysis. In the first chapter of this study, it will be shown that Robinson Crusoe exhibits a
distinctly modern subjectivity which is based upon the "entrepreneurial" abilities of quick decision-making, a willingness to experiment and to take risks, calm reasoning, self discipline, calculation and planning, intensive application of labor, self-reliance, individual initiative, and the belief that he is capable of controlling and shaping his environment.

At the same time, Davis and other critics who deplore the destructiveness of capitalism for human subjectivity are also correct, but only with regard to historically later stages of capitalism. For the newly created modern subjectivity is a sword which cuts both ways: on the one hand, capitalism needs to encourage the formation of inwardness which allows individuals to establish themselves as independent subjects. On the other hand, once the process of reflection, which is so central to the establishment of a sense of individual subjectivity, has been set in motion, there is no way of predicting which way individuals will turn their new-found powers of selfhood. While they may use their reflective powers to make independent decisions in the service of the market economy and profit, they may also use them to deny capitalism their allegiance and to rebel against the system. In order for capitalism to establish itself as the dominant form of production in the western world, it had to facilitate the development of a volatile and explosive subjectivity, and, at the same time, it also had to seek to control and channel this subjectivity once it had been freed from traditional and communal controls. It therefore had to evolve an alternative control mechanism
which must encourage the development of individualistic, entrepreneurial qualities, while curbing the "subversive use" of individualistic subjectivities. This delicate balancing act is performed by ideology, a vehicle of power which gains its tremendous importance for capitalism's need to both foster and control the development of an individual subjectivity. Thus, Shorter's and Davis's theses can be synthesized and become the joint basis for my analysis of the dialectic interaction of capitalist ideology and subjectivity as it is reflected in five representative novels from three centuries: Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*, Charlotte Bronte's *Villette*, Charles Dickens' *Bleak House*, Gustave Flaubert's *Madame Bovary*, and Virginia Woolf's *To the Lighthouse*.

A further advantage of analyzing the development of the novel in terms of the dialectic of subjectivity and ideology is that one need no longer rely on labels such as "Realism," "Romanticism," and "Impressionism," because a dialectic framework allows one to comprehend these literary styles and movements as reactions to the shifting relationship of ideology to subjectivity. In historical stages where the development of an independent subjectivity and a strong inwardness is fostered because it serves the current economic structure, literature tends to portray the world as malleable, knowable, and "transparent", i.e. in a "realistic" mode, because it seems that it is possible for human beings to understand and shape their environment and their destinies. When this certainty is lost, however, and subjectivity and inwardness are usurped by various
current ideologies, this process is reflected in literature by a movement away from "realistic" modes of writing. Either the protagonists are shown reacting violently against the imminent destruction of their selfhood (in such literary modes as expressionism), or as withdrawing into themselves, fighting desperately against a world which has become unknowable (in such literary modes as surrealism) and in which they can no longer feel empowered and at home. This phenomenon is reflected in the constant struggle of many protagonists of the 20th century novel against the loss of selfhood, and the frequent portrayal of their futile struggle against paranoia, neurosis, depression, silence, and death.

I think the power of my analysis is to put the development of these various literary "styles" and "movements" into a more holistic theoretical framework, and thus become independent of the standard ad hoc interpretations of literary phenomena. For example, if my thesis on the dialectical relation between capitalist ideology and the depiction of subjectivity in the novel holds true, I may also be able to show up corresponding changes in the historical development of narrative strategies, which have so far been "analyzed" in a largely descriptive manner. Much of what has passed for literary history and theory is in fact only taxonomy and a description of discrete facts; there is no coherent rationale given for the causes underlying the historical formation of literary movements. In part, this "blind spot" has been due to many theoreticians' inability to see beyond their own ideological hobby horse. Marxist theoreticians view
capitalism as entirely evil and evaluate its effects on human subjectivity and its portrayal in literature accordingly, while more orthodox schools of literary criticism refuse to acknowledge any damaging influences on human subjectivity at all. Both these views seem to me to lack complexity; yet in synthesizing them, one can define a theoretical base which is powerful enough to yield a coherent explanation of the changing depiction of subjectivity throughout the history of the novel.
CHAPTER I
ROBINSON CRUSOE

Introduction

In Robinson Crusoe, the reader witnesses a powerful piece of ideology in the making: Defoe feels the pulse of his age when he creates Crusoe, the lonely lord of a deserted island who successfully subdues nature and turns it into a flourishing little paradise. The book became an instant success and has continued to fascinate the young of every generation since. Clearly, Defoe had given expression to a strong new sense of individualism which could not find expression within the given social structure or within existing literary genres. Ian Watt, in The Rise of the Novel, recognizes the intimate connection between the new concept of individualism and successful economic management when he calls Crusoe the prototype of the "homo economicus":

That Robinson Crusoe, like Defoe's other main characters, Moll Flanders, Roxana, Colonel Jacques and Captain Singleton is an embodiment of economic individualism hardly needs demonstration. (63)

The concept of the individual as we understand it today is quite inapplicable to traditional feudal society. Each person was part of a rigidly structured system of relationships based on loyalty and responsibility. In this traditional, static society, there was a
continuity between the individual's social role and his sense of selfhood. The individual was defined through his role within society, i.e., by the expectations he could have of others and by what others could expect of him. Although I am not going to argue that individuals did not have an inwardness which could have served as a point of departure for critical self-reflection, I do maintain that such an inwardness was rare, and, where it existed, it was not directed toward secular issues but was almost entirely religious. Only with the secularization of this inwardness—a process which was greatly fostered by nascent capitalism—did self-reflection become a means of establishing an individual subjectivity independent of the individual's inherited role in society and often antagonistic to it.

Reflection, the process which can take place in the newly gained space of secularized inwardness, is by definition active and dynamic. It is, therefore, opposed to the static structures of traditional feudal societies. Those who want to be economically successful within capitalist society cannot let themselves be confined by state and station, faith and family. It is a person's reflection on the discrepancy between her desires and the possibility of realizing them within the social position into which she was born which leads to the essentially dynamic worldview characteristic of capitalism.

Thus, it is hardly surprising that Crusoe's first act in this story of an economically successful odyssey is an act of rebellion against "his station in life" and, in particular, an act of disobedience against patriarchal rule. Crusoe comes from a family
whose social position is normally identified with the rise of capitalism: his father is a rich merchant, a member of the middle class, who is fully conscious of the advantages of the "middle station in life". In young Crusoe's confrontation with this rich bourgeois merchant, Defoe showcases the conflict between the dynamism of entrepreneurial capitalism as opposed to the relatively static worldview of the established bourgeois merchant. At the very outset of his narrative, Crusoe explains that his father is "a foreigner of Bremen", who settled at Hull and made a fortune as a merchant. Thus, Crusoe's father was himself himself a risk-taker willing to leave his native country to make his fortune abroad. But after having established himself, Crusoe senior adopts more traditional values and advocates to his son the older patterns of a rooted and secure middle-class life. According to the old merchant, middle-class life is

the best state in the world, the most suited to human happiness, not exposed to the miseries and hardships, the labour and sufferings of the mechanick part of mankind, and not embarrass'd with the pride, luxury, ambition, and envy of the upper part of mankind. (6)

Crusoe's father views middle-class life as a desirable norm attended by such virtues as temperance, moderation, quietness, and health. He has no doubt that if his son does not settle into this life, misery and dishonor are certain for him. Thus, he utters the "truly prophetick" prediction that his wayward son "would have leisure hereafter to reflect upon having neglected his counsel when there might be none to assist in [his] recovery" (7). It may seem
surprising at first that a man whose own youth was characterized by risk-taking and who came into his fortune solely through his own exertion, should make such negative predictions for a son who wishes to do the same, but his reservations relate not so much to the enterprise itself as to its appropriateness for his son:

He ask'd me what reasons more than a meer wandring inclination I had for leaving my father's house and my native country, where I might be well introduced, and had a prospect of raising my fortune by appplication and industry, with a life of ease and pleasure. He told me it was for men of desperate fourtunes on one hand, or of aspiring, superior fortune on the other, who went abroad upon adventures, to rise by enterprize, and make themselves famous in undertakings of a nature out of the common road; that these things were all either too far above me, or too far below me; (5)

In this passage, Defoe shows that he is well aware of the fact that both the very rich and those who have nothing to lose have always been attracted to the life of the adventurer. What is new in young Crusoe's case is that he is by no means compelled to seek his fortune abroad; he is merely following his "wandring inclination", a diffuse desire for mobility, change, and action which now cuts across classes and infuses an entire society.

After this emotional paternal admonition, Robinson's flouting of paternal authority must have seemed so much more shocking to the contemporary reader. When Crusoe elopes with his friend and when their ship is immediately caught in a raging storm, this plot development coincides fully with the traditional reader's expectation of divine revenge for the disturbance of the cosmic order in which
disobedience to parents is instantly punished. Yet, Robinson Crusoe is not an Elizabethan tragedy, and the changing social norms of his age are reflected in his fate. Crusoe's rather temporary repentance vanishes as soon as there is no longer any danger to his life. In fact, Defoe gets as close to an ironical treatment of the subject as his serious purpose of "instruction of others by example" will admit:

In a word, as the sea was returned to its smoothness of surface and settled calmness by the abatement of that storm, so the hurry of my thoughts being over, my fears and apprehensions of being swallow'd up by the sea being forgotten, and the current of my former desires return'd, I entirely forgot the vows and promises that I made in my distress. I found indeed some intervals of reflection, and the serious thoughts did, as it were, endeavour to return again sometimes, but I shook them off, and rouz'd my self from them as it were from a distemper, and applying my self to drink and company, soon mastered the return of those fits, for so I call'd them, and I had in five or six days got as compleat a victory over conscience as any young fellow that resolv'd not to be troubled with it could desire. (10-11)

Such pride must, of course, be punished; but Defoe breaks the traditional literary scheme by consistently turning to the good what at first seems to be a detrimental development for his protagonist. Defoe is in fact establishing a pattern of movement to which the plot adheres till the very end: Crusoe's fate describes a spiraling movement from periods of destitution and despair to periods of ever greater prosperity and well-being. The first instance of this pattern can be observed in his initial escape from a safe home and the prompt "punishment" through the life-threatening storm. The next movement is defined by Crusoe's recovery and immediate subjection to a second, more severe trial, the shipwreck in the Yarmouth Roads. But he is
saved from the shipwreck and finds himself in London, where he befriends the captain with whose help he sets himself up as a Guinea trader. The third movement is circumscribed by his second journey to Guinea, during which he is captured and sold into slavery, so that he is once more shown destitute and in a seemingly hopeless situation. The fourth movement comprises his escape from slavery, his rescue by the Portuguese captain and his easy success as a planter in Brazil; the fifth, and by far the largest and most intricately developed, is the account of his journey to Africa to procure slaves, the subsequent foundering of his vessel, and his fate as the sole survivor on the island. Characteristically, this movement begins by showing us Crusoe in the depths of despair, proceeds to describe Crusoe's life on the island as a life of health, moderation, and temperance, and finally shows Crusoe richly rewarded for his youthful rebellion.

It is evident that Defoe's novel contains a new pattern of thought which breaks with the rigidly defined moral code of the feudal era: filial disobedience is no longer avenged by death but awarded with prosperity. Fredric Jameson argues that "in its emergent, strong form a genre is essentially a socio-symbolic message, or in other terms, that form is imminently and intrinsically an ideology in its own right" (140-141). Thus, Defoe's novel reflects and simultaneously creates new modes of behavior which were exceedingly rare in pre-capitalist societies: Crusoe rejects the position into which he was born; he trades the uncertainty of a seafaring life for the quiet steadiness of the life of a well-to-do tradesman, and when he has
achieved a comfortable life as a planter in Brazil, he is again impelled to risk it all because of his desire to wander and to make a profit in the slavetrade with the local planters. His willingness to take risks, to invest part of his capital in order to finance new ventures, and his mental quickness in adjusting to changed circumstances all characterize the new capitalist man: the entrepreneur.

Crusoe's rebellion against his parents causes him to lose the "paradisial state" of middle-class felicity, but it also establishes his own subjectivity. Only a person who defines himself as an individual, independently of the station into which he was born, can become the self-conscious protagonist of the novel. Lukacs writes in The Theory of the Novel:

The novel tells of the adventure of interiority; the content of the novel is the story of the soul that goes to find itself, that seeks adventures in order to be proved and tested by them, and, by proving itself, to find its own essence. (89)

The story of Crusoe's life is such an adventure in a twofold manner: it traces Crusoe's conquest of the external world and correlates it to his increased consciousness of his own inwardness. It is important to remind oneself at this point that the novel is by no means an "artificial" creation. The new genre and its new protagonists are generated organically, in response to the actual historical experience of a society in the throes of change. A society in which economic competition puts greater and greater emphasis on the
individual as reflected in the pioneering new inwardness of Defoe's protagonist, which is to become the basis for bourgeois subjectivity.

It is significant in this context that Defoe chooses, alternately, the journal form and the first person narrative as a device for gaining narrative access to the new inner space to which neither writers nor readers were as yet accustomed in secular writing. I believe that the technical inexperience of early novelists in "getting into" their characters' minds accounts for the flood of epistolary and confessional novels which clutter the pages of literary histories: there were no precedents for literary techniques which allowed the writer to unself-consciously enter a character's mind, and a letter or the written confessional accounted conveniently for the author's privileged knowledge.

Defoe circumvents this "credibility gap" by setting up a first person narrative in which Crusoe recounts the adventures of his youth in retrospect and seasoned with the wisdom of old age. Distanced from the follies of his youth by many decades, he tells the readers how his trials led him to be both a rich and a good man. The narrator's evaluative adjectives and his explicit comments upon his youthful behavior signal to the reader that we are not dealing with a direct and unmediated retelling of Crusoe's adventures, but what gets distanced is not so much Crusoe's success story as its after-the-fact recasting into the traditional moral mold. Much stronger than the impact of the wisened narrator is the immediacy of the journal passages written during Crusoe's stay on the island, which grant the
reader nearly unmediated insight into the development of Crusoe's inwardness. Before going into more detail about the development of Crusoe's inwardness as it is documented in his journal entries, I would like to turn to an analysis of the emergent capitalist ideology which is so powerfully packaged in Defoe's narrative.

Crusoe's island adventure begins in Brasil, where he has become a successful plantation owner; but he is bored with his success, since his life is becoming more and more similar to the steady middle class life which he has shunned at home.

I was gotten into an employment quite remote to my genius, and directly contrary to the life I delighted in, and for which I forsook my father's house and broke thro' all his good advice; nay, I was coming into the very middle station, or upper degree of low life, which my father advised me to before; and which if I resolved to go on with, I might as well ha' staid at home, and never have fatigu'd my self in the world as I had done (28)

As his business prospers and becomes more and more established, Crusoe feels that the challenge and the adventure have gone out of his enterprise, and his old impulse to travel and seek his fortune elsewhere grips him again. It is interesting to see with what judgmental words the aged Crusoe, the narrator, tells us of his decision to go to sea again:

But as abus'd prosperity is oftentimes made the very means of our greatest adversity, so was it with me. . . .

Had I continued in the station I was now in, I had room for all the happy things to have yet befallen me, for which my father so earnestly recommended a quiet retired life, and of which he had so sensibly describ'd the middle station of life to be full of; but other things attended me, and I was still to be the willful
agent of all my own miseries; and particularly to encrease my fault and double the reflections upon my self which in my future sorrows I should have leisure to make; all these miscarriages were procured by my apparent obstinate adhering to my foolish inclination of wandring abroad and pursuing that inclination, in contradiction to the clearest views of doing my self good in a fair and plain pursuit of those prospects and those measures of life which nature and Providence concurred to present me with, and to make my duty.

(29-30)

It becomes quite obvious in those lines that there are two conflicting value systems at work: there is the old narrator's voice, which holds up bourgeois values of contentedness with one's lot, of moderation and stability, which largely coincide with values predating capitalism. These standards are reflected in Crusoe's father's praise of "the upper degree of low life" and the phrase "a fair and plain pursuit of those prospects . . . which nature and Providence concurred to present me with." The second value system is present, implicitly, in young Crusoe's actions, which are now labelled as "foolish" by the old narrator: he is driven by an impulse to travel, and, for better or worse, he is the "wilful agent" of his own fate, which is perhaps the most crucial factor for the formation of a new, specifically capitalist subjectivity.

In precapitalist bourgeois society, life was narrowly circumscribed by the parameters of necessity, duty, and providence. Everyone was expected to act out the life assigned to him by providence by following a "fair and plain" pursuit of those prospects which were his due. Undue ambition, striving for wealth for its own sake, attempting to change the course of providence by "wandring
abroad", all this was viewed as running counter to nature, as "unnatural" and therefore reprehensible in both a human and a religious sense. The new subjectivity, which endorses the active shaping of one's life, is primarily the product of the very prosaic wish to become rich. Capitalism both creates this desire and puts it within reach, if one only has the entrepreneurial qualities necessary to succeed: the new type of the entrepreneur is quick, independent, innovative, even iconoclastic and he is ambitious and strives for money for its own sake. For this man, it is no longer enough to lead a fair and plain life. There is always the challenge of achieving more, making the money yield yet more money, of changing the world in which he lives. Providence, religion, and tradition, can no longer contain the dynamism of money once it has been set to work. Most importantly, however, its dynamic, which can be predicted and calculated, creates a rational model of agency which carries over into the psychic life of the entrepreneur. Thus, the new subjectivity which has so decisively shaped Western history is a by-product of and, simultaneously, a necessary prerequisite for nascent industrial capitalism.

In Defoe's novel, the formulation of this new subjectivity is still heavily overlaid with older values and prohibitions, as can be seen in the old narrator's derogatory comments on young Crusoe's action. It is the novel of the emerging entrepreneurial type, the *homo economicus* who actively and energetically works upon his environment to change and shape the world he inhabits; and it is also
a novel which contains introspective and reflective passages which are heavily colored by religion. Far from suffering from these divergent strands within the novel, the narrative thrives on the integration of such heterogeneous material. In The Dialogic Imagination, Bakhtin argues that, at all times, many value systems in residual, dominant, or emergent form, coexist within a given society, and a good novel must reflect this historical truth. In fact, the coexistence and valuation of a plurality of views, values, and class languages is the very prerequisite for the novel to come into existence. There must be an internal dialogue within the novel, and in Robinson Crusoe this dialogue unfolds within the parameters of the religious and social values of a pre-capitalist bourgeoisie and the new, dynamic worldview of the emergent capitalist entrepreneur.

As a result of the tension between these different ideologies, Crusoe's life on the island vacillates between spiritual crises and a very healthy economic pragmatism. After his deliverance from the sea, Crusoe thanks Providence enthusiastically:

> I believe it is impossible to express to the life what the extasies and transports of the soul are, when it is so sav'd, as I may say, out of the very grave; (36)

But only moments later, when he becomes aware of the desolateness of his situation, he despairs and deplores his lonely fate. Yet, the reflection that there might be many valuable things to be got from the beached ship soon overrides his spiritual despair, and Crusoe begins to take the pragmatic, active hold on life which characterizes him throughout the novel.
From childhood readings—perhaps abridged versions—of the novel, one tends to remember only that Robinson Crusoe was stranded on a desolate island, which, starting from point zero, he transformed into a tropical paradise. Upon rereading Crusoe's account, it therefore comes as quite a surprise to discover how incorrect this notion is: the ship turns out to be a veritable supermarket of supplies for Robinson, and nothing would be less correct than to claim that he had no "starting capital". Crusoe salvages tools, arms, ammunition, ink and paper, as well as various luxury goods and building materials, and proudly surveys his possessions:

I had the biggest magazin of all kinds now that ever were laid up, I believe, for one man, but I was not satisfy'd still. (42)

From this moment on Cruoe's subjectivity is structured by the dynamic of his desire for gain, the planned activity to realize this desire, followed by stocktaking and the renewed impulse to gain. How "unnatural" and historically new Crusoe's behavior is becomes more obvious to us when we compare his future-oriented planning, planting, and storing with the way of life, for example, of the natives who come to the island from time to time: they are hunters and gatherers, living a "primitive", aboriginal life which seems, however, entirely viable on this tropical island which does not know a cold season; one could easily imagine a Robinson who survives by this mode of life. But it would not be Defoe's Robinson Crusoe, for his real appeal to his contemporary and modern audience lay and still lies in his ability to
transform an initially hostile environment in such a way that he is able to live a very civilized life and eventually even becomes a rich man.

Crusoe's reflections are always strictly pragmatic and rational, leaving little room for emotion and speculation. There are occasional fits of despair and spiritual remorse, but they are always soon overcome. When the wreck finally sinks, for example, Crusoe does not ponder the fate of those who lost their lives on it; instead, he consoles himself with more pragmatic thoughts:

I was a little surpriz'd, but recover'd my self with this satisfactory reflection, viz. that I had lost no time, nor abated no dilligence to get every thing out of her that could be useful to me . . . (44)

The ship is not viewed as a sentimental object linking him to his earlier life; instead, it has become an object of his economic desire. Once he has retrieved from it what there is to retrieve, it is an empty shell which no longer occupies his thoughts. At this early stage, Crusoe's is not a very complex inwardness. Rather, his reflections are always prompted by external events and swiftly return to stocktaking and practical resolve to action from their short excursions into more spiritual matters.

There are instances in which Crusoe reacts in what seems to be a non-capitalist way, for example when he extols contentedness and the vanity of attachment to worldly goods in his soliloquy in front of the
chests of gold coins he finds in the wreck:

I smil'd to m y self at the sight of this money. 'O drug!' said I aloud 'what are thou good for thou art not worth to me, no not the taking off of the ground; one of these knives is worth all this heap; I have no manner of use for thee, e'en remain where thou art, and go to the bottom as a creature whose life is not worth saving.' However, upon second thoughts, I took it away. . . . (43-44)

While it is true that in his present situation the money counts for nothing, the effect of the "drug" is still so forceful as to make Crusoe change his mind about sinking it to the bottom of the sea. The "however" is an important marker of the conflict between two ideologies, that of Christianity, teaching wariness of attachment to worldly goods, and the other that of Capitalism, which fetishizes—money, and the latter carries the day.

Similarly, what at first glance seems to be Crusoe's non-capitalist practicing of agriculture is soon revealed to be nothing but acquiescence to the inescapable reality of his lack of the prime ingredient for any capitalist entrepreneur: a market for his goods.

I might have rais'd ship loadings of corn; but I had no use for it; so I let as little grow as I thought enough for my occasion. I had tortoise or turtles enough; but now and then one was as much as I could put to any use. I had timber enough to have built a fleet of ships. I had grapes enough to have made wine, or to have cur'd into raisins, to have loaded that fleet when they had been built. (95)

Clearly, it is not that he objects in principle to the planting of more and more corn or the building of a proud fleet of ships and the making of profits—it is that it is of "no use" to him that makes
these enterprises uninteresting to Crusoe. It is not worthwhile to produce more than he needs for his own consumption, since there is no one to whom he could sell his surplus. So, in spite of his impassioned sermon on contentment, Crusoe's values have not changed. He is simply applying the standard of utility and the law of reason to his situation on the island.

Although Crusoe's new inwardness manifests itself primarily in its workings in and upon the material world, it is not solely material in origin but is rooted in the spirituality of religion. The recognition that some of the characteristics of the capitalist system are intimately intertwined with Protestant ethics has been persuasively developed by Max Weber in his famous book *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*. The application of Max Weber's findings to my analysis of *Robinson Crusoe* reveals a dialectical relationship between Crusoe's spiritual and material development: Crusoe's conquest of the material world is made possible only through the development of his new subjectivity, which, in turn, is spawned and spurred on by his changing attitude towards religion; and Crusoe's increased control over his environment contributes to the development of a new, more secularized and complex subjectivity.

As a young lad, and for quite a while after his arrival on the island, the thought of religion never crosses young Crusoe's mind. If we hear about God, providence, or conscience, it is because the narrator, the now old Crusoe, comments upon the pattern he sees
developing in his life as he retells it for the reader. Young Crusoe is, so to speak, a religious innocent:

I had, alas! no divine knowledge; what I had received by the good instruction of my father was then worn out by an uninterrupted series for 8 years, of seafaring wickedness, and a constant conversation with nothing but such as were like myself, wicked and prophane to the last degree. I do not remember that I had in all that time one thought so much as tended either to looking upwards toward God, or inwards towards a reflection upon my own ways; but a certain stupidity of soul, without desire of good or conscience of evil, had entirely overwhelm'd me, and I was all that the most hardened, unthinking, wicked creature among our common sailors can be supposed to be, not having the least sense either of the fear of God in danger, or of thankfulness to God in deliverances. (66)

It is only after his pivotal visionary dream during his illness—a dream about a warrior angel come to kill the unrepentant wretch—that Crusoe begins to reflect upon religion and his own life. During his long and lonely illness, Crusoe discovers what he views as a causal relation between his banishment to the island and his "wicked ways". Fear of death compels him to pray, and in his distress he takes up a lifelong habit of studying the bible. This turn towards religion is important, because it opens up to the protagonist's conscious mind a whole range of thoughts and emotions which had gone undiscovered before. To no small degree, it is the interiorization induced by religion which creates the inwardness that allows Crusoe to turn towards the material world and to fashion it according to his needs and desires.

What is the difference, one might ask, between this new Crusoe and millions of 17th and 18th century peasants, who were also pious and
labored to make the soil yield its fruit? How is Crusoe's subjectivity different from theirs? Crusoe starts from a very different place than these peasants: he has travelled, he has seen the world and known the fascination of money, and he is an agnostic. His initially cynical attitude toward religion is evident in the episode of the "miracle of the barleycorn", which moves Crusoe to religious fervor while he thinks that God made the barley grow next to the entrance of his cave. But when he discovers the profane origin of the now demysticized miracle, he immediately loses this religious feeling.

at last it occur'd to my thoughts, that I had shook a bag of chicken's meat out in that place, and then the wonder began to cease; and I must confess, my religious thankfulness to God's providence began to abate too, upon the discovering that all this was nothing but what was common; (59)

Thus, he realizes that he himself is, ultimately, the cause of "miracles", because it is to his own chance action that he owes his stock of breadgrain and not to the intervention of God.

While 17th century peasants whose relation to religion was unbroken might have seen a divine miracle even in this chance human action, it is characteristic of Crusoe's modern subjectivity that he sees an absolute antithesis to "miracle" and religious feeling in his discovery that the sprouting of the barleycorn was "nothing but what was common" and can be explained by reason. This sense of disillusionment with religion testifies to the fact that the world of nascent capitalism is rapidly becoming a "world without God", as Lukacs phrased it. The new god is reason, with its subdeities of calculation, projection, rational planning, and individual initiative.
And so it is not surprising that Crusoe no longer prays to God for an abundant harvest but coolly calculates that by saving his first and several following crops of grain and always "reinvesting" them into the soil, his yield will soon be large enough to actually use the grain for baking bread.

Even after Crusoe has been touched by his visionary experience and subsequently changes his life, he is not as unquestioningly pious as the peasants of earlier times. Proof of this is his self-censorship during his prayer, when he is about to give God thanks for bringing him to the island:

I know not what it was, but something shock'd my mind at that thought, and I durst not speak the words. 'How canst thou be such a hypocrite,' said I, even audibly, 'to pretend to be thankful for a condition, which however thou may'st endeavour to be contented with, thou would'st rather pray heartily to be deliver'd from?'. So I stopp'd there. (84)

There is nothing of the blind acceptance of a god-given fate in these lines of internal dialogue which would have characterized feudal man's relation to religion. "Something shock'd my mind", says Crusoe at the thought of being thankful for his predicament. This "something" is, clearly, the obvious contradiction to reason and common sense, even to honesty to his own self, which modern man would see in such a prayer and which warns Crusoe not to be hypocritical. It is the inner voice of modern man who is beginning to view himself as the agent of his own fate and who balks at unquestioningly abiding by God's counsel. Thus, while capitalism made use of the inner space which had been prepared, over the centuries, by religion, it did not
just take this space over, but changes its structure as it forges the inwardness which is to become the core of the new, capitalist subjectivity. The literary technique which reflects this new subjectivity in Defoe's novel is the journal form.

"But I must first give some little account of my self, and of my thoughts about living, which it may well be suppos'd were not a few" (47). These are the opening lines of Crusoe's reflections on life. They are prompted by his sad awareness of his helplessness and desperate isolation, which lead him to draw up a rather Franklinesque list of "Evils and Goods" in his situation. Quite rationally and unemotionally, he weighs the evil of life on a desolate island against that of certain death, had he not been thus saved and concludes that things are not as bad as they seem:

I had a tolerable view of subsisting without any want as long as I liv'd; for I consider'd from the beginning how I would provide for the accidents that might happen, and for the time that was to come, even not only after my ammunition should be spent, but even after my health or strength should decay. (48)

This mental stocktaking is immediately followed by the resolve to turn to action and to produce the items he still lacks. With an energetic "so I went to work" (51), Crusoe concludes his introspection and sets out to develop a variety of new skills and qualities. The gradual transformation of Crusoe's sense of selfhood becomes evident in his increased self-confidence and his steady activity towards transforming the wilderness into a primitive kind of civilization. Although he has never handled tools before, he feels confident that he can learn any
mechanical skill by "labour, application, and contrivance" (51):

So I went to work; and here I must needs observe, that as reason is the substance and original of the mathematicks, so by stating and squaring every thing by reason, and by making the most rational judgment of things, every man may be in time master of every mechanick art. (51)

Crusoe's trust in the power of reason to master the world about him, in combination with his keen economic sense and his regular application of labor to a well-thought-out end, and his determination to approach any problem the material world may pose in a rational manner, makes him into the precursor of the industrial wizzards of the late 1900s. After Crusoe has secured his physical wellbeing by hewing out and fortifying a cave, creating order among his possessions, and making the most basic pieces of furniture, he turns to an occupation which attests to and promotes the development of a new inwardness:

Crusoe keeps a journal of his island life.

The writing of this journal and its integration into the novel is a reflection of a new, modern subjectivity. Crusoe states that he puts his thoughts in writing as a form of "therapy,"

to deliver my thoughts from daily poring upon them, and afflicting my mind; and as my reason began now to master my despondency, I began to comfort my self as well as I could, and to set the good against the evil, that I might have something to distinguish my case from worse, and I state it very impartially, like debtor and creditor . . . (50)

Crusoe's justification for writing the journal is an excellent example of the integration of capitalist thought structures into the formation of the new inwardness. Crusoe uses the journal as a vehicle for distancing himself from his own emotions. By writing down
his thoughts, he creates a dialogue between his emotional and his rational self, thereby externalizing the conflict. To analyze his changed situation impartially, he draws up "pro and con" lists as if he were dealing with an accounting problem, and thus forces his life and his emotions into the structure of a debtor/creditor relationship. Although this maneuver does not solve his problems, it is comforting to Crusoe to be able to objectify and externalize his emotions by assigning "good" or "evil" value to them and depositing them in the secure and impersonal structure of a set of business books. Defoe's use of the accounting book paradigm is significant because it indicates the entwinement of his new inwardness with the economic practices of capitalism and the permeation of his emotional and thought patterns by capitalist business practices.

It is true that in comparison to modern journal novels, Crusoe's journal is hardly a very private one and does not bear witness to complex psychological processes. Instead, it lingers on the description of events, daily tasks, and achievements and deals very little with the internal life of the writer. Thus, it has much more the character of a "log" than that of a private journal. But in 1719, when *Robinson Crusoe* was published, it was still quite unusual to have an individual take himself and his thoughts seriously enough to write a journal, and both the writer and the reading public were unused to journals as a means of literary expression. It was only with the rise of Puritanism and its scrupulous examination of every little detail of an individual's thoughts and actions in daily life that the journal
became a popular form of writing. However, the focus of these journals was largely religious, and it was predominantly in the related letter form that writers found a secular outlet for their subjectivities. It is not surprising therefore, that these first exercises in the journal form are not what we would expect of a modern journal. The 18th century writer is still quite unused to focusing on his inner life, and instead, tells us about his activities and daily events. Yet the sudden flourishing of confessional and epistolary novels attests to a very strong impulse towards the expression of a new, self-conscious subjectivity. Defoe's novel shows that this subjectivity is inseparable from the new economic order of capitalism in its focus on the profane, the daily events of planning, regular labor, and the proud accounting of Crusoe's increasing wealth, and thus affirms the thesis that Crusoe exhibits a new inwardness which did not exist before capitalism.

The intimate interrelation between Crusoe's new spirituality and his economic activity is particularly evident in the changes that take place within him and in his attitude towards his environment after his transformative fever dream. Crusoe gradually allows himself to view his enforced exile in a different light: he comes to accept his life on the island and in fact begins to discover its good sides.

I gave humble and hearty thanks that God had been pleas'd to discover to me, even that it was possible I might be more happy in this solitary condition, than I should have been in a liberty of society, and in all the pleasures of the world. . . . It was now that I began sensibly to feel how much more happy this life I now led was, with all its miserable circumstances, than the wicked, cursed, abominable life I led all the past part
of my days; and now I chang'd both my sorrows and my joys; my very desires alter'd, my affections chang'd their gusts, and my delights were perfectly new from what they were at my first coming, or indeed for the two years past. (83)

His journal takes on a new, reflective tone and becomes more and more detailed in its descriptions of his thoughts and emotions.

Before, as I walk'd about, either on my hunting, or for viewing the country, the anguish of my soul at my condition would break out upon me on a sudden, and my very heart would die within me, to think of the woods, the mountains, the deserts I was in . . . In the midst of the greatest composure of my mind, this would break out upon me like a storm, and make me wring my hands and weep like a child. (84)

Frequently, bare fact-telling is now "interrupted"—as Crusoe still calls it—by digressions on his spiritual condition; in short: the journal is beginning, more and more to reflect an increasingly complex inwardness and moves away from the matter-of-factly relating of events.

The development of a more complex inwardness after Crusoe's visionary experience is also manifest in a surprising burst of activity on Crusoe's part. Only now does he really take possession of the island: he begins to explore it systematically, screening its plants and fruit for his use. He finds the grapes which are to become a staple of his diet. He discovers the fertile valley, where he is to build his "country bower". In his bower, he grazes domesticated goats, and thus ensures for himself a steady supply of meat. It is also around this time that he begins his systematic experiments to determine the best season for sowing grain, to find suitable raw materials to manufacture clay vessels, to fire them, and to produce the items needed to bake his own bread. In short, he has now truly
become the steward of the island, an 18th century Adam in his self-fashioned paradise.

In *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, Max Weber states that a capitalistic enterprise is characterized by the regularised investment of capital, a disciplined work force, and the "rational organisation of formally free labour" (3). Furthermore, labor must be performed "as if it were an absolute end in itself" (62). Robinson Crusoe's island enterprise fits this description. Crusoe has hardly set foot on the island, when he already feels the need to devise a means of measuring time. His famous notched calendar on a square post is a testimony to a new sense of time, which is perhaps one of the most important and indicative changes in the human psyche wrought by capitalism. It is true, Crusoe's initial motive for keeping close track of time is to remember the Sabbath, but only little later he mentions quite nonchalantly, "I soon neglected my keeping Sundays, for omitting my mark for them on my post, I forgot which was which" (55). If one then takes Crusoe's interest in time together with the work schedule which he soon sets up for himself, one cannot help but think that Benjamin Franklin's motto "Time is money" is not too far off any more. Although Crusoe's time is not really money—a fact of which he is only too aware himself ("my time or labour was little worth, and so it was as well employ'd one way as another" (52)), what counts for him is the establishment of a regular, daily structure, a sound balance of work and leisure, which keeps him from sloth and excessive exhaustion. Work thus becomes a
transformative activity: it is a means of enforcing the human will
upon nature, where nature means Crusoe's natural environment as well
as his own selfhood.

I was very seldom idle; but having regularly divided my
time, according to the several daily employments that
were before me, such as, first, my duty to God, and the
reading the scriptures, which I constantly set apart
some time for thrice every day; secondly, the going
abroad with my gun for food, . . . thirdly, the
ordering, curing, preserving, and cooking what I had
kill'd or catch'd for my supply; these took up great
part of the day. Also it is to be considered that the
middle of the day, when the sun was in the zenith, the
violence of the heat was too great to stir out; so that
about four hours in the evening was all the time I could
be suppos'd to work in; (84-85)

Thus, while Crusoe schedules his time and performs work in order
to maintain himself, there is also a spiritual dimension to time and
work which cannot be measured in terms of money. Crusoe's concept of
work derives its spiritual dimension from the Biblical tradition:
according to Genesis (1 Moses 1.28), God placed human beings into the
world with the specific instruction to rule the world, and this could
only mean that man has to transform the world and mold it to his own
liking. After the Fall, man was condemned by an irate God to gain his
bread by the sweat of his brow. Both of these injunctions, gaining
control of nature and ensuring survival within it, can only be
realized through hard work. It is obvious that this concept of work
lends itself to a transfer to the capitalist economy. Weber
characterized the spirit of capitalism as religious ethos applied to
everyday life. Thus, one can conclude that Crusoe, in his truly
religious devotion to secular work, exhibits a new trait which, in its
peculiar combination of the secular and the spiritual, is a first
example of the new, capitalist subjectivity.

This new secular/religious significance of work is further borne
out by the subjection of work to reglementation through rational
planning, systematization, and experimentation. For example, Crusoe
experiments with part of his seed grain to find the best season for
sowing and proudly concludes, "by this experiment I was made master of
my business, and knew exactly when the proper season was to sow; and
that I might expect two seed times and harvests every year" (78). He
laboriously fashions a spade with which he prepares the land to sow
the grain. After he has raised enough barley and rice to think about
making bread, Crusoe systematically sets out to create the utensils
necessary for harvesting and storing the grain and for baking bread.
He experiments with clay until he produces functional pottery which he
fires in a makeshift kiln. He weaves wicker baskets in which to keep
the earthen storage pots, and he makes a mortar, a sieve, and a baking
oven, to fit his needs. In the history of civilization, such skills
as weaving, baking, and the making of clay vessels have not been the
result of the efforts of one individual, but were instead
non-individual cultural achievements whose discovery spanned
centuries. Crusoe, on the other hand, goes about his work
single-mindedly and with a definite purpose: he experiments with
different materials to find one fit for mortar, and he tries different
techniques for firing pottery; each time he learns from his failures
and systematically moves towards a solution. What is new is the
systematic, almost monomaniac devotion to one task at hand: labor is used to solve one particular problem. This "scientific" approach to labor is unlike anything connected with the concept of labor as it was understood during earlier, feudal times, and it is also new that an individual applies his creativity in a focused manner to economic problemsolving.

The result of this unprecedented focus on work is Crusoe's equally unprecedented ability to shape his environment according to his needs and desires. Crusoe gains a new self-confidence which asserts itself in his pride of ownership when he proudly surveys his island:

I descended a little on the side of that delicious vale, surveying it with a secret kind of pleasure . . . to think that this was all my own, that I was king and lord of all this country indefeasibly, and had a right of possession; and if I could convey it, I might have it in inheritance as compleatly as any lord of a mannor in England. (74)

The newfound sense of independence from nature which his labor and his creativity enable him to feel is immediately translated into the need to dominate nature and to be the lord of the island. The step from liberating himself from the rule of nature to making himself the ruler of nature is to be typical of capitalist man, and, as has been pointed out above, it is a step which has been sanctioned by religion. Crusoe finds nothing wrong with his notion of lordship over the island, since it has been given to him by divine providence. When he rescues Friday from the cannibals, he has not scruples whatsoever to make him his slave, and after thwarting the murder of the English Captain by his mutineering crew, Crusoe makes it an inflexible
condition of his help that no one challenge his sole authority on the island. Crusoe never stops thinking in terms of ownership, power, and domination. What is important to him is that he alone is absolute lord of the island and that there is no competition (itself a keyword in capitalist thought) for power. Thus, the "monopoly" he enjoys on the island is essentially worth his human isolation to him.

I was lord of the whole manor; or if I pleas'd, I might call my self king or emperor over the whole country which I had possession of. There were no rivals; I had no competitor, none to dispute sovereignty or command with me. (95)

Defoe's Robinson Crusoe offers the reader a powerful image of capitalist ideology's impact on human subjectivity: Crusoe uses his new inwardness to gain economic dominance over his island. He feels himself to be a new type of aristocrat, the "lord of the manor", entitled to such distinction not by birth but through his own merit and hard work. But at the same time there is an emptiness in Crusoe's achievements which can be felt throughout the novel: Crusoe is desperately lonely. Weber writes in The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism that

the full economic effect of those great religious movements, whose significance for economic development lay above all in their ascetic educative influence, generally came only after the peak of the purely religious enthusiasm was past. Then the intensity of the search for the Kingdom of God commenced gradually to pass over into sober economic virtue; the religious roots died out slowly, giving way to utilitarian worldliness. Then, as Dowden puts it, as in Robinson Crusoe, the isolated economic man who carries on missionary activities on the side takes the place of the lonely spiritual search for the Kingdom of Heaven of Bunyan's pilgrim, hurrying through the market-place of Vanity. (176)
The image of one man's isolation on an island is rapidly becoming the simile for all of human existence in a more and more profit-oriented society where competition is fierce and often economically fatal. Crusoe is both a first, and in its directness and lack of self-consciousness perhaps the most explicit example of the impact of capitalist ideology on the formation of subjectivity. After he overcomes his initial despair, there is very little conflict or doubt about his role in the scheme of things. He bends nature to his needs, subduing it and enforcing his will upon it, thus in essence externalizing his subjectivity into his transformative projects. It has been shown that Crusoe's inwardness is characterized by a very functional combination of traditional religious and anti-traditional capitalist ideologemes which create a strong, self-centered, and powerful personality. Crusoe is at one with himself, but he is also isolated. The image of Crusoe, the lonely master of an economic miracle, foreshadows an intensification of the conflict between ideology and subjectivity which will be even more evident in Charlotte Bronte's *Villette*. 
NOTES

1. For the terminology used in this paragraph I have drawn on Antonio Gramsci's theories as summarized by Carl Boggs in Gramsci's Marxism (London: Pluto Press Ltd., 1976) 36-55.

2. Raymond Williams' terminology of "residual", "dominant", and "emergent" ideologies coexisting within one socio-economic formation at any given time has been very helpful for this argument. Williams develops this theory in Marxism and Form (121-35).
Charlotte Bronte's novel *Villette* is a study of bourgeois subjectivity, which traces the impact of a multiplicity of factors in forming of the subjectivity of its protagonist and narrator, Lucy Snowe. The novel locates Lucy Snowe's subjectivity in the concrete societies of 19th century England and Belgium and shows the readers how this subjectivity is determined, simultaneously, by her nationality, her religion, her class, her sex, and her economic situation. In showing how these factors combine and modify each other, Bronte creates a complex dramatization of Lucy Snowe's struggle against ideology for an independent subjectivity.

In *Villette*, we find the same narrative constellation as in *Robinson Crusoe*: Lucy Snowe, the first person narrator, is a wisened old woman who has weathered the storms of life and is telling the story of her youth across the distance of the years. The protagonist of the novel, however, is the young Lucy Snowe, the orphan and the teacher at the "Pensionnat de Demoiselles", who is desperately trying to conquer a place for herself in an alien and often hostile society. Lucy's is a complex narrative whose stage is the human mind. The very inwardness which we have seen *in statu nascendi* in Defoe's novel has now, more than 130 years later, evolved into the complicated and
troubled subjectivity of Lucy Snowe. Her narrative itself creates a field of action in which Lucy actively fights to create the internal space for her subjectivity. Since her mind and the narrative are the arena of ideological struggle, the narrative reflects the ideological contradictions at work in Lucy's mind. It is thus through her function and her strategy as a narrator that the reader can trace Lucy's ideological struggle for an independent subjectivity.

Perhaps the most disconcerting discovery about Lucy as a narrator is that she is unreliable. She does not always tell the truth. In a novelistic world where everything the reader knows is filtered through Lucy's consciousness and is structured by her subjectivity, this is a disorienting recognition. The reader has no choice but to accept Lucy's rendering of "reality". She judges, weighs, and selects, and thus effectively shapes and controls the reader's image of her world. In a sense, her inwardness becomes the reader's world. There is no outside instance to appeal to for verification. While Madame Beck wields totalitarian power over the tenants at the pensionnat through her intricate system of espionage and control, Lucy wields the far more subtle control of an ideologue over the readers' minds. Lucy has total control over the flow of information to the reader, and she manipulates it to conceal aspects of her own subjectivity which she feels could make her vulnerable if they were revealed.

Bronte was writing under the androgynous nom de plume Currer Bell, which was intended to leave the reader in the dark about her sex,
because she feared ridicule, condemnation, and discrimination if it were known that a woman had authored her rather controversial novels. It is therefore to be assumed that Bronte was acutely aware of the risks involved in being "honest" with a male dominated society. This attitude may well have carried over into her portrayal of her heroine. Lucy finds it necessary to keep certain truths from an audience which she instinctively fears to be in a position to pass judgment, to harm her in some way; in short: Bronte may well have kept the reader in the dark about Lucy Snowe's emotional life because that was the habitual strategy of the author herself when dealing with a male dominated society.

Bronte's narrator becomes unreliable only in specific situations; she does not lie about factual matters related to anyone but herself, and she does never tells an outright untruth. Her unreliability consists of elisions, of a failure to speak the entire truth. The careful reader will soon recognize a pattern in Lucy's elisions: Lucy is most likely to "embezzle" the truth when she is talking about her emotions toward Paulina, Graham, and Monsieur Paul. We do not know, for example, that Dr. John is Graham Bretton, the son of Lucy's godmother Louisa Bretton, until chapter 16, where Lucy finds herself at La Terrasse after her nervous fever. It is only then that she confides in the readers and lets them know that she had indeed recognized Graham in Dr. John a long time ago, but deemed it more prudent not to remind him (or the reader, for that matter) of a time
which he had so evidently forgotten. Equally, she keeps it a secret from the reader that she has committed the "folly" of falling in love with Dr. John, and it is only through indirection, in her half hidden digressions on "these struggles with the natural character, the strong native bent of the heart" (253) that we may infer her real feelings for Dr. John.

However, Lucy's emotional and narrative quandary is perhaps most evident in her demeanor towards Paulina, the young charge of Mrs. Bretton. Paulina is a strangely intense, serious little girl with an uncanny capacity for loving. Immediately, and in spite of her carefully distanced descriptions of Paulina, Lucy takes a deep interest in the young guest whose unchildlike earnestness and unfailing sense of independence and dignity impress her. Lucy watches Paulina with almost scientific curiosity, and it soon becomes clear that the reason for her fascination with Paulina is that she sees her living out emotions which Lucy feels within herself, but which she represses resolutely, to avoid making herself vulnerable to a cruel reality. Paulina's emotional frailty frightens her and makes her wonder about Paulina's (and her own) chances for survival in life:

How will she get through this world, or battle with this life? How will she bear the shocks and repulses, the humiliations and desolations, which books, and my own reason tell me are prepared for all flesh. (93)

It soon becomes obvious that what Lucy cannot tolerate in others is the display of emotions which appeal to her own inwardness and thus make her vulnerable to the pain that comes to those who allow
themselves to be compassionate and soft-hearted. Thus, when Lucy reacts calmly, even coldly, towards a child by whom all others are invariably charmed, it is not out of jealousy or lack of feeling, but instead out of an exceedingly strong identification with Paulina. As a result, Lucy is just dishonest enough in her account of the relationship between Paulina and herself to deceive the superficial reader, while leaving clues to her true feelings which cannot be missed by the more attentive reader. When describing the depth of Paulina's longing for her father, for example, Lucy characterizes Paulina as being "a one-idead nature; betraying that monomaniac tendency I have ever thought the most unfortunate with which man or woman can be cursed" (69). At the same time, she emphasizes her own distance from Paulina's suffering:

These sudden, dangerous natures - sensitive as they are called - offer many a curious spectacle to those whom a cooler temperament has secured from participation in their angular vagaries. (71)

Lucy's insistence that little Paulina's nature is alien to hers is underscored by her choice of words: Paulina's sensitivity is a "curious spectacle" to her. Lucy, "secured" by her "cooler temperament" from going to similar extremes of emotion, insists on maintaining the most decided distance from such "angular vagaries". She presents herself to the reader as a remote observer, a role which she reinforces in her account of her own reactions to Paulina's grief over the departure of her father: "I roused myself and started up, to check this scene while it was yet within bounds" (67) and a resolute
"I, Lucy Snowe, was calm" (79). While Graham and even the imperturbable Mrs. Bretton can't help but empathize with Paulina, Lucy Snowe refuses to let herself feel for the little girl. Instead, she withdraws into the safe distance of an uninvolved observer, taking for the subject of her unemotional analysis the very "spectacle" which is threatening to destroy the distance she is trying to preserve.

There is a dialectical force at work in Bronte's character: Lucy is trying to protect her vulnerable inwardness against the shocks of life by remaining in the stance of an uninvolved, seemingly impassive observer; yet, at the same time, it is this very ability to observe critically and to stand apart from oneself and others which creates the inner space for the development of a complex, critical subjectivity. Thus, rather than deadening the complexity of her emotional inwardness and her critical faculty, Lucy increases the critical distance between herself and others, and between her own feelings and her thoughts, which serves in turn to strengthen the acuteness of her subjectivity.

When Paulina and Lucy meet again in Villette, the affinity between the two young women becomes more and more evident. In creating Lucy Snow and Paulina, Charlotte Bronte illustrates in the most exemplary manner what happens to two women from two different class backgrounds with the same complex inwardness: Paulina, who is protected by her class position and her father's money, initially unfolds her capacity to feel without harm. Her capacity to love and feel deeply enriches her life. Lucy, on the other hand, who must provide for her own
living, cannot afford to indulge in the luxury of deep emotions, which are part of a complex subjectivity. In order to survive in a tough world, she must harden herself and mask her own feelings, she must deny her selfhood to a point where others mistake her for "a being inoffensive as a shadow" (403). Already when Lucy first meets Paulina at her godmother's house, she is keenly aware of her lowly social position and her lack of economic means. She knows that she will have to work for a living as soon as she is old enough. The knowledge that a woman who has to struggle to survive in an intensely competitive economy cannot afford to weaken herself by letting herself feel the pain and the losses of deep emotional attachment keeps her from indulging the "native bent of her heart". Ironically, in the end, it is Paulina who does not escape the loss of selfhood, while Lucy manages to maintain her own subjectivity. But there is a price to pay for Lucy's maintaining her independent subjectivity: she does so at the cost of a lifetime's loneliness, while Paulina enjoys the protection of powerful men.

Paulina is the pampered only daughter of a doting father, Mr. Home de Bassompierre, who has provided amply for her wellbeing. As the novel shows, Paulina will never have to face the harsh realities of life: there will always be a man -- her father or Graham -- to carry that burden for her. Thus, in spite of her emotional fragility, Paulina flourishes and prospers, a "sensitive plant" who never meets with harsh treatment, because her class background and her economic position make it possible for her to live in a sheltered atmosphere.
In this "greenhouse" atmosphere, Paulina has matured into a young woman whose beauty is the outward reflection of her "beautiful soul", her complex inwardness:

her seventeen years had brought her a refined and tender charm which did not lie in complexion, though hers was fair and clear; nor in outline, though her features were sweet, and her limbs perfectly turned; but, I think, rather in a subdued glow from the soul outward. This was not an opaque vase, of material however costly, but a lamp chastely lucent, guarding from extinction, yet not hiding from worship, a flame vital and vestal. (359)

It is this inwardness which draws Lucy to her and which constitutes the affinity of the two women. Both have a strong sense of loyalty and personal dignity; both are human beings who observe closely, experience deeply, and do not forget easily. Lucy is really characterizing herself as well, when she says about Paulina that:

Her eyes were the eyes of one who can remember; one whose childhood does not fade like a dream, nor whose youth vanish like a sunbeam. She would not take life loosely and incoherently, in parts, and let one season slip as she entered another: she would retain and add; often review from the commencement, and so grow in harmony and consistency as she grew in years. (359)

Lucy's inwardness is the space where a continuous narrative is produced out of fragmentary memories. It is a review of life "from the commencement". Lucy, too, refuses to take life in disjointed parts, and, by giving it coherence in a narrative, she forces it into a pattern, she molds it by adding and retaining, and the novel itself becomes a documentation of the development of her complex subjectivity from her youth into her old age. Quite evidently, Lucy and Paulina
are two versions of the same character, and Lucy is shown to be fully aware of this elective affinity:

I thought the same, but I wondered to find my thoughts hers: there are certain things in which we so rarely meet with our double that it seems a miracle when that chance befals. (361)

Yet Paulina is Lucy's double in potential only, not in reality. Under the concrete historical and social circumstances in which both their lives are bound up, the inwardness which characterizes both women develops very differently. Lucy, after severe struggles, achieves a measure of contentment and economic success and succeeds in creating an independent subjectivity. Paulina, on the other hand, does not go through a comparable period of economic and emotional struggle and personal development. Throughout the novel, Paulina is described as a tiny, ethereal, if very self-possessed person, and there is a constant tendency to attach to her an epithet which emphasizes this smallness and perceived lack of substance. She is variously called an "elf", a "highland fairy", a "pigmy", a "creature", an "it", and even a "thing". It is indicative of the same tendency towards diminution and desubstantiation that she never loses her childlike naivete and a "charming" little lisp. Already as a child, Paulina defines herself merely as a reflection of the object of her love -- be it her father or young Graham. "...Her mind had been filled from his, as the cup from the flagon" (71) states Lucy, and goes on to say that in the absence of the beloved, it is as if Paulina's selfhood had been erased. She ceases to be interesting or to exhibit any of the
spritelike spirit which enlivens her in the presence of the beloved.

With curious readiness did she adapt herself to such themes as interested him. One would have thought the child had no mind or life of her own, but must necessarily live, move, and have her being in another. (83)

Paulina's inwardness is not constitutive of selfhood; instead, her sensitivity merely serves her to intuitively anticipate another's needs and desires. She is the mirror of another's identity, but her own identity has become depleted. Her inwardness does not lead her to reflect upon her own historical situation, and the protectedness of her life keeps her from ever coming in conflict with and questioning the ideological superstructure within which she lives her life. Paulina fights the battle of life "by proxy", whereas Lucy has no choice but "to conduct it singlehandedly" (381). Ironically, it is Lucy, who is trying so hard to remain distant, disengaged, and uninvolved, who is goaded into first-hand contact with life, while Paulina never ventures past the narrowly defined private domain of a housewife and mother. In the end, Paulina remains isolated from the historical flow of life around her. She is a very sensitive human being and possesses a highly refined inwardness, but it never crystallizes into the firm outlines of a truly independent, historical subjectivity such as Lucy Snowe's.

Lucy's need to remain seemingly disengaged and her fear of letting herself feel are more complex than those of a modern housewife who is afraid to "get in touch with her feelings" -- Lucy is literally
fighting for survival. Orphaned at an early age, Lucy must rely on
the kindness of her kinspeople for her maintenance and shelter. Her
yearly vacations at Mrs. Bretton's townhouse affords her the only
glimpse of middle class prosperity and security she is to know for a
long time. After Lucy loses all her kin through an unspecified
illness, she becomes a nurse to an ailing old woman, Miss Marchmont,
whose death leaves her destitute once again. Thus forced to look
after herself, Lucy develops a courage and a resolve still unusual in
the women of her age. Since she has nothing and no one to keep her in
England, she decides to take the courageous step to leave her home
country and to try her luck on the continent.

there remained no possibility of dependence on others;
to myself alone could I look. I know not that I was of
a self-reliant or active nature; but self-reliance and
exertion were forced upon me by circumstances, as they
are upon thousands beside. (95)

Arriving on the continent nearly penniless and in despair, she
makes her way to Mme. Beck's boarding school, of which she has
chanced to hear on the boat. She makes a desperate appeal to Mme.
Beck in her very limited French, and, after her physiognomy has been
inspected and approved of by M. Paul, she is finally established in
Mme. Beck's boarding school as a nanny For a while, Lucy is quite
content to go through the motions of a nanny's life and to live her
true life in her mind.

Inadventurous, unstirred by impulses of practical
ambition, I was capable of sitting twenty years teaching
infants the hornbook, turning silk dresses and making
children's frocks. Not that true contentment dignified
this infatuated resignation: my work had neither charm
for my taste, nor hold on my interest; but it seemed to
me a great thing to be without heavy anxiety, and relieved from intimate trial; the negation of severe suffering was the nearest approach to happiness I expected to know. Besides, I seemed to hold two lives — the life of thought, and that of reality; and, provided the former was nourished with a sufficiency of the strange necromantic joys of fancy, the privileges of the latter might remain limited to daily bread, hourly work, and a roof of shelter. (139-140.)

At the same time frustrated and intimidated by reality, Lucy withdraws into that inwardness, the life of the mind, which is both the seedbed and the result of her complex subjectivity. Because reality first creates and then resists her desires, she limits her inwardness to its manifestation as an alternative space to reality, while Crusoe, for example, could shape reality according to his own subjectivity.

Lucy is not shown to be an active, energetic or even entrepreneurial person by nature. In fact, already before Miss Marchmont's death she had tried to escape the challenge of fate by hiding from life, deadening her hopes and desires, and by settling for the absence of pain as a substitute for a happiness which could only be won from life through active participation in it.

But another decree was written. It seemed I must be stimulated into action. I must be goaded, driven, stung, forced to energy. . . . I had wanted to compromise with Fate: to escape occasional great agonies by submitting to a whole life of privation and small pains. Fate would not so be pacified; nor would Providence sanction this shrinking sloth and cowardly indolence. (97)

But eventually it is Mme. Beck's unswerving commitment to the principle of self-interest and profit which forces her to forsake her
attitude of disengagement from life. Mme. Beck represents the
development of the capitalist economy in its purest form. She is not
cumbered with the belief in the basic goodness of human nature. She
believes only in what she can see—thus her elaborate system of
control and espionage—and she does not indulge in emotions, not
even in her relationship with her children. Instead, she
imperceptibly but strictly guides her business and all the human
beings connected with it. Lucy soon comes to admire Mme. Beck's
smoothly functioning system of surveillance and control, while
maintaining the outward appearance of total liberty. In particular,
Lucy is fascinated by the unerring entrepreneurial spirit of this
Frenchwoman, whose guiding principle and the mainspring of her nature
is that of self-interest. Once Lucy has recognized this, Mme. Beck
becomes quite predictable and Lucy finds it easy to establish a modus
vivendi with her.

In a curious way, Lucy and Mme. Beck are even kindred spirits.
Although for different reasons, both women act coolly, rationally, and
in an unemotional manner. Mme. Beck really is unemotional, because
her feelings are dominated by the desire for material gain (i.e., they
have been co-opted by ideology); but Lucy suppresses her feelings and
forces herself to go into a kind of "hibernation" of the heart because
she has been deeply hurt by life and wants to avoid the pain of
further losses.

I have seen her feelings appealed to, and have smiled in
half-pity, half-scorn at the appellants. None ever
gained her ear through that channel, or swayed her
purpose by that means. On the contrary, to attempt to
touch her heart was the surest way to rouse her antipathy, and to make of her a secret foe. It proved to her that she had no heart to be touched: it reminded her where she was impotent and dead. (137)

Living in Mme. Beck's house and witnessing her single-mindedness and entrepreneurial ambition have a stimulating effect on Lucy. While she does not subscribe to the profit-motive, Lucy deeply believes in the value of work as a virtue in itself. Love of work becomes a criterion for worthiness of character, and the "prop of work" is viewed as a valuable aid in avoiding morbid reflections on life (228). While this view of work is by no means new -- it is a traditional religious interpretation of the role of work in human life -- there is an aspect of Lucy's attitude towards work which is in fact new, the offspring of Puritanism mingled with capitalist goals: work is a means of personal advancement; more particularly, for Lucy hard work is a way to maintain her dignity as an independent woman who is a burden to no one, and it is her only means to achieve economic stability and security.

Thus, when Mme. Beck demands of Lucy to try out for a teaching position, Lucy's guiding principle of detachment and disengagement comes in conflict with her love of work and her goal to become economically independent. The narrator criticizes young Lucy's impulse towards "sloth" and her "usual base habit of cowardice", thus clearly indicating the superiority of the capitalist virtues of risk-taking and dynamic striving for advancement. But what is more, the narrator understands that accepting the challenge of a more qualified position within the boarding school would also improve
Lucy's chances of self-realization in her work, which would remedy the "schizophrenic mind-body-split" that Lucy has accurately diagnosed in her own life. Marx's analysis of the role of work in forming human subjectivity explicitly speaks to the power of work to transform both reality and human consciousness.

In *The German Ideology*, Marx argues that history is the record of man's struggle with nature. Through work, which is defined as conscious action upon matter, man strives to gain independence from nature; but, "by producing their means of subsistence men are indirectly producing their actual material life" (7). As man liberates himself from his dependence on nature, he changes not only his relationship to nature, but also himself and his history. By modifying man's relationship to nature through work, mankind constantly modifies and creates its own history. Thus, human beings are both actors and authors of their history.

Yet, man does change in the courses of history; he develops himself; he transforms himself, he is the product of history; since he makes his history, he is his own product. History is the history of man's self-realization; it is nothing but the self-creation of man through the process of his work and his production: 'the whole of what is called world history is nothing but the creation of man by human labor . . . (Fromm 26)

One could argue similarly, and on a smaller scale, that *Villette* is a novel which relates the story of the formation of Lucy Snowe's subjectivity through work under the conditions of a developed capitalist society. Of course this would amount to a very pointed and
somewhat reductive description of the novel, but it is true that a major focus of the novel is the process of Lucy's self-creation through her forced involvement in life through her work.

Each human subjectivity is a "project for the shaping of reality", a desire which strives for realization and fulfillment in reality. The translation of subjectivity from an inward project into reality takes place in work, the meaningful shaping or reality. In The German Ideology Karl Marx further argues that work in its original, ideal sense, is the true expression of human subjectivity, creativity, and individuality. Through work, man appropriates and shapes the external world and realizes his own human potential. Through work, human beings become historical agents. However, work can only be a vehicle of self-expression and self-creation if it is unalienated labor. The alienated labor which, according to Marx, characterizes capitalist relations of production stifles and cripples human potential. In the competitive, trade oriented first phase of capitalism, when the development of a then revolutionary entrepreneurial subjectivity was desirable to serve capitalist economy, there was ample space for the practical realization of many different subjectivities. Entrepreneurial man experiences reality as malleable, as a "material" upon which he can imprint his own subjectivity. But as soon as capitalism moved into its second phase -- the early stages of industrial capitalism -- work became alienated and self-realization through work becomes increasingly difficult and the privilege of an ever smaller number of people. As a poor orphan and a woman, Lucy is
doubly excluded from the possibility of realizing her subjectivity thorough meaningful work. Lucy never really enjoys work until she works independently, in her own school; because it is only when she herself becomes an "entrepreneur" that she can control the conditions under which she works and that she is secure from exploitation through others.

Lucy is not an early feminist who goes out into the world to challenge male prerogatives or to "realize her potential" — all she wants to do is to procure a living for herself, and to do so in a dignified manner. Through no choice of her own, because she is poor, Lucy is forced to participate in the economy and to function within this field of power which is usually reserved for men only. As a result, she benefits from the challenge of economic activity which has helped to shape the psyche of the male and has encouraged the forging of venturesome, strong subjectivities. Economic activity is a crucial step towards actual economic and emotional independence. It is no coincidence that Lucy makes a direct connection between her profession as a teacher and her sense of selfhood. Lucy views it as a welcome opportunity to clarify her social position when the old Count de Bassompierre asks her about Madame Beck's school. She readily volunteers that she is a teacher, and in response to Paulina's naive questions, she answers that she teaches "Chiefly ... for the sake of the money I get" (369). In spite of her awareness of the lowliness of her social position and the general effusion of pity about the hardship of her circumstances, Lucy exhibits a strong sense of pride.
in her ability to live independently and without relying on others for support. It is this sense of pride in her independence which makes it impossible for her to accept M. de Bassompierre's offer to become a companion to Paulina. Even though working for a living puts her at a social disadvantage, it is through her profession as a teacher that she defines herself. She bases her sense of self-hood not on rank, birth, and social position, but instead on inner values and merit. This belief in the individual's achievement is a keystone of bourgeois ideology. The new bourgeois focus on the individual both presupposes and reenforces the development of subjectivity in its dual manifestation as self-critical, reflective inwardness and practical application in the economy.

It is here, perhaps, that a comparison of Lucy's subjectivity with that of Robinson Crusoe might prove useful. Both Crusoe's and Lucy's lives are success stories of sorts. Even though Defoe's novel precedes Bronte's by more than a century, it is remarkable how similar their notions of success are: both authors define success in predominantly economic terms: Crusoe becomes, first, a self-supporting, independent farmer, then a rich merchant and, finally, the founder of an island colony. Lucy Snowe rises from complete destitution to becoming the well-to-do directrice of her own private school. What these two versions of success have in common is that both Crusoe and Snowe, impelled by necessity, had the courage and the grit to succeed through hard work; for both, independence is a crucial criterion for success: Crusoe prides himself on being the king
and sole lord of his island, and Snowe enjoys her hard work at her own
school, because for the first time she is her own master and has
control over her own life. But in spite of these parallels in their
life stories, the social and historical conditions under which Lucy
Snowe has to make her way in Belgium are entirely different from those
encountered by Crusoe on his island.

Crusoe is a rich merchant's only surviving son, while Lucy is a
poor orphan, without a family to protect her and without any economic
means. Crusoe, driven by his youthful spirit of rebellion and
adventure, runs away from home and goes aboard ship. Lucy, on the
other hand, is not an adventurous person by nature, but she is
impelled to emigrate by despair. She has never known the security of
a home, and when Miss Marchmont, her employer, dies, she takes the
courageous step of leaving England, friendless and penniless, to try
her luck on the continent. In *Villette*, Bronte shows us the fate of a
woman who has left her home country because she had nothing to lose
and finds herself a stranger in a strange land; she does not speak the
language, does not understand the culture, and is thus condemned to
"looking in from the outside". However, one should not yield to the
temptation to think that Lucy would be more "at home" in England--she
was isolated and friendless there, and her loneliness in Belgium is
merely a concrete physical representation of her existential condition.

While working for Madame Beck, Lucy's experience is, for the most
part, not a happy one. There is no tangible product of her work and
she is not in control of the conditions under which she is to work.
Madame Beck shamelessly exploits her, paying her less than her male predecessor, Mr. Wilson (144). Lucy does not enjoy teaching the dull, dense, and misbehaving upper class girls at Madame Beck's school, and, because of her retiring nature and disinclination to gossip, she is not fully accepted among the other female instructors.

Where work is understood as the process of self-creation in Marx's sense, Crusoe has much more space to "create his selfhood than Lucy. Crusoe works on a deserted island, limited only by his physical and mental capacities, whereas Lucy works under the infinitely more complex conditions of a developed, multifaceted society. Crusoe's opponents are the forces of nature and the savages visiting the island for their rituals. For him the struggle for subjectivity is an almost entirely externalized struggle with nature, in which the challenge is to overcome physical obstacles and to impress his subjectivity upon the world of matter. Because his story takes place on a deserted island, Crusoe can make himself "lord of creation" like a second Adam. Crusoe's subjectivity is largely external and so untroubled that it can be seen as identical with his entrepreneurial activity. To put it glibly, what Crusoe does is who he is. Lucy, on the other hand, is hemmed in by a multitude of social restraints. It is almost impossible for her to find an external expression for her subjectivity. As a result, her subjectivity remains conflicted and internalized, creating an inner space which becomes the battle ground of ideological conflicts in Lucy's struggle for an independent subjectivity.
"If life be a war, it seemed my destiny to conduct it singlehanded" (381). This observation of Lucy's can be taken to be a diagnosis of the condition of an entire society. Like Robinson's isolation on the island, Lucy's loneliness in Belgium is a simile for the loneliness of modern man in capitalist society. But there is a significant difference between Robinson's and Lucy's loneliness: Robinson is shown to be physically alone. He is, after all, the only living being on a remote island somewhere off the South American coast, while Lucy is surrounded by other human beings. Yet her psychological loneliness is no less harrowing than his physical isolation. There is certainly no more powerful account of absolute loneliness and maddening mental torment in English literature before Bronte than her description of Lucy Snowe's despair during the long, dull summer vacations which she is forced to spend in the company of an imbecile. When "the prop of employment is withdrawn" (228), Lucy becomes aware of a gradual sinking of her spirits, a general despair that takes hold of her and threatens to destroy her sanity. Lucy takes to wandering the country, solitarily, during the long summer days. No one minds what she is doing, no one expects her back. Her life is of no consequence to the world.

Night brings no relief but only terrifying dreams which further intensify her sense of lostness and loneliness. Bronte has Lucy describe her dream in such harrowing, heart-rending intensity that one can't help but think that this may in fact have been the author's
dream, recounted in this novel to exorcise its horror by sharing it with the reader.

Sleep never came! . . . I err. She came once, but in anger. Impatient of my importunity she brought with her an avenging dream. By the clock of St. Jean Baptiste, that dream remained scarce fifteen minutes—a brief space, but sufficing to wring my whole frame with unknown anguish; to confer a nameless experience that had the hue, the mien, the terror, the very tone of a visitation from eternity. Between twelve and one that night a cup was forced to my lips, black, strong, strange, drawn from no well, but filled up seething from a bottomless and boundless sea. Suffering, brewed in temporal or calculable measure, and mixed for mortal lips, tastes not as this suffering tasted. Having drank and woke, I thought all was over: the end come and past by. Trembling fearfully—as consciousness returned—ready to cry out on some fellow-creature to help me, only that I knew no fellow-creature was near enough to catch the wild summons—Goton in her far distant attic could not hear—I rose on my knees in bed. Some fearful hours went over me: indescribably was I torn, racked and oppressed in mind. Amidst the horrors of that dream I think the worst lay here. Methought the well-loved dead, who had loved me well in life, met me elsewhere, alienated: galled was my inmost spirit with an unutterable sense of despair about the future. Motive was there none why I should try to recover or wish to live; and yet quite unendurable was the pitiless and haughty voice in which Death challenged me to engage his unknown terrors. When I tried to pray I could only utter these words: "From my youth up Thy terrors have I suffered with a troubled mind." Most true was it. (232)

The most terrifying aspect of this dream is not so much that it emphasizes her current loneliness—that there is no fellow-creature near enough to hear her—but the dream's attempt to change the past. Its true horror lies in the fact that it falsifies the memory of the "well-loved dead." In the dream, she meets her dead loved ones and finds that they are alienated from her. Lucy can bear the loneliness of the present; but she cannot bear losing the knowledge that she,
too, was once loved. The dream cruelly completes her despairing sense of total alienation from other human beings in the present, the past, and even the future. Yet although she cannot see a motive for living, Lucy refuses to give up.

Like Crusoe's fever dream, this dream marks a point of transition, an ordeal by fire which brings about the climax of Lucy's mental crisis and impels her to act. Her deep spirituality makes it possible for Lucy to view this crisis as an ordeal appointed her by God, and therefore as inherently meaningful. It is, of course, a traditional Christian attitude to cope with anguish by defining it as a divine ordeal. What is new about Lucy's attitude, however, is that she knows that it is not enough to submit to this trial passively. She understands clearly that she will perish if she does not actively seek a way out. Thus, God has been assigned a new position in this young Protestant's world: God defines the framework within which her life takes place; he sets things in motion, he is the underlying cause of her ordeal, but it is she herself who must determine its outcome.

One evening - and I was not delirious: I was in my sane mind, I got up - I dressed myself, weak and shaking. The solitude and the stillness of the long dormitory could not be borne any longer; the ghastly white beds were turning into spectres - the coronal of each became a death's head, huge and sun-bleached - dead dreams of an elder world and mightier race lay frozen in their wide gaping eye-holes. That evening more firmly than ever fastened into my soul the conviction that Fate was of stone, and Hope a false idol - blind, bloodless, and of granite core. I felt, too, that the trial God had appointed me was gaining its climax, and must now be turned by my own hands, hot, feeble, trembling as they were. (232)
Lucy Snowe submits to the trial of loneliness and despair only to a certain point. Then she takes her fate into her own hands. She must act, she must do something. This emphasis on human action reflects a change in social ideology. Life is no longer viewed as static. One no longer accepts the trials of life passively, merely because they come from God. There is room to turn one's fate, something can and must be done—in a sense, human beings, through their activity in the world, have become equal to God in determining their fates. And one more thing is new: the depth of mental anguish described in the passages above can only be experienced by a character who possesses an extraordinarily subtle inwardness, a capacity for feeling far surpassing anything Defoe might have had Crusoe think or feel. A new degree of subtlety has been reached; a new, almost modernistic language, reminiscent of De Quincey's visionary and tortured writing, is being employed to represent the urgency and intensity of emotional pain.

Lucy's experience differs most significantly from that of Crusoe where it is determined by society's reaction to her as a woman. Lucy's decision to work for a living is a most courageous one in a society which regards working women with suspicion or even contempt. There are, of course, working class women who earn their living as seamstresses, milliners, or as domestics in the houses of the rich; but middle class women are discouraged from working outside the home. Lucy's societal position is further complicated by the fact that she is educated, a privilege usually reserved for the rich, and that she
uses her education to make a living. As a teacher and governess, she straddles the class gap between the moneyed and well-protected gentlewoman who does not need to work and the poor working-class woman who sells her labor to make a living. 

In *The Political Unconscious*, Fredric Jameson writes that "reality is that which resists desire" (184). Certainly, this is the experience of Lucy Snowe. Endowed by nature with the strong desire for human companionship, she can never indulge her desire for seeking it, because it would mean to open herself up to pain in a way which would endanger her very survival. Thus, Lucy confines her subjectivity to its inward aspect, and, instead of shaping reality according to her desires, she transplants reality into her mind. This disillusionment with her own powerlessness and the resulting withdrawal from an active shaping of reality is shared by most women and most members of the "working masses" who are denied the realization of their subjectivities through meaningful work. Once Lucy has overcome her fear of involvement, however, and accepts Madame Beck's offer to become an English teacher, she begins to find a sense of pride and a new identity in her economic independence. Even though this first experience of working for money is wretched, it moves her closer to a sense of liberation, because she feels she can take control of her life.

*It was pleasant. I felt I was getting on; not lying the stagnant prey of mould and rust, but polishing my faculties and whetting them to a keen edge with constant use. Experience of a certain kind lay before me, on no narrow scale.* (145)
Experience is a key term in this passage. Lucy has so far isolated herself from life for fear of getting hurt. But experience cannot be gained by mere distanced observation. It requires active participation in and constant reflection upon life as it is lived at a concrete historical moment of time. In accepting the challenge of working as a teacher, Lucy has simultaneously accepted the challenge of life. Increasingly, she is forced to surrender her attitude of frozen disengagement. As she opens herself up to others by degree, she begins to deal with the force of her own emotions, a conflict which will be dealt with at a later point, in our discussion of Lucy's experience with the stage.

Lucy observes others closely, dissecting and analyzing what she sees, and defining her subjectivity by contrasting her own values with those of the people surrounding her. This strategy is particularly evident in her criticism of her Labasscourienne students. She views them as ideologized creatures of the ideology of the Catholic Church, which throws into relief her own Protestant values. While Lucy believes in letting oneself be guided by the rules of conscience, the Catholic girls are viewed as following the letter, but not the spirit of the law laid down by the Church. What is more, the Church condones this behavior, readily absolving sinners from the sin of lying, while severely punishing them if their offense is missing a mass or questioning the authority of the Church. Lucy despises this kind of hypocrisy with its implied rejection of personal dignity and integrity, qualities which she possesses to a high degree. Not
surprisingly, Lucy has a much easier time dealing with her students and Madame Beck than she does with those people who could actually engage her affection. With her students, there is no threat to her disengagement. She remains cool and distant, her "professional self", determined to succeed at all cost.

My mind was a good deal bent on success: I could not bear the thought of being baffled by mere undisciplined disaffection and wanton indocility, in the first attempt to get on in life. (146)

The desire "to get on in life" is a sentiment which is not new to readers of literature. But before the rise of the novel, "getting on in life" usually was a rather vague undertaking, rather much like the project of fairy-tale heroes who sally forth to seek their luck and who end up finding a treasure or marrying a king's daughter. Even in Robinson Crusoe, the protagonist's fortune is in large part made through a kind of "fairy-tale" device: the wreck of the "Esperanza" functions as a treasure cove from which Crusoe rescues the silver coins and all the tools he needs to make the island habitable. In Bronte's novel, we find a new, very concrete and historically accurate project for "getting on in life": Lucy achieves economic independence through her own work as a teacher and through her entrepreneurial activities as the headmistress of her own school.

But working for a living is not the only way to "get on in life". Bronte shows us other ways of succeeding economically in her two other women characters, Paulina and Ginevra Fanshawe. As has been shown before, Paulina moves through life smoothly, without any effort of her own. She is the prototype of the upper class Victorian lady who lives
a well-protected life and need not worry herself about the material aspects of life. Ginevra Fanshawe is a more interesting character with a certain tradition in literature to look back upon. She is a close relative of Moll Flanders and of Becky Sharp in Thackeray's *Vanity Fair*. What she has in common with these female characters is an indomitable passion for pleasurable living and the desire to rise in the world. She also shares their resourcefulness in devising means of escaping her lowly origins.

As the daughter of an impoverished gentleman, she has little to hope for from her family and has to rely on her wits and her considerable charms for success in life. Her guardian, M. Home de Bassompierre, is paying to send her to Madame Beck's school, where Ginevra is to receive continental "polish" before making her debut in England. Naturally averse to any form of exertion, mental or physical, Ginevra limits her studies to the pursuit of embroidery, dance, and singing, a curriculum which contains all that is necessary to educate a future "grande dame" of society. Little burdened with a sense of personal dignity and inner values, Ginevra thinks little of begging clothes and finery of her long-suffering benefactors. As Lucy maliciously observes, it is "wonderful to witness the activity of her otherwise indolent mind on this point, and to see the much-daring intrepidity to which she was spurred by a sense of necessity, and the wish to shine." (151). In spite of all this, Ginevra is not at all a bad person. She is merely convinced that she deserves all the praise and attention possible. She thrives on Graham's hopeless infatuation
and really believes that it is very gracious of her to accept his
costly presents. Yet Ginevra is not a one-dimensional character. She
has her endearing qualities, as well. At times she is so disarmingly
candid that her greediness and self-centeredness seem almost
childishly innocent.

When de Hamal appears on the scene, Ginevra does not hesitate for
a moment to snub Graham and to begin a relationship with the flighty
young aristocrat, whose title and connections promise her the position
she is striving for. When she substitutes de Hamal's courtship quite
easily for tender admiration, Ginevra proves that she lacks any deep,
inner sense of values. This class arrogance is what most infuriates
Lucy about Ginevra, and thereby serves to throw Lucy's democratic
values into sharp relief. Lucy believes in the supremacy of
individual, inner merit, quite apart from an individual's class
position. The result is the opposition of two value systems, one
everely subjectivized, the other entirely externalized: Lucy measures
a person's inner value, whereas Ginevra looks at external achievements
only and is quite oblivious of inner qualities. Even though she
pretends to despise anything bourgeois, Ginevra represents the new
capitalist focus on money and status. Lucy's value system, on the
other hand, is rooted in the deep spirituality of the Puritan ethic
which Weber considered
so central to the development of capitalist ideology. Lucy, who constantly delimitates herself against the "Popish" customs of the Belgians around her, defines herself very consciously through her Protestantism. The spiritual emphasis of her religion makes introspection and reflection a natural habit of the mind to her. She disregards status and wealth, judging a person's worth only by his inner qualities. Yet both Lucy's and Ginevra's value systems are bourgeois in that both aspects, the focus on an independent life of the mind and the desire for wealth and status, are characteristic of the entrepreneurial stage of capitalism.

"Vive les joies et les plaisirs! A bas les grandes passions et les severes vertus!" (156). This motto of Ginevra's neatly describes her character. Herself shallow and bent only on seeking pleasure, Ginevra is quite unable to comprehend the complexities of Lucy's inner life. Lucy, on the other hand, cannot "realize such deadness" (230), to the point where, for a fleeting moment, she is convinced that Ginevra is merely feigning callousness and indifference toward the feelings of others. But she soon recognizes that Ginevra is hiding nothing. There are no hidden depths under the unruffled surface of selfishness. Ginevra, for her part, likes Lucy's company, for Lucy knows her as she really is, and she need not feign being all "sweetness and light". Conversely, she justifies her dislike of Graham as being caused by his idealization of herself:

"It is something in this fashion", she cried out ere long: "the man is too romantic and devoted, and he expects something more of me than I find it convenient to be. He thinks I am perfect: furnished with all sorts of sterling qualities and solid virtues, such as I never
had, nor intend to have. Now, one can't help, in his presence, rather trying to justify his good opinion; and it does so tire one to be goody, and to talk sense,—for he really thinks I am sensible. I am far more at my ease with you, old lady—you, you dear crosspatch—who take me at my lowest, and know me to be coquettish, and ignorant, and flirting, and fickle, and silly, and selfish, and all the other sweet things you and I have agreed to be a part of my character." (155)

Being known as she actually is is a relief to Ginevra, even though the truth about her character is less than flattering. Although it is certainly impossible for the reader to love Ginevra, this unabashedly self-centered and egotistical young girl is a refreshing change from the "goody" female characters normally encountered in nineteenth-century novels. Although she does not have the depth of Jane Eyre, nor the mythic wildness of Catherine Earnshaw, Ginevra holds her own as a counter image of conventional Victorian womanhood. She finds it inconvenient to be good, humble, and quiet. It is against her nature to be patient, long-suffering, and self-sacrificial. She rebels against the expectation that women should be "sweet" and "good" because it is unnatural to her. It bores her and does not get her what she wants. This is not to say that Ginevra has any degree of consciousness about protesting the role women were forced to play in Victorian England, or that she attempts to make a point of any sort. Ginevra simply does as she pleases. Her rebelliousness has no noble "revolutionary" goal. In fact, her goals—money and status—are quite in line with Victorian ideology, and she breaks social rules only where they fetter her own desires. But within the setting of
Victorian society, Ginevra is a true descendant of Crusoe, acting out her own desires and forcing her will upon her environment.

The most telling aspect of this character, however, is the fact that Bronte can have her elope with her lover without ever "punishing" her for this "indecency". Unlike Becky Sharpe, who dies lonely and impoverished, and unlike Moll Flanders, whose story is a story of repentance and confession, Ginevra never comes to regret her elopement. "the reader will no doubt expect to hear that she came finally to bitter expiation of her youthful levities. Of course, a large share of suffering lies in reserve for her future", Bronte writes ironically.

Under every cloud, no matter what its nature, Ginevra, as of old, called out lustily for sympathy and aid. She had no notion of meeting any distress single-handed. In some shape, from some quarter or other, she was pretty sure to obtain her will, and so she got on – fighting the battle of life by proxy, and, on the whole, suffering as little as any human being I have ever known. (577)

By not punishing Ginevra for her moral transgression, nor for her selfishness and greed, Bronte intensifies a Calvinist sense of random choseness or condemnedness, which is reenforced by Lucy's comparison of her own, difficult life with those of Paulina and Graham/ Dr. John.

Yes; it is so. Without any colouring of romance, or any exaggeration of fancy, it is so. Some real lives do – for some certain days or years – actually anticipate the happiness of heaven; . . . I will go farther. I do believe there are some human beings so born, so reared, so guided from a soft cradle to a calm and late grave, that no excessive suffering penetrates their lot, and no tempestuous blackness overcasts their journey. And often, these are not pampered, selfish beings, but Nature's elect, harmonious and benign; men and women mild with charity, kind agents of God's kind attributes. (532)
What is most obvious in those lines is Lucy's consciousness of otherness. She cannot, like Ginevra, call out lustily for help. She cannot fight life by proxy. Her fate is to experience life deeply, sharply, to suffer and to agonize. The crucial difference between Lucy and such "chosen" characters as Ginevra, Dr. John, and Paulina, is that neither one of these latter three has the same subtle and acute subjectivity as does Lucy. Ginevra's vain flightiness and empty materialism have been the subject of Lucy's criticism throughout the novel; her lack of moral values and her uncritical acceptance of the superficial for the genuine have been sufficiently exposed in her exploitation of Dr. John's misplaced love and in her elopement with De Hamal. In short: Ginevra has no independent subjectivity to lose. And even Paulina, although she is sensitive and introspective, does not possess an independent subjectivity. She lets her inwardness be filled with those of her father and of her husband, and she never gains an independent standpoint of her own from which to reflect upon her own position in life. Dr. John does have a strong selfhood, but it is severely limited by his inability to think beyond the dominant ideology. As his stereotypical reaction to Vashti's acting shows, he has internalized the dominant ideology's view of women which holds that women are childlike, weak, and in need of protection. If they behave in any other way, they are unwomanly, indecent, or simply monstrous. Yet within the mental limits of the dominant ideology, Graham functions very effectively and is obviously quite happy. Unlike Ginevra, Graham, or even Paulina, Lucy possesses a highly
developed independent subjectivity, which sets her apart from "Nature". Lucy cannot accept her "naturally" powerless and friendless condition. As a result, her critical mind goes on reflecting upon her condition, throwing into relief the ideological boundaries of her life. Her critical awareness of those boundaries is what constitutes Lucy's otherness. "From my youth up Thy terrors have I suffered with a troubled mind" (232) is Lucy's agonized cry after her night of terror during the long vacations. It is indeed her "troubled mind" that makes it impossible for Lucy to be one of "Nature's elect", but it is also the driving force for the development of a subjectivity of theretofore unknown depth and complexity.

"I, Lucy Snowe, plead guiltless of that curse, an overheated and discursive imagination." (69) the narrator announces emphatically. It is an absurd statement to make for the narrator of a novel—for what else is the novel if not the dramatization of a discursive imagination—what Bakhtin calls the "dialogic imagination." The novel is generated by the dialogue among the various characters from all walks of life which take form in the novelist's imagination. Lucy Snowe is, of course, not the novelist but only a character created by Bronte. On the plot level, however, Lucy does indeed function as the "writer-narrator", and it is in her mind that the action takes place. What one must ask oneself, then, is why Lucy is so bent upon rejecting the proposition that she may have a "discursive imagination". What is so bad about that? What is the "guilt" connected with exercising a
discursive imagination? What is Lucy so afraid of—and what is she trying to hide?

Often called a uniquely human faculty, imagination allows us to conjure up realities other than our own, to imagine ourselves as other than our present selves and it is in our imagination that hopes and fears have their place. In the imagination, human beings are freed from the fetters of reality. It is a declaration of independence from reality for the duration of a dream. Every great revolutionary is a dreamer and a visionary, a person with a great deal of imagination. It is little wonder then, that imagination is a very dangerous and volatile faculty to the powers that be. In today's societies, much money and energy is expended to channel imagination in "safe" ways through the ideological machinery of the entertainment industry. In countries where even the semblance of freedom is lost, literature and art are always the first items on the agenda of censorship, for it is in these areas of cultural activity that imagination is expressed most freely. Lucy Snowe certainly did not set out to be a revolutionary, but she cannot help having a "troubled mind", in which Reason (the ideological voice of the existing conditions) is forever in conflict with Imagination (the world as it could be). This conflict is most poignantly dramatized in the chapter entitled "Reaction".

Lucy has been taken in by the Brettons after her nervous breakdown and her identity has been revealed. In the course of the weeks she has spent with the Brettons, Lucy has permitted her feelings for Graham to rise to the surface of her mind, encouraged by his
kindliness and obvious caring for her. Upon returning to the
pensionnat, she wrestles with herself, torn by the desire to express
her feelings for Graham, and racked by the fear of certain
disillusionment and pain in store for her if she dared presume. In an
imaginary dialogue, she pleads with stern Reason to let her express
her feelings in a letter to Graham, but is rebuffed peremptorily.

"if he should write, what then? do you meditate pleasure
in replying? Ah, fool! I warn you! Brief be your
answer. Hope no delight of heart - no indulgence of
intellect: grant no expansion of feeling" . . .

"But I have talked to Graham and you did not chide", I
pleaded. "No," said she, "I needed not. Talk for you
is good discipline [sic]. You converse imperfectly.
While you speak, there can be no oblivion of inferiority
- no encouragement to delusion: pain, privation, penury
stamp your language. . . ."

"But," I again broke in, "where the bodily presence is
weak and the speech contemptible, surely there cannot be
error in making written language the medium of better
utterance than faltering lips can achieve?" Reason only
answered, "At your peril you cherish that idea, or
suffer its influence to animate any writing of yours!"
"But if I feel, may I never express?" "Never!" declared
Reason. (307)

What Lucy calls "that hag, Reason" (308) denies a person as
powerless as herself the right to hope, to desire friendship and joy,
to even conceive of a better life. It is the voice of ideology,
internalized to protect herself from hopes that are sure to be crushed
and from feelings that would only make her vulnerable. Only in her
imagination can Lucy give vent to her feelings.

This hag, this Reason, would not let me look up or
smile, or hope: she could not rest unless I were
altogether crushed, cowed, broken-in, and broken-down.
According to her, I was born only to work for a piece of
bread, to await the pains of death, and steadily through
all life to despond. (307)
One is tempted to call the following passage, perhaps the most emotional and enthusiastic one in the entire novel: it is written in such a dithyrambic strain, it reads like an ode to imagination. Too long to be quoted here in its entirety, suffice it to say that Lucy Snowe, the sober Protestant, goes as far as to set imagination on the same level with God:

Divine, compassionate, succourable influence! When I bend the knee to other than God, it shall be at thy white and winged feet, beautiful on mountain or on plain. Temples have been reared to the Sun - altars dedicated to the Moon. Oh, greater glory! To thee neither hands build, nor lips consecrate; but hearts, through ages are faithful to thy worship. A dwelling thou hast, too wide for walls, too high for dome - a temple whose floors are space - rites whose mysteries transpire in presence, to the kindling, the harmony of worlds! Sovereign complete! thou hadst, for endurance, thy great army of martyrs; for achievement, thy chosen band of worthies. Deity unquestioned, thine essence foils decay! (308)

If this effusion of emotion surprises the reader, coming from a narrator usually as controlled as Lucy, it also gives us crucial insights into the workings of her mind and the motives for her action. Clearly, Lucy is capable of very intense emotion and ardent desire. It is also evident from the passages quoted above that Lucy is acutely aware of her lowly position in life and the improbability that reality could hold anything but pain, renunciation, and disappointment for her. As a result, she tries very hard to hold her feelings in check through imposing the laws of "Reason". After all, for anyone as powerless as Lucy, it does seem "reasonable" not to expect anything from life and thus to protect herself from emotional harm.
The endeavor to keep her emotions in a state of induced dormancy is complicated, and ultimately foiled, by her exceptional power of imagination, her capacity for feeling, observing, analyzing, and reflecting on life—in short, by her highly developed subjectivity. At any rate, it should now be obvious to the reader why a "discursive imagination" is a most problematic gift for a person in Lucy's position, and it explains why she is often most unreliable as a narrator when she is called upon to give us an accurate account of her own emotions: the ideological conflict of reason with the natural impulse toward the expression of her passionate feelings is what impels Lucy to create a narrative which is full of elisions, a narrative which almost screams out the truth, while muddling the traces of emotion at the same time. It is this conflict which creates a layered narrative, like layers of lace upon lace, which makes it necessary for the reader to peer through the elisions to the underlying cause, to substitute what is not being said, to read intuitively, unraveling the truth like a detective in a psychological mystery.

Lucy's horror of the depth and intensity of her own feeling is particularly obvious in her experience with the stage, both in her first amateurish attempt at acting, and during her evening at the theater with the Brettons. At the insistence of M. Emanuel, Lucy reluctantly takes on the role of the fop in the play on occasion of Madame Beck's birthday. She rehearses her role locked into the dusty hot attic, then, retrieved by M. Emanuel, steadfastly refuses any
attempt to be got up like a man, and finally steps on stage to astound
herself with the exhilaration and the sense of empowerment she feels
while acting.

What I felt that night, and what I did, I no more
expected to feel and do, than to be lifted in a trance
to the seventh heaven. Cold, reluctant, apprehensive, I
had accepted a part to please another: ere long,
warming, becoming interested, taking courage, I acted to
please myself. Yet the next day, when I thought it
over, I quite disapproved of these amateur performances;
and though glad that I had obliged M. Paul, and tried my
own strength for once, I took a firm resolution never to
be drawn into a similar affair. A keen relish for
dramatic expression had revealed itself as part of my
nature; to cherish and exercise this new-found faculty
might gift me with a world of delight, but it would not
do for a mere looker-on at life: the strength and
longing must be put by; and I put them by, and fastened
them in with the lock of a resolution which neither Time
nor Temptation has since picked. (211)

Behind the mask of the fop, a character as unlike her own as could
be, Lucy feels safe enough to truly come into her own. For a few
hours, she lives out her imagination, throws herself into life,
savoring the sense of power that comes from "acting out" her
feelings. Yet a day later, even this surrender to the true
emotionality of her nature seems frightening, because it reveals to
her the depths within her own subjectivity which she would rather deny
and kill off. It is damaging to "a mere looker-on at life", to
pretend to herself, even if only on stage, that it is possible to live
her feelings, and to act to please herself. Survival in the real
world depends on her ability to distance herself, to dissimulate her
feelings, and to expect nothing of life. The "world of delight" she
might find through acting must be renounced, because living in it
would mean to lose her disengaged stance toward life and to acknowledge the forcefulness of her feelings. She is repelled by the force of the passions within her, yet at the same time she continues to be intrigued with the sense of power she momentarily experienced when she "acted to please herself". This ambiguity is particularly evident in Lucy's later reaction to Vashti, a celebrated actress who gives a performance in Villette.

Behold! I found upon her something neither of woman nor of man: in each of her eyes sat a devil. These evil forces bore her through the tragedy, kept up her feeble strength—she was but a frail creature; and as the action rose and the stir deepened, how wildly they shook her with their passions of the pit! They wrote HELL on her straight, haughty brow. They tuned her voice to the note of torment. They writhed her regal face to a demoniac mask. Hate and Murder and Madness incarnate, she stood. It was a marvellous sight: a mighty revelation. It was a spectacle low, horrible, immoral. (339)

In spite of herself, Lucy is fascinated, for what she sees enacted by Vashti is the spectacle of a strong woman. Vashti represents woman as she might be, were she liberated of the fetters of social norms. Lucy understands that the beauty of such a woman is not conventional—for that would be the frail and childlike beauty of a woman who needs a man's protection. Vashti represents the beauty of strength and power, qualities which are rarely associated with women in conventional thought even today. Her acting evokes the anarchic power of women of an earlier, mythological age, when humankind adored dark goddesses like Ishtar, Kali, and Isis. The spectacle of Vashti's rebellion on stage encourages in Lucy her own suppressed anger against
the "mind-forged manacles" of an ideology which forces her into repression, humbleness, and meekness, because she is poor and a woman.

On stage, Vashti rebels against this ideology by exposing the falseness of the therapeutic value of the repression of one's feelings and desires, and of self-sacrifice. Lucy, who is struggling for a definition of selfhood, sees in Vashti a woman who dares be herself and who snubs society; a woman who is strong and powerful, and who is unafraid to accept the demonic and anarchic undercurrent of her newfound power.

I had seen acting before, but never anything like this: never anything which... disclosed power like a deep, swollen, winter river, thundering in cataract, and bearing the soul, like a leaf, on the steep and steely sweep of its descent. (340)

Although Lucy is frightened by the response which Vashti's acting generates within herself, she understands that Vashti has provided her with a model for a new aesthetic, the aesthetic of power and truthfulness to one's feelings, which is also a new model of strong womanhood. Lucy had begun to develop this new aesthetic during her hours spent alone in the Villette art galleries waiting for Graham to make his rounds. Her whimsical, but always honest taste refuses to admire a painting merely because it is thought to be admirable. She judges art by a rigid standard: its adherence to the truth of nature. "Cleopatra", a portrait of a rubenesque nude lounging among a still-life of materials and objets d'art, incurs her particular displeasure, because it seems to her a pointless portrait of a voluptuous, mindless woman, expressive only of mental and physical
lassitude. She is quite unable to see what is supposed to be beautiful about this painting. M. Paul, who chides her for having the audacity of looking at such a risque work of art, advises her instead to contemplate four paintings called "La vie d'une femme", a series of pictures which Lucy finds most exasperatingly affected and boring. Her criticism of these works is acrid, astute, and outrageously funny.

They were painted rather in a remarkable style - flat, dead, pale and formal. The first represented a "Jeune Fille", coming out of a church-door, a missal in her hand, her dress very prim, her eyes cast down, her mouth pursed up - the image of a most villainous little precocious she-hypocrite. The second, a 'Mariée' with a long white veil, kneeling at a prie-dieu, holding her hands plastered together, finger to finger, and showing the whites of her eyes in a most exasperating manner. The third, a 'Jeune Mère', hanging disconsolate over a clayey and puffy baby with a face like an unwholesome full moon. The fourth, a 'Veuve', being a black woman holding by the hand a black little girl, and the twain studiously surveying an elegant French monument, set up in a corner of some Pere la Chaise. All these four 'Anges' were grim and gray as burglars, and cold and vapid as ghosts. What women to live with! insincere, ill-humoured, bloodless, brainless nonentities! As bad in their way as the indolent gypsy-giantess, the Cleopatra, in hers. (277-278).

Lucy's most strident criticism is aimed at the same shortcomings in all of these works of art: their lack of truthfulness to life, their lack of courage in depicting nature and character. This kind of art does not serve life and truth; it is art serving ideology. The artists depict women as their society wishes to see them, not as women really are: Cleopatra is the voluptuous, erotic woman, and the "La vie d'une femme"- sequence depicts only stereotypical images of womanhood in a flat, lifeless, hypocritical way. Lucy despises these representations of women as "bloodless, brainless nonentities", thus
defining both a new aesthetic in opposition to the dominant one, and a specific set of values for her own life as a woman: she will not let herself be turned into a nonentity, and she will not give up either her femininity or the use of her brain, even though this is sure to create conflicts with the dominant ideology. Lucy's is fascinated with Vashti's acting, because it reflects what she believes to be the function of art: that art must have the courage to adhere to the truth of Nature and to depict the truth of character even where it is in contradiction with generally accepted beliefs. Vashti is a strong, independent woman, full of the life of the body and the mind—and it is towards this ideal of wholeness that Lucy aspires.

One important aspect of the novel has not yet been addressed in sufficient depth: the nature of Lucy's relationships with the two major male characters in the novel, M. Paul and Graham, and the effect of these relationships on the formation of Lucy's subjectivity. From her childhood days in the Bretton home, Lucy has known Graham. For his part, Graham carried himself kindly but rather indifferently towards his poor relation, and Lucy has always known her place too well and is too proud to allow herself to show her affection for him. When Lucy recognizes Graham in Villette, he catches her looking at him intently and interprets her gaze as a reproof. In this first significant interaction a pattern is set for their relationship that holds true throughout the novel: Lucy conceals her feelings for him behind a mask of coldness by which Graham is deceived into thinking her severe and indifferent towards him.
I might have cleared myself on the spot, but would not. I did not speak. I was not in the habit of speaking to him. . . . There is a perverse mood of the mind which is rather soothed than irritated by misconstruction; and in quarters where we can never be rightly known, we take pleasure, I think, in being consummately ignored. What honest man on being casually taken for a housebreaker, does not feel rather tickled than vexed at the mistake? (163)

Graham lacks the sensitivity to intuitively understand the truth about Lucy's feelings for himself and about her own personality, and Lucy will not speak to him to explain herself or to clarify misunderstandings. Her refusal to speak out is based only in part upon her painful awareness of her social inferiority. The deeper reason, however, is to be sought in a kind of snobbery rather than Lucy's sense of social inferiority. Lucy feels that Graham has so blatantly misconstrued her true nature that he really is quite incapable of understanding her. In a sense, she treats him according to the motto: "If I have to tell you who I am, you would not understand me anyway". Lucy recognizes that Graham's inwardness is much less complex than she thought it was, when she hears his damning criticism of Vashti after the performance that stirred her so deeply.

Such a strange smile went wandering round his lips, a smile so critical, so almost callous! I suppose that for natures of that order his sympathies were callous. In a few terse phrases he told me his opinion of, and feeling towards, the actress: he judged her as a woman, not an artist: it was a branding judgment. (342)

Lucy knows at this point that Graham's judgment of Vashti marks a transition in their relationship. She knows now that Graham is not a soulmate. He is not capable of feeling as deeply as she does, and, as a result, he will never be able to comprehend her fully. Lucy does
not judge him for his lack of depth of feeling, she merely realizes that he belongs to another class of human beings: he is a pragmatist, a rationalist, a man of action. He is not used to pondering over spiritual issues. His nature does not hold unsuspected depths and he is constitutionally incapable of great passions. With women like Vashti — and, we suspect, Lucy — he is quite literally "out of his depth."

His natural attitude was not the meditative, nor his natural mood the sentimental; impressionable he was as dimpling water, but, almost as water, unimpressible: the breeze, the sun, moved him — metal could not grave, nor fire brand. Dr. John could think, and think well, but he was rather a man of action than of thought; he could feel, and feel vividly in his way, but his heart had no chord for enthusiasm ... for what belonged to storm, what was wild and intense, dangerous, sudden, and flaming, he had no sympathy, and held with it no communion. (341)

Lucy does not judge him harshly for his shortcomings, a fact which is shown in her choosing to tell the reader of Graham's courageous and manly rescue of Paulina during the fire at the theater. What the reader is to understand is that Graham is not a bad person because he does not appreciate passion in the dramatic arts or in life—Graham is simply a person so different from Lucy that there is no possibility for a meaningful, close relationship between them.

Graham's lack of sensitivity to Lucy is shown, again and again, in his inability to see through her cool and controlled facade. "Quiet Lucy Snowe", he calls her, and "a being inoffensive as a shadow" (403). He has not the slightest inkling at what cost Lucy maintains the calm surface, and what turmoil of passion is hidden beneath it.
With now welcome force, I realized his entire misapprehension of my character and nature. He wanted always to give me a role not mine. Nature and I opposed him. He did not at all guess what I felt: he did not read my eyes, or face, or gestures; though I doubt not, all spoke. (404)

Graham cannot "read" Lucy, and even though she is trying very hard not to be "found out", it is part of a hide-and-seek game, the object of which is to be known for who she is. Graham will always misread her. In spite of her powerful attraction to him, Lucy has made her decision regarding Graham: "That night was already marked in my book of life, not with white, but with a deep-red cross" (342) she writes. Thus, even before Graham meets Paulina again and falls in love with her, Lucy gives up her tenuous claim on him.

I have written above that Graham is a man of action, not a passionate man or a man of thought. This sort of distinction is fairly acceptable to most readers today. However, if we remember the assumptions from which this study proceeded, it is clear that we have now arrived at a turning point. We proceeded from the assumption that early capitalism needed entrepreneurial men; therefore, it was the function of capitalist ideology to encourage the development of an independent subjectivity to create men of action with independent minds. Significantly, there was not seen to be a contradiction between a practical, active life, and the development of a subtle inwardness. In fact, independent economic activity becomes possible through an independent mind. This is no longer true in Villette; Graham is presented to us as a man of action, and we are to accept, as a matter of course, that therefore he can not be expected to
understand the "angular vagaries" of less fortunate minds. Madame Beck is successful as an entrepreneur (in the new, strictly economic sense), because she is not hindered by emotions. And Lucy has a very hard time coping with life, because she has a "troubled mind", an unduly alert subjectivity which keeps her from functioning effectively in practical life.

As we can see, a subtle division has taken place between the realm of active life and the life of the mind. While Crusoe translates his thoughts directly into action, thereby externalizing his subjectivity, modern subjects are confronted with a societal reality which resists this sort of direct externalization of subjectivity. The ideology of a now more entrenched capitalist system has been successful in splitting off the development of inwardness from the development of entrepreneurial abilities to create a *homo economicus* for its economic system who will function successfully, but who will not endanger the system by showing excessive mental independence. Graham Bretton is a case in point. Graham is "a man of luck - a man of success... Because he had the eye to see his opportunity... and no tyrant-passion dragged him back;" (405). Yet while he seems strong and independent enough on the surface, his judgment of Vashti as a woman, not an artist, and his consistent misconception of Lucy, show him to be limited by his ideologized perceptions of others, in particular of women. He does not have the strength of mind, nor the will, to think beyond the limits of ideology.
Lucy's attraction to Graham is the not uncommon story of the fascination of a very complex, troubled personality with her uncomplicated opposite. Lucy's relationship with M. Paul, however, is a more mature love which develops gradually between two people who are, at bottom, very much alike and must learn to accept themselves in accepting the other. In M. Paul, Lucy has found her equal in emotional power and depth of feeling. Like Lucy, he, too is unconventional, capable of living his life without general approval, and like her, he has a strong sense of personal dignity. Like Lucy, he is capable of unswerving devotion and loyalty, as is shown in his dutiful support of his dead fiancee's relatives. If Graham sees in Lucy "a being inoffensive as a shadow", M. Paul chides her for her "flamboyance"—the pink dress she wore at the concert with the Brettons, the bit of lace, the ribbon she put on as a concession to Louisa Bretton. At the same time, M. Paul himself loves bright colors and is pleased as a child with the colorful, beaded watchguard and the mother-of-pearl box Lucy gives him on his nameday. Nevertheless, he criticizes her for her "vanity", and, in the same breath, goes on to chide her obstinacy and her English "impious scepticism" (428). M. Paul is a man of contradictory impulses, angry and passionate when he feels rejected, but generous and forgiving when he knows he is being relied upon and trusted. The "little man" has passions as violent as a force of nature, and his outbursts of anger are feared throughout the pensionnat. At first, Lucy finds him "spiteful, acrid,
savage; and, as a natural consequence, detestably ugly" (428); but soon, Lucy sees right through him and knows that, in reality he is a gentle soul who could never harm anyone.

There is one aspect of his nature, however, that does cause continued conflict: M. Paul's love of power.

To pursue a somewhat audacious parallel, in a love of power, in an eager grasp after supremacy M. Emanuel was like Bonaparte. He was a man not always to be submitted to. Sometimes it was needful to resist; it was right to stand still, to look up into his eyes and tell him that his requirements went beyond reason - that his absolutism verged on tyranny. (438)

A typical example of his "tyranny" are his efforts at tutoring Lucy in arithmetics, patiently at first, while her own powers are still feeble, but criticizing her severely as soon as she finds joy in her work. He accuses her of keeping her presumed knowledge of ancient languages and of algebra a secret, merely to mock him, and assures her that she needs "so much checking, regulating, and keeping down." (452). In particular, he is dismayed at her "pride of intellect" and her striving for "unfeminine knowledge" (440). Lucy responds by redoubling her efforts.

Whatever my powers - feminine or the contrary - God had given them, and I felt resolute to be ashamed of no faculty of His bestowal. (440)

The struggle between M. Paul and Lucy boils down to a power struggle between the sexes. M. Paul does not know where to place Lucy: the women he knows are either false and full of self-interest, like Madame Beck and Zelie, the teacher; or they are coquettes, like
Ginevra and most of her schoolmates; or they are silly, simple-minded creatures living in mortal fear of him, like Rosine, the housemaid. No matter how hard he tries, he cannot reduce Lucy to either one of those familiar types of women. She is different. She is honest, proud, and trustworthy; she is not at all afraid of him. She thinks like a man, and she generally considers herself his equal. It is little wonder that the appearance of such a woman takes some adjusting to for a volatile, autocratic little man in the 19th century.

It may have surprised some readers that Lucy is putting up a struggle at all. Would it not be more in line with her character to continue her strategy of dissimulation and to let M. Paul assume that she is merely a meek little woman? It has been said above that Lucy keeps herself "unreadable" to protect herself, but her deepest wish is to be "read" by someone. In M. Paul she has recognized a person great enough to do it. She feels that he has the power to see right through her, to read her face as he did on the day of her arrival at the school. Thus, it is only to M. Paul that Lucy opens up and shows at least part of her passionate and proud nature. One could argue that M. Paul's ideological preconceptions about the role of women are at least as limiting as those of Graham and that it is surprising that Lucy prefers the ugly little professor to the handsome young doctor. But with Graham, Lucy would not even have had a "fighting" chance. He simply cannot understand the depth and complexity of her character. When she is troubled, he advises her to cultivate happiness and a cheerful mind (330), and he simply cannot help seeing others only in
his terms. To make matters worse, he is considered a nearly "ideal" young man: he is kind, a good son, a gentle husband, a successful doctor, a sensible, practical person. He is a conscious of being a gentleman-businessman, the ideal creation of his age and society. On the surface, it is hard to find fault with him, and Lucy would have had a hard time accounting for what it is that is lacking in him. A partnership of equals would be quite impossible with him. With M. Paul, Lucy has no such problems. He is by no means perfect. His faults are right at the surface: his volatility, his tremendous passions, his little jealousies and intrigues—in short, he is a fallible human being, but with him Lucy at least has the chance of struggling to resolve conflicts. He knows suffering and loneliness as she does, and shares her depth of feeling. In spite of his vehemence and his attempts to subdue Lucy, he is capable of pulling back and giving her space. He is strong and independent enough to question ideological assumptions and to reverse his judgment once he has seen their falseness.

"Whatever say priests or controversialists," murmured M. Emanuel, "God is good, and loves all the sincere. Believe, then, what you can; believe it as you can; one prayer, at least, we have in common; (517)

There are the beginnings of a constructive compromising in the novel, which would allow both partners to maintain separate and independent subjectivities. He is willing to listen, and to try to understand. One example of this mutual respect for the other's subjectivity is M. Paul's acceptance of Lucy's protestantism. He
gives up his attempts to convert Lucy to Catholicism after reexamining and throwing aside the ideological tenet that there is only one way to serve and adore God.

Adherent to his own religion (in him was not the stuff of which is made the facile apostate), he freely left me my pure faith. He did not tease nor tempt. He said: - 'Remain a Protestant. My little English Puritan, I love Protestantism in you. I own its severe charm. There is something in its ritual I cannot receive myself, but it is the sole creed for 'Lucy'". (595)

With Lucy and M. Paul, Bronte has created a couple where both partners are willing to listen to and to learn from each other. While their relationship is not without conflicts and points of friction, it is a relationship in which both could grow. It comes as a shock, in view of this favorable "set-up", that Bronte chose not to write this novel with a conventional "happy ending". It is known that Villette contains a great deal of autobiographical material. Charlotte Bronte had studied and taught at the school of Mme. and M. Heger in Brussels, Belgium and there she had contracted a hopeless infatuation with M. Heger, who became the model for M. Paul. In the story of Lucy Snowe, Bronte reenacts her own sense of existential loneliness and alienation, and her longing for the possibility of a love-relationship of equals, which might bridge the gap between individuals while allowing both to maintain their selfhoods.

In Villette it is M. Paul to whom Lucy owes her institution as the directrice of her own school. He provides the starting capital, rents and sets up the house for her, thus laying the foundation for Lucy's economic independence and her entrepreneurial career. Lucy spends the
three years of his absence working hard, increasing the starting capital, investing money and enlarging the school. In fact, Lucy, who sees herself as M. Paul's faithful steward, has become quite the entrepreneur. In her narrative, she calls these years of hard work and of hope for a common future with M. Paul the happiest years of her life. Charlotte Bronte chose not to leave the reader with the image of a happily married Lucy.

One must assume that Bronte, perhaps from personal experience, has no confidence in the feasibility of a marriage of equals. Sooner or later, would not Lucy have to give up her independent subjectivity and submit to M. Paul? There are indications that Lucy could very easily fall into a more traditional, subservient wifely role, for example when she says about M. Paul "He was my king; royal had been that hand's bounty; to offer homage was both a joy and a duty." (587). On the other hand, it is quite paranoid to suspect the relinquishing of independence in every expression of gratitude and love. Bronte engineers the rather contrived shipwreck as the abrupt and melodramatic solution to the dilemma of isolation versus the risk of the loss of an independent subjectivity if Lucy lets herself be known by someone as she really is.

There are few novels which communicate to the reader the loneliness of the critical subject with such poignancy and haunting intensity as Bronte's *Villette*. Human loneliness is shown to be no longer an exceptional condition, or the consequence of having suffered shipwreck on a deserted island. Instead, it is an inescapable
historical fate for all those who have a strong sense of selfhood in capitalist societies. "Loneliness is felt . . . as a condition in life." (Craik 171). Lucy's loneliness in Belgium is only in part the result of her being a foreigner, for she was just as lonely in England, and she is lonely even among her friends in Villette. Thus, her isolation is to be read as a physical representation of the psychological alienation of the critical individual in 19th century capitalist societies.

Endnotes

1) In Madame Beck, Bronte creates a minor character whose subjectivity is entirely ideologized. Her Dickensian grotesqueness is at times almost funny, but Bronte never lets the reader forget that there is a "deadness" at the center of her personality which is the result of her lack of an inwardness.

2) Historically, it has been true that working class and lower middle class women who had to earn their own living were the first women to benefit from the newfound sense of freedom of being a wage earner. On the other hand, it is obvious that their unprotected position and the fact that they have no choice about working has given the employers carte blanche for the ruthless exploitation of these female employees. But there is no doubt that women's participation in the economy has given them a power base which, for the first time in history, has made it possible for them to gain a degree of freedom.
It is still true, as Virginia Woolf wrote in her essay "A Room of One's Own", that "a woman must have money and a room of her own..."—not only to write fiction, but also to develop and maintain an independent subjectivity. Economic activity, therefore, is a crucial step towards actual economic and emotional independence.

3) Potentially, this new standard can have revolutionary consequences for society: it is no longer decisive who one's parents were—instead, people are judged by who they are as individuals and by what they manage to do with their abilities. This could mean that class distinctions become irrelevant and eventually vanish; it could mean that society judges individuals by their ethical worth instead of their family trees. This possibility is visible in the democratic ideals Lucy—the Englishwoman—brings with her to the continent. She lauds Madame Beck's school for its republicanism, which enables aristocratic and bourgeois girls to study together, but her sympathies are clearly on the side of the bourgeoisie, when she emphasizes that the young aristocratic ladies are often lazy, stupid, and misbehaved. These democratic sympathies are even more evident in her disgust with Ginevra's snubbing of the bourgeois suitor, Dr. John, and her unshakeable resolution to marry an aristocrat, however flighty and superficial he may be. The gallant young aristocrat De Hamal is lambasted by Lucy as being an effeminate little dandy, while Dr. John is an honest, serious man of deep feeling and unswerving loyalty. All of these positive qualities are "inner achievements" which are independent of economic or class background, and to some degree these
standards did gain a certain importance in determining human value. But for the most part, what resulted from this focus on the individual and subjectivity was not a more equal society, but one dominated by money.

Success and the worthiness of human beings are increasingly defined as worldly success in monetary terms. In reality, therefore, human beings are merely judged by their ability to translate the originally iconoclastic models of thought and behavior which are characteristic of the new subjectivity into economic success. Capitalism has employed ideology to control a potentially revolutionary development of subjectivity. As a result, the revolutionary potential of subjectivity is eroded and subjectivity is left with the role of a mere handmaid to an economic system which needs dynamic self-made men.

The gradual liberation from the confines of class and pedigree was a revolutionary development in itself, but it needs to be seen in a historical and ideological context. In the late 18th century, the aristocracy had left its best days behind. While aristocrats were still prominent in directing the political fate of England, the economically much more powerful bourgeoisies was demanding its fair share of political power, and in France it seized power in the 1789 and 1848 revolutions. It was obvious that political power could no longer be based on birth and inherited wealth, but that it would henceforth be based on the economic success of the individual, regardless of his birth. But aside from securing a tremendous amount
of power for its proponents, capitalism had thus achieved another aim: each individual is judged for himself and by himself, much like Christ is said to judge the sinners on Judgment Day. Society is thus split up into its smallest units. Everyone has to struggle for oneself, and a sense of solidarity (as it used to exist among members of the peasantry and the aristocracy in precapitalist ages) is destroyed its root. Society has become atomized, and what can be seen as a liberation on the one hand can also be seen as a means of control on the other.

4) In a very concrete sense, the figure of the governess or the teacher is the female literary prototype of the new capitalist subjectivity. The governess is frequently chosen as a narrator because she is educated and is therefore more likely to be of a reflective cast and to have a well developed inwardness. Like the entrepreneur who does not accept class limits, the governess moves in and out of social classes, while not being part of any social class. Often superior to her rich employers in education and a gentlewoman by inner refinement, the governess holds an inferior position in 19th century society. Separated from both her employers and the other domestics by her class and education, she is isolated and powerless, thrown back upon her own resources and frequently reduced to living her life within her own mind, as does Lucy in Mme. Beck's establishment. Living with her employer's family on intimate terms, yet separated from them by her lowly position, the governess has
unique insight into the life of the upper classes, and her precarious position gives her the acute vision and the distance which makes her a prime candidate for the narrator of a novel.

5) "Nature" is always a problematic term which is easily used as a synonym for "the world as we find it" (i.e., the world as ideology would like us to view it). From a Marxist perspective there is no purely "natural" state of being. What is perceived as natural is always already historical and ideological.

6) I owe much of my line of reasoning on this subject to an informal presentation by Audrey Jaffe in Professor Julian Markels' seminar on February 15, 1988 in Columbus, Ohio on "Charlotte Bronte and the Narrative of Identification."
It has been argued by several critics that Dickens's novel *Bleak House* is in fact a "double novel", because of its intricate narrative structure (Zabel 336). Viewing it as a "double" novel, however, involves a severely reductive reading. By artificially splitting the two narrators and viewing *Bleak House* as a dual narrative, the critic pricks apart the structural unity of the novel, missing the fact that the two narrators in fact contribute to form a novelistic totality which is greater than the sum of its two parts. In other words, the omniscient narrator and Esther Summerson are not competitive voices struggling for hegemony. Instead, these two voices create a constructive tension; they are antithetic voices generating a complex dialectic. The voices of the two narrators are as necessary to each other as two voices in a duet. Of course, one could listen to each voice on its own, but it is the harmony of both which constitutes the artistic whole. *Bleak House* is being produced through the constructive conflict between the two narrators.

Fredric Jameson argues in *The Political Unconscious* that the novel as a genre is not a unified form. Instead, it is characterized by its "marbled structure" which contains generic discontinuities, uniting or
harmonizing "heterogeneous narrative paradigms which have their own specific and contradictory ideological meaning." (144) *Bleak House* is a case in point. The novel consists of two storylines reflecting two different genres which are skillfully connected through a few characters who move in the world of both storylines. The first storyline is, for the most part, a satirical narrative focusing around the Jarndyce lawsuit. It is largely told by the omniscient narrator and contains many of the socially critical passages which are characteristic of the omniscient narrator. Esther's narrative makes up the second storyline; it is a true romance, complete with unsure parentage, secret love, renunciation, crisis, happy ending and all.

The obvious question for this study is, of course, what the complex structure of this novel can show us about the conditions under which inwardness can be developed, historically in Dickens' time, and within the novel. In analyzing *Villette*, we have focused almost entirely on the subjectivity of the characters within the novel. In analyzing *Bleak House*, the focus will be on the form and structure of the novel and on the conclusions this allows us to draw about the subjectivity of the author himself. The structural complexity of *Bleak House* will be read as a strategy for coping with the pressures of ideology in literature, as a bourgeois writer's attempt to work out the dynamics of inwardness in Victorian England for the reader.

Jameson writes that:

Genres are essentially literary institutions, or social contracts between a writer and a specific public, whose function is to specify the proper use of a particular cultural artifact. (106)
Every literary form is a response to a specific set of historical circumstances that need to be expressed and contained by literature. Thus, an analysis of literary form can yield both the historical pressures which created the form and the ideological message which the form contains. While every literary genre has its origin in a specific set of historical circumstances, it may survive for a long time after the original historical situation has changed, but it still carries the same ideological message which brought it about. Literary genres are not merely empty vessels which can be used at will; just like a gold coin is valuable in and of itself, independently of its denomination, literary forms convey ideological messages through their very structure, and in addition to the content which may fill the form. Esther's romance in Bleak House is a case in point.

Since Esther's story fully takes shape as a romance only after the foregrounded storyline around the Jarndyce lawsuit begins to collapse, I would like to add a few observations about the function of the lawsuit within the novel before turning to an analysis of Esther's story as a romance. Like a Derridean "absolute signifier", the meaning and significance of everything within the web of the novel is defined in relation to the interminable lawsuit. The lawsuit becomes the constituting structure of the lives of those involved in it. Richard and Ada are the "wards in Jarndyce", Miss Flite and the Shropshire man are caricatures of human beings, whose subjectivities have been depleted by the madness of the lawsuit. Guppy is a magnificent representative of the ambitious, bombastic and utterly
ridiculous legal clerk who takes his imaginary splendor from the even more imaginary dignity of the law. Their attitudes to the lawsuit and its procedures define and determine the inwardness of all the characters. Richard Carstone and Miss Flite are waiting for "The Judgment" as Estragon and Vladimir are waiting for Godot. However, the attentive reader soon realizes that it is not so much the end result that constitutes the lawsuit's inescapable allure as the fact that it offers to them a new, tangible center upon which to focus their hopes and expectations. The Judgment becomes the "absent cause" of Richard's life, the "absolute signifier" hovering en abysme of a nothingness at the core of society that makes itself felt more and more. Like any powerful ideology, the lawsuit and its proceedings create a center from which to reinterpret the entire world. Richard, for example, begins to view his friends differently as he becomes more and more entangled in the lawsuit. He views others from the point of view of their possible interests in it and is convinced that his new understanding of legal intricacies has opened his eyes to the "true" nature of people and their relationships. Thus, he now suspects even his benevolent and generous guardian of scheming against him. In short, everything in the novel, is centered around the Jarndyce lawsuit. Even Esther and her guardian cannot escape the lawsuit, if only in negating its importance and shunning everything to do with it. When its utter meaninglessness is revealed in the end, as stacks of files, records, motions and petitions are being piled up and
burned, and as it becomes clear that the cause of contention, the Jarndyce estate, has long since been whittled away by legal expenses, the entire relational structure breaks down and reveals the nothingness at the core: the meaningless absolute signifier from which the novel defines its entire value structure. More significantly, however, the exposure of the absurdity of legal procedures constitutes an acrid condemnation of bourgeois laws and morality and epitomizes the omniscient narrator's radical critique of bourgeois society.

What is left after this major plotline of the novel has thus collapsed is a romance: the love story of Esther and Woodcourt, which finds its fairytale conclusion in a removed Yorkshire cottage far from the bustling life of Victorian London.

An analysis of the romance storyline leads, of necessity, to a closer inspection of the ideological function of the two narrators. Esther's narrative makes up a large part of the romance storyline, although several crucial chapters ("A Wintry Day and Night", "Steel and Iron", "Down in Lincolnshire") are told by the third-person narrator, and although Esther tells us about some important developments in the lawsuit. In the main, however, Esther's story has to do with her daily cares for her guardian, Ada, Richard, and the Jellyby lot, and with the mystery theme of her true parentage. Like Lucy Snowe, Esther is a young woman without a place in society, and like her she expects to have to earn her living as a governess.

It was understood that I would have to depend, by and by, on my qualifications as a governess; (24)
But Lucy Snowe's and Esther's situations differ in that Esther has John Jarndyce for her guardian, which makes it unnecessary for her to earn her living among strangers. As a result, the contradictions of her social position never fully come to bear upon her. However, it has been exactly this necessity to participate in the economy and to "stand on her own two feet" which has sparked the formation of Lucy's independent subjectivity. The tension between Lucy's mind and reality, her inner life and her external social position, created a contested inner space, where the battle of critical reflection against ideology is carried out. Esther does not need to struggle for an independent subjectivity in order to secure economic survival. As a result, Esther's subjectivity is a much less tormented, but also a much less interesting one than Lucy Snowe's. This is not to say, of course, that Esther is a "flat" character in E.M. Forster's sense. As a matter of fact, Esther has a great deal of inner depth, perceptiveness, and feeling. In the opening lines of her narrative Esther describes herself in the following manner:

I have a great deal of difficulty in beginning to write my portion of these pages, for I know I am not clever. . . . I had always rather a noticing way – not a quick way, O no! – a silent way of noticing what passed before me, and thinking I should like to understand it better. I have not by any means a quick understanding. When I love a person very tenderly indeed, it seems to brighten. But even that may be vanity. (14)

This description is reminiscent of Bronte's Paulina, whose ability to intuit other people's feelings grows into an almost uncanny tendency to read the minds of those she loves. Esther's inwardness resembles Paulina's much more closely than it does Lucy's; for like
Paulina, Esther lives a genteel, protected life. Her modesty, her honesty, her naive, intuitive intelligence are all aimed to make her a loveable, trustworthy character, an intention which is underscored by her simple, direct, unaffected narrative style and her childlike paratactic sentence structure. Esther's is not a quick, rational cleverness. She does not comprehend the "mechanics" of her age. Because of the limitations of her knowledge and understanding of her own society, she can not give the reader a comprehensive vision of the world around her. But not only is Esther unable to give us an accurate picture of her time, she is also trying to keep the reader from forming an accurate picture of herself: like Lucy Snowe, Esther is an unreliable narrator. In a character calculated to inspire trust and confidence, this is a surprising twist.

Her most blatant "emotional embezzlement" is, as in Lucy Snowe's case, her dissimulation of her growing love for Woodcourt. Esther's course of deception begins with Woodcourt's first appearance at the Jarndyce dinner table, which is nearly entirely repressed by her.

I have omitted to mention in its place, that there was some one else at the family dinner party. It was not a lady. It was a gentleman. It was a gentleman of a dark complexion - a young surgeon. He was rather reserved, but I thought him very sensible and agreeable. At least, Ada asked me if I did not, and I said yes. (168)

It is evident that, by mentioning the appearance of a new character in such an obviously downplayed, post scriptum manner, Esther gives Woodcourt additional significance. From this point on, Esther's feeling for Woodcourt becomes a kind of "absent center", around which all issues pertaining to her reorder themselves. In a
sense, Esther's embezzlement of the truth about Woodcourt is a little game she plays with the reader, for one soon begins to suspect the unspoken truth. As a result, the reader is not deceived at all, but is playing along with Esther, humoring the self-deceived and deceiving narrator, while forgiving her this little deception all the while. In fact, Dickens wants his narrator to be "found out", for he wants her to be trustworthy, and he plants enough red herrings that a reader would have to be quite dense if she didn't notice what is going on: for example, Esther adds another post scriptum to the chapter entitled "Deportment", obviously having "forgotten" to mention that Woodcourt had been at Bleak House for dinner, and when Esther receives her guardian's letter and accepts his proposal of marriage, she reacts in a way that is only understandable if she is renouncing a prior attachment:

Still I cried very much; not only in the fullness of my heart after reading the letter, not only in the strangeness of the prospect - for it was strange though I had expected the contents - but as if something for which there was no name of distinct idea were indefinitely lost to me. I was very happy, very, thankful, very hopeful; but I cried very much. (568)

By juxtaposing Esther's professed happiness about her prospective marriage to her guardian, and her tears, which are clearly shed for her renunciation of a passionate love relationship with Woodcourt, Dickens exposes the blatant contradiction between Esther's words and her emotional reality. He shows us Esther's yearning for romantic love, like that of Richard and Ada, when she kisses the withered flowers Woodcourt sent her after his departure for India and then has
her insist "I thought about her [Ada's] love for Richard; though, indeed, the flowers had nothing to do with that" (569). Thus, Esther's true feelings are so constantly hinted at that (unlike Lucy Snowe) she can deceive no one even for a moment. What is more, after Esther has lost her "old face" as a result of the smallpox, she eventually confides in the reader and tells us about her secret feelings for Woodcourt:

And now I must part with the little secret I have thus far tried to keep. I had thought, sometimes, that Mr. Woodcourt loved me; and that if he had been richer, he would perhaps have told me that he loved me, before he went away. I had thought, sometimes, that if he had done so, I should have been glad of it. But, how much better it was now, that this had never happened! (466)

After this confession, and halfway through the novel, the "air is cleared" between Esther and the reader. She has nothing else to conceal. Esther embezzles information with respect to Woodcourt only; thus, her elisions are predictable and "localized". Lucy, on the other hand, is forced to hide her vulnerability at all times. Her elisions are far-reaching and "systemic", affecting the entire world of the novel. And while Lucy Snowe's elisions come out of the ideological contradiction of her powerlessness, as a woman, a foreigner, and a poor orphan in an ideologically hostile environment, Esther's deception is founded in her inability to accept Woodcourt's love for what it is until she has resolved the issue of her illegitimate birth and the resulting social stigma. In effect, Esther must gain a sense of self-worth before she can tell the truth about
her feelings. The "loss of face" she has suffered socially since her birth, finds its physical concretization through her infection with smallpox.

It is no coincidence that Esther falls ill shortly after her first interview with her mother, whose face is to her "like a broken glass" (232). Esther, who is determined to be kind-hearted and to "do some good to some one" (17), is distressed at the knowledge that she may be the involuntary undoing of her mother. Once again, just as it was in her loveless childhood, her entire existence is thrown into question. Thus, her illness, as a result of which she actually loses her "old" face, conveniently solves several of her problems: she no longer endangers Lady Dedlock through her resemblance, and she can now convince herself that Woodcourt's attentions to her are merely the expression of his pity for her. This strategy makes it easier for her to resign herself to a marriage of convenience and gratefulness to her guardian, instead of risking the treacherous paths of passionate love, which have led her mother to dishonor and death.

It is in Esther's descriptions of the fears and thoughts that moved her during her illness that the reader gets perhaps the best and most truthful insight into her inwardness. In particular, Esther's description of a frightening fever dream comes to mind here.

Dare I hint at that worse time when, strung together somewhere in great black space, there was a flaming necklace, or ring, or starry circle of some kind, of which I was one of the beads! And when my only prayer was to be taken off from the rest, and when it was such inexplicable agony and misery to be a part of the dreadful thing? (454)
Esther's illness is the concrete expression of an intense crisis of identity, which reaches far back into her childhood. Her godmother's, Miss Barbary's, words "Your mother, Esther, is your disgrace, and you were hers." (16) have come back to haunt her.

Knowing that my mere existence as a living creature was an unforeseen danger in her way, I could not always conquer that terror of myself which had seized me when I first knew the secret. (549)

Laid aside as dead at birth, Esther has clung tenaciously to life, that "starry circle", that "flaming necklace" of which she is a bead. Consumed with terror of herself, Esther wants to be released, to be taken off the string of life and history that unites all living things. Esther recovers, but she is changed. One must understand the depth of Esther's terror of herself to comprehend the strange sense of relief with which Esther accepts her altered face. Her resemblance to Lady Dedlock, which might have led to her exposure, is gone, and Esther's existence is no longer an immediate danger to her. Having been raised with the specter not only of not being wanted, but of bringing disgrace and unhappiness to those close to her through her very existence, it is important to Esther to prove this terrible prediction wrong. Her stern, loveless upbringing has instilled within her a fierce determination to try

as hard as ever I could, to repair the fault I had been born with (of which I confessedly felt guilty and yet innocent), and would strive as I grew up to be industrious, contented, and kind-hearted, and to do some good to some one, and win some love to myself if I could. (17)
Perhaps it is for this reason that Esther dwells with such obvious pleasure (and such unconvincing modesty) on the testimonials of love she receives from everyone she meets, starting with the old gardener and all her fellow students at Greenleaf, to the inhabitants of Bleak House, to the Jellybys and the brickmaker's battered wife. Whenever she is shown love in response to her own caring and tenderness, she immediately projects it back onto the giver, but it is clear that she revels in it and feeds on it like a butterfly feeds on nectar.

It was only their love for me, I know very well, and it is a long time ago. I must write it, even if I rub it out again, because it gives me so much pleasure. They said there could be no East wind where Somebody was; they said that wherever Dame Durden went, there was sunshine and summer air. (396)

With her sewing basket, her household ledgers, and invested with the dignity of her jingling household keys, Esther is the image of a veritable household Juno in a domestic Olympus. But when Esther strives to be a good housekeeper, a loving friend, a healer, and a mother to the motherless, it is not merely to satisfy the Victorian ideal of womanhood; to Esther, being loved and needed, making others happy and doing them good, is a reaffirmation of her right to exist.

A final comparison of Lucy's and Esther's struggle for inwardness shows that Esther's is not so much a struggle for economic survival as it is an internal struggle for the right to exist against a looming sense of unworthiness instilled in her by her zealous aunt. In comparison to Lucy's tormented and complex subjectivity, Esther's inwardness remains relatively uncomplicated. Esther's life is limited to a small circle of loving friends and acquaintances, and she does
not need to earn her living in the economy. As a result, perhaps, she does not need to harden herself to others to survive psychologically and physically. What is even more important, however, is that Esther simply is not as rationally critical of society as Lucy is from her vantage point as a remote observer, and, consequently, she has not evolved Lucy's critical subjectivity.

Dickens can "afford" to create Esther with a relatively untroubled inwardness, because the ideological conflict has been externalized into the second, omniscient narrator. In other words, while Lucy's mind provided the battleground of ideological contradictions in her struggle for subjectivity, these contradictions have been resolved by externalizing the split between a socially critical, ideologically conscious self (the omniscient narrator) and a relatively well-adjusted, humanistic (ideologized) self. The struggle for subjectivity has shifted from an internal struggle into a struggle between different narrative voices. Dickens anticipates here a development which is to come to full fruition in the novels of the 20th century: these novels reflect an inner reality so fragmented and torn by the pressure of ideology that it has become impossible to contain it within the mind of one narrator. By spreading the ideological conflict out among several characters, the novelist externalizes it, creating a relational structure of inner space which reflects the contradictory inwardness of the author and his time.

With reference to Bakhtin's analysis of the novel in The Dialogic Imagination as a "microcosm of heteroglossia" and a "field of
ideological contention" (263), Esther's narrative must be viewed as interacting dialectically with the omniscient narrator's voice. For the sake of analysis, however, both narratives will be treated as if they were separate entities. In effect, we will be reading each part of the duet separately, in order to observe more clearly what changes are effected by the dialectical interaction of both voices within the novel. The omniscient narrator does not appear as a character in the novel. He (the masculine pronoun is used for convenience of reference, and because both narrators represent ideological aspects of Dickens' inwardness) is a disembodied voice, which is therefore not limited to a specific arena of activity. Unlike Esther, who is limited by her class position and by her sex, the omniscient narrator has insight into all strata of society: he knows the Dedlock estate just as he knows Tulkinghorn's town house and the wretched conditions in Tom-All-Alone's. His is an unsparingly critical and censorious voice. He speaks in the present tense, which gives his voice a quality of immediacy and timeless truthfulness—even as he is most specifically historical. The omniscient narrator has moments of supreme clear-sightedness, and the courage to speak out about what he sees, for example when he criticizes the class differences which make a sham out of England's democratic ideals.

A People there are, no doubt — a certain large number of supernumeraries, who are to be occasionally addressed, and relied upon for shouts and choruses, as on the theatrical stage; but Boodle and Buffy, their followers and families, their heirs, executors, administrators, and assigns, are the born first-actors, managers, and leaders, and no others can appear upon the scene for ever and ever. (150)
Unlike Esther, this narrator does not qualify his statements: he sets them down like bedrock, with all the hard edges, and without trying to be "just" and understanding. However, this does not mean that he is unfeeling—on the contrary: his voice is often informed by a deeply felt compassion, its harshness a result merely of his outrage about the injustice and inhumanity he observes. He is often intensely critical of society, ridiculing and satirizing it with an acerbity that is sometimes almost frightening in its intensity. On Nemo's death, for example, he lashes out at the bigotry of society in the following manner:

Into a beastly scrap of ground which a Turk would reject as a savage abomination, and a Caffre would shudder at, they bring our dear brother here departed, to receive Christian burial. With houses looking on, on every side, save where a reeking little tunnel of a court gives access to the iron gate— with every villainy of life in action close to death, and every poisonous element of death in action close on life—here, they lower our dear brother down a foot or two: here, sow him in corruption, to be raised in corruption: an avenging ghost at many a sick-bedside: a shameful testimony to future ages, how civilization and barbarism walked this boastful island together. (141)

Dickens has been called a "radical moralist" by several critics, and it seems to me that that is a correct assessment of Dickens's politics. Dickens is certainly very far from being a political radical, but what he does possess in a marvellous degree is a deep, moral sensibility which sensitizes him to the social misery caused by the political and economic structure of the empire and which engenders a kind of "radical humanism". As Orwell puts it in his analysis of Dickens' *Hard Times*,
There is not a line in the book that can properly be called Socialistic; indeed, its tendency if anything is pro-capitalist, because its whole moral is that capitalists ought to be kind, not that workers ought to be rebellious. (6)

In *Bleak House* the omniscient narrator expresses Dickens' disillusionment with a legal system which makes a sham out of the ideal of justice. The legal profession is portrayed as quibbling over details, wasting money and clients' lives over meaningless formalities. The law has turned into a self-perpetuating machinery in which justice is no longer the goal. The true goal is "generating business" for those in the legal profession.

The one great principle of the English law is to make business for itself. (509)

Dickens feels that the greed of individuals has perverted what was once a beneficial system of impartial justice. What he cannot see is that these individuals embody nothing else but the very essence of the capitalist ideology, and that the law is the reticule of that ideology. In other words, in every society the law is created to protect the values of this society. In a capitalist society, property and profit are central values. As a result, the legal process is not "infected" with the idea of greed, it embodies it. Its disregard for the Gridley's and Miss Flite's of this world is not a perversion, it is the result of its functioning as a vehicle of those in power.

But again, in spite of his chiding criticism of the legal and political systems, Dickens never really demands the overthrow of the given social and political system. In spite of his interminable sarcastic attacks on Lord Boodle, Foodle, and Doodle, Dickens is
amazingly easily reconciled with society as it is, as soon as the
Jarndyce case is resolved and Esther's and Woodcourt's romance has
found its long expected happy ending. In every institution, Dickens
criticizes not the systemic faults but the individuals who, as he sees
it, have perverted them. Mr. Gridley, the Shropshire Man, utters
this conviction explicitly:

"There again!", said Mr. Gridley, with no diminution of
his rage. "The system! I am told, on all hands, it's
the system. I mustn't go into Court, and say, 'My Lord,
I beg to know this from you - is this right or wrong?
Have you the face to tell me I have received justice,
and therefore am dismissed?' My Lord knows nothing of
it. He sits there, to administer the system. I mustn't
go to Mr. Tulkinghorn, the solicitor in Lincoln's Inn
Fields, and say to him when he makes me furious, by
being so cool and satisfied - as they all do; for I know
they gain by it while I lose, don't I? - I mustn't say
to him, I will have something out of some one for my
ruin, by fair means or by foul! He is not responsible.
It's the system. But, if I do no violence to any of
them, here - I may! I don't know what may happen if I am
carried beyond myself at last! - I will accuse the
individual workers of that system against me, face to
face, before the great eternal bar!" (200)

This impassioned accusation of the individual working within and
for the system is, ironically, simultaneously more and less radical
than an accusation of the system itself. It is less radical, because
it reaffirms the validity of the system by blaming the individual's
greed for its failure. And it is more radical, because the individual
is held responsible for the system of which he is a part. However, it
is not clear whether Dickens has in fact recognized that the
inhumanity and injustice of contemporary society are structural.
Especially in view of the novel's happy endings on almost every level,
one is tempted to answer this question negatively.
Further support for viewing Dickens as a radical moralist (rather than a writer of radical political convictions) is to be found in his use of romantic elements not only in Esther's narrative, but also in the omniscient narrator's storyline. Their function within this generally more "critical" narrative is to temper the acerbity of the omniscient narrator's criticism of existing social structures and to safely "contain" the radical conclusions that could otherwise be drawn from this critical analysis.

Dickens' "romantic" tendencies are particularly obvious in his treatment of class relationships, specifically in the relationship of the Dedlock family with the Rouncewell's. According to Jameson, the romance is a genre which is resurrected in transitional situations in which two distinct modes of production coexist.

Their antagonism is not yet articulated in terms of the struggle of social classes, so that its resolution can be projected in the form of a nostalgic (or less often, a Utopian) harmony. Our principal experience of such transitional moments is evidently that of an organic social order in the process of penetration and subversion, reorganization and rationalization, by nascent capitalism, yet still, for another long moment, coexisting with the latter. (148)

In *Bleak House*, the uneasy coexistence of remnants of the feudal with the nascent capitalist society are poignantly shown in the interaction of the Rouncewell and the Dedlock families. Mrs. Rouncewell, supported by her formidable stays, is the epitome of the faithful housekeeper to the aristocratic family of the Dedlocks. She is a figure who would not have been out of place in a novel on feudal England. But her older son, the Ironmaster, is the central figure of
the Victorian age: the self-made man. Through hard work, Rouncewell has become a powerful mill-owner. He is well-respected, and, to the dismay of Sir Leicester and company, he is even running for parliament, which is interpreted by Sir Leicester as a sure sign of the decline of the empire.

Dickens opposes the fullness and activity of the bourgeois entrepreneur's life to the paralysis and entropy of aristocratic life. The Ironmaster, on the other hand, is portrayed as the true embodiment of the spirit of the new age. In his interview with the Dedlocks on behalf of his son and Rosa, he is impeccably polite, but he knows his own value exactly and never grovels. He is shown to be a man of unquestionable merit and integrity, and he shocks Sir Leicester by explaining to Lady Dedlock that the class structure of society is shifting and changing and that Rosa may indeed have things to learn that she was not taught at the Dedlock-sponsored village school. Dickens takes this opportunity to present to his readers a textbook example of the philosophy of the new industrial bourgeoisie and the disquieting implications it has for the gentry:

"I have been" proceeds the visitor, in a modest and clear way, "an apprentice, and a workman. I have lived on workman's wages, years and years, and beyond a certain point have had to educate myself. My wife was a foreman's daughter, and plainly brought up. We have three daughters, besides this son of whom I have spoken; and being fortunately able to give them greater advantages than we have had ourselves, we have educated them well; very well. It has been one of our great cares and pleasures to make them worthy of any station. . . . From the village school of Chesney Wold, intact as it is this minute, to the whole framework of society; from the whole framework of society, to the aforesaid framework receiving tremendous cracks in consequence of
people (ironmasters, leadmistresses, and what not) not minding their catechism, and getting out of the station unto which they are called, — necessarily and for ever, according to Sir Leicester's rapid logic, the first station in which they happen to find themselves; and from that, to their educating other people out of their stations, and so obliterating the landmarks, and opening the floodgates, and all the rest of it; this is the swift progress of the Dedlock mind. (369-370)

Education, if defined in a practical sense as an education with a view to making a living in the modern world, is an entirely foreign and inherently threatening concept to Sir Leicester. It is even more so when education is bestowed upon women as well as men, and if it becomes the springboard—as it invariably does—for social mobility. Sir Leicester perceives correctly that this will indeed explode the foundations of the society he knew.

It is quite obvious, in the "Ironmaster" and "Steel and Iron" chapters of the novel, that Dickens's omniscient narrator is entirely on the side of the Ironmaster and the new age when it comes to the acknowledgment of the social evil of a paralyzed aristocracy and of rigid class barriers. On an emotional level, however, one feels a lack of connection between the Ironmaster and the narrator, while there is an almost tender undertone in the portrayal of Sir Leicester, an impression which is borne out by Dickens's moral elevation of this character during the crisis of Lady Dedlock's exposure. Sir Leicester is portrayed as being governed by the past: already old and infirm at the opening of the novel, his life has been entirely dedicated to representing the Dedlocks of the past and to protecting the "family honor". There is nothing original about Sir Leicester; he is merely
an extension into the present of the Dedlocks that have gone before him. Even his illness is the inherited family gout. Yet he gains almost tragic stature through his un faltering love and loyalty to Lady Dedlock—which perhaps constitutes his first authentic moral act independent of concerns for the family name and the family honor.

Dickens portrays Sir Leicester as a man who deeply distrusts change; he is suspicious of new ideas: he does not read books, for example, because he already has set opinions and is not about to change them. Even his taste in art is determined and bounded by his family collection of paintings. There is about him a pervading sense of stagnation and inflexibility, an impression which is reenforced by Dickens' descriptions of Chesney Wold and its inhabitants. Images evoking death and decay abound:

Around and around the house the leaves fall thick—but never fast, for they come circling down with a dead lightness that is sombre and slow. Let the gardener sweep and sweep the turf as he will, and press the leaves into full barrows, and wheel them off, still they lie ankle-deep. Howls the shrill wind round Chesney Wold; the sharp rain beats, the windows rattle, and the chimneys growl. Mists hide in the avenues, veil the points of view, and move in funeral-wise across the rising grounds. On all the house there is a cold, blank smell, like the smell of a little church, though something dryer: suggesting that the dead and buried Dedlocks walk there, in the long nights, and leave the flavour of their graves behind them. (373)

There is a leaden heaviness and fatigue about the prose devoted to the old Lincolnshire manor house, and the conspicuous focus on fires and light in the Chesney Wold sections strenghtens the impression that Sir Leicester and his coterie are constantly trying to ward off the cold and to keep it from creeping into their bones. It is further evident
from the narrator's satirical rendering of the Chesney Wold circle's views on contemporary politics that he considers the aristocracy to be a superannuated institution. Volumnia and the decrepit and impoverished cousins around Sir Leicester are particular targets of Dickens' ridicule. Volumnia's misplaced vanity, her affected coyness and flirtatiousness, the old cousin's mumbling debility and Lady Dedlock's morbid boredom are shown to be the result of the aristocratic lifestyle's fatal remoteness from the historical flow of life: Chesney Wold and its inhabitants are a world of the past which is rapidly decaying and declining. Dickens succeeds in creating the eerie sense of a house and a way of life which have outlasted its time and are now doomed to exist in a kind of twilight zone of history. Already half covered with the steadily falling leaves, veiled in the mists of time, its outward solidity is assailed by the unflagging steps on the walk, like a ghastly clock keeping time, reminding the Dedlocks that their time in history is coming to a close.4

Evidently, while Dickens rejects the aristocracy as a class, a certain nostalgia for a feudal relation of trust and mutual loyalty among the classes makes itself felt—perhaps not so much explicitly as in Dickens' all-too-obvious discomfort with the new entrepreneurial bourgeois class. Dickens has conspicuously little to say, for example, about the Ironmaster's life, and what he says sounds superficial, perfunctory, and affected. Dickens portrays the Ironmaster as a sober, honorable man, to be sure, and we are supposed to admire him as a the "man of the future", but there is no real
connection between Dickens and the Ironmaster: the character simply
does not come alive. Dickens has been chided for his inability to
create a credible portrait of a man of business in the midst of life:
one of his most famous critics, Orwells, argues that this weakness
shows that Dickens has in fact a surprisingly limited knowledge of the
actual day-to-day functioning of his society (46). Nowhere in
Dickens's works is there a single detailed description of a
professional's life, or that of a farmer, a businessman, an
industrialist, a worker—their concrete, daily lives remain blanks as
far as their actual making-a-living is concerned. If one were to
compare the clerks and lawyers of Chancery Lane to, say, Dreiser's
descriptions of the daily business transactions of Frank Cowperwood or
to Balzac's detailed descriptions of the business activities of his
heroes, one is forced to admit that Dickens really does lack concrete
knowledge of the practical reality of an age the very texture of which
was made up of business and industry.

As a result of this lack of a deeper knowledge of and connection
to the character, Dickens takes refuge in cumulative description where
he is unable to go into depth. He describes George Rouncewell's visit
with his brother in terms that evoke strong associations with
Orpheus's descent into Hades, and at any rate makes it clear that this
is alien territory for George—and the narrator:

As he comes into the iron county farther north, such
fresh green woods as those of Chesney Wold are left
behind; and coal pits and ashes, high chimneys and red
bricks, blighted verdure, scorching fires, and a heavy
never-lightening cloud of smoke, become the features of
the scenery. . . . He comes to a gateway in the brick
wall, looks in, and sees a great perplexity of iron lying about, in every stage, and in a vast variety of shapes; in bars, in wedges, in sheets; in tanks, in boilers, in axles, in wheels, in cogs, in cranks, in rails; twisted and wrenched into eccentric and perverse forms, as separate parts of machinery; mountains of it broken-up, and rusty in its age; distant furnaces of it glowing and bubbling in its youth; bright fireworks of it showering about, under the blows of the steam-hammer; red-hot iron, white-hot iron, cold-black iron; an iron taste, an iron smell, and a Babel of iron sounds.

Dickens employs the rhythm of his long, cumulative sentences to mimic the staccato hammering of the iron mills and to create the overwhelming effect, in the readers' mind, of the feverish activity of a new Iron Age. But he also employs this baroque imagery to mask the absence of analytic, causative description. To Dickens, as to his character, George, the industrial landscape simply does not make sense. An iron mill is a place where iron exhibits varying colors and somehow takes on a bewildering array of shapes, but the purposiveness of this industrial process remains obscure, or, at any rate, unimportant.

Dickens only warms to the subject again, when he informs the reader of George's decision to become Sir Leicester's man. While the Ironmaster considers service as demeaning, Dickens has George explain to him that he is in need of the discipline and order which service enforces. As the two brothers exchange farewells, each returns to his native domain:

the ironmaster turning his face to the smoke and fires, and the trooper to the green country. Early in the afternoon, the subdued sound of his heavy military trot is heard on the turf in the avenue, as he rides on with imaginary clank and jingle of accoutrements under the old elm trees. (794)
Like an Arthurian knight of old, George marches off into a hazy, timeless fairytale world under the "old elm trees", while the modern industrial man's world is summed up in the short phrase "smoke and fires". Clearly, Dickens respects the achievements of his model entrepreneur, but his sympathies are with George and Sir Leicester. While Dickens abhors the rigid class distinctions of the feudal system (whose remnants were still quite alive in Victorian England, coexisting uneasily with the new bourgeois society), he really can't help feeling emotionally attracted to a sentimentalized, romantic version of feudalism in which a loyal knight stands by his lord unto the end. George, the military man, is such an anachronistic knight for whom life is only possible under the discipline of unselfish loyalty and service. What Dickens seems to say is that the new age is for those strong individuals who can motivate themselves and maintain a sense of discipline; but for the others—perhaps the majority— who are weaker and less self-directed, the new kind of freedom is destructive and disorienting. Thus, Dickens espouses a romantic, retrogressive solution, pretending to himself and the reader that it is possible for George, to take refuge in the life of the past.

Chesney Wold, as it is shown at the close of the novel, represents an enclave of an organic, feudal society untouched by the ravages of progress.

A goodly sight it is to see the grand old housekeeper (harder of hearing now) going to church on the arm of her son, and to observe—which few do, for the house is scant of company in these times—the relations of both towards Sir Leicester, and his towards them. They have visitors in the high summer weather, when a grey cloak
and umbrella, unknown to Chesney Wold at other periods, are seen among the leaves; when two young ladies are occasionally found gambolling, in sequestered saw-pits and such nooks of the park; and when the smoke of two pipes wreathes away into the fragrant evening air, from the trooper's door. (812-13)

Even in this idyllic depiction of organic harmony, it must be noted that it is largely a bourgeois family idyll within an aristocratic setting. It is the old housekeeper, Mrs. Rouncewell, and her son George who receive visits from the Bagnet family and enliven the house and grounds. Chesney Wold itself, and the lives of Volumnia and Sir Leicester remain prey to boredom and decay. Dickens' ideological affiliation is clearly not with the aristocracy as he sees it in his own time, but it does seem that he frequently gives in to a nostalgic yearning for a feudal age where everyone knew his place and where ties of mutual loyalty held society together. The withdrawal from history, fictitious as it may be, is clearly an ideal of happiness which marks Dickens as a bourgeois writers.

Thus, Dickens' ideal of stepping out of history to live happily ever after in a timeless, organic society is the "fantasy level" of the text. Or, in Jameson's words,:  

The fantasy level of a text would then be something like the primal motor force which gives any cultural artifact its resonance, but which must always find itself diverted to other, ideological functions, and reinvested by what we have called the political unconscious. (142)

The fantasy which Dickens implies in his novels is the desire for freedom from history, a retrogressive desire for stillness in the past. Ideologically, the rejection of the flow of history is a reactionary impulse. It is this hidden agenda, informed by Dickens'
political unconscious, which finds its literary form in the romantic elements in the omniscient narrator's story line and, more prominently, in Esther's narrative.

Jameson argues that "all literature must be read as a symbolic meditation on the destiny of community" (70). The romance paradigm, in particular, provides the writer with a nostalgic or utopian solution to a concrete historical problem by delivering from the anxieties of reality while still containing it (Frye 193). According to Jameson, this deliverance from reality is achieved by disembodying evil and transplanting it into magic, or, in modern novels, into the absurdity of monstrous, kafkaesque systems. In *Bleak House*, this function is filled by the legal system and its emissaries, who are drawn as the incarnation of evil. In figures such as Vholes, the vulture-like lawyer who manages to prod on Richard in his pernicious course while ruining him, Dickens shows us representatives of the "evil" that he thinks is infecting society.

In a word, Mr. Vholes, with his three daughters and his father in the Vale of Taunton, is continually doing duty, like a piece of timber, to shore up some decayed foundation that has become a pitfall and a nuisance. (510)

The decayed foundation Vholes is continually shoring up is, of course, the existing power structure of the empire, and he does so not out of disinterestedness, but because he is one of its beneficiaries. The most intriguing rogue of the novel, however, is Tulkinghorn, the batlike, unfathomable lawyer, the reticule of the secrets of aristocratic houses, who wields a subtle but very real power over his
clients. He is the embodiment of the law. Stiff and unassailably proper, everything about him exudes an unquestionable solidity, from his business manners, to his impeccable black suit to his large house with its painted plaster ceilings and the wine cellar full of cobwebbed bottles of aged wine, the moderate indulgence in which seems to be Tulkinghorn's only human weakness. Subservient and obsequious on the surface, he is not above practicing extortion on Lady Dedlock, when he finds out about her secret. He pursues the exposure of this secret recklessly, paying Jo, Guppy, and Weevle to hunt her down, harassing poor Snagsby and setting Bucket on her tracks to find her out. His fanatic perseverance and his vindictiveness towards Lady Dedlock has the coloring of a personal vendetta. However, since Tulkinghorn is so entirely a creature of the legal system—and of the ideology which it represents—his "personal" matters are by nature ideological. Tulkinghorn serves the aristocracy and willingly caters to the aristocrats' sense of innate superiority.

When Sir Leicester marries a bourgeoise about whose past associations nobody knows anything, Tulkinghorn's sense of propriety is offended and his suspicions are aroused. Perhaps he finds it hard to be treated with such superior indifference by a woman who comes from his own class, or perhaps he is just concerned about Sir Leicester's "folly" in yielding to his feelings and disregarding his obligations to his noble lineage. Tulkinghorn no doubt views himself as the guardian and maintainer of the class structure of society, and Lady Dedlock has made her way into the upper echelons of this society
under false pretenses. Thus, Tulkinghorn revenges himself for her
undermining the structure which he reveres, represents, and controls
by virtue of his intimate knowledge about all its members. This
interpretation is corroborated by the fact that Tulkinghorn does not
really intend to destroy Lady Dedlock—he merely ensures that she
knows that he knows her secret. Enjoining her to continue her
burdensome life of deception, he forces her to dance to his tune, to
become his puppet. What he strives for is not truth itself, but the
power over others which his knowledge of the truth gives him. A
person without any signs of human emotion himself, he self-righteously
holds himself up to be the arbiter of morality and propriety.

In Tulkinghorn, Dickens shows us a character who is so entirely a
creature of the ideology of that society that he does not have any
feelings left that might lead him astray. Like Javert in Victor
Hugo's Les Misérables, he is on the side of the "good guys", as we
conventionally see it, and yet he is exposed as being evil, a zealot
and a schemer, who has lost his humanity in the process of enforcing
and representing the law. He uses it as an excuse to indulge his
desire for power over others. Not surprisingly, Dickens presents
Lady Dedlock much more sympathetically than the self-righteous
Tulkinghorn, guilty as she may be. Lady Dedlock has erred because she
is human; Tulkinghorn can do no wrong, because he has no humanity to
lose. Dickens implicitly shows us that being human is to have human
weaknesses, and that erring may be preferable to being irreproachable
at the cost of one's humanity.
In defining Tulkinghorn's conflict with Lady Dedlock in relatively impersonal, ideological terms, Dickens' novel reflects a new historical reality: in a modern, increasingly atomized society, one does not need to have a personal connection to one's enemy any more. Good and evil, friend and enemy are defined along ideological lines, and persecuting and killing the class enemy can be every bit as cruel and bloody as killing the "old-fashioned" way, out of personal motives. The 20th century has certainly given us enough harrowing examples of ideological persecution, for example the persecution of Jews, socialists, communists, and others during World War II, which was possible only through a psychology of detachment and the dehumanization of the individual.

In concluding this discussion of Dickens' use of the romance paradigm in combination with his two narrators, it becomes evident that it must be read as a strategic reaction to ideological pressures on the subjectivity of the author. The critical mind of the omniscient narrator pierces the totality of society and comes to the conclusion, rather frightening to a bourgeois writer, that a society in which both the oppressed and those in power are warped and dehumanized has no right to exist. The ensuing ideological pressure leads to the adoption of the romance paradigm and the creation of Esther. Creating Esther and entwining her narrative with that of the omniscient narrator produces a kind of "schizophrenia" which is to become characteristic of modern novels: the pressures and contradictions of the conflict between ideology and subjectivity can
no longer be contained within the inwardness of a single character, and the narrative—if there is a coherent narrative—is split up into contributions by several characters. Esther's story tempers the impact of the satirical narrator's observations and offers a non-revolutionary solution to the social problems: bourgeois humanism. Althusser has argued that it is the function of humanism in bourgeois society to make it possible for the bourgeoisie to "live with its own inhumanity" (237). The bourgeoisie—and Dickens certainly is a bourgeois writer—"lived its relation to its own real society as a rejection and program through the ideology of humanism" (Althusser 237). Dickens may have thought that in extolling humanism he was pointing the way to a solution to the inhumanity of contemporary society, but he failed to realize that humanism itself is a "containment strategy", part and parcel of bourgeois ideology.

Although Dickens despises the Borrioboola-Gha kind of philanthropy, he embraces the humanistic project of amelioration and reform over a truly radical and political solution of societal problems. Dickens' inability to recognize that humanism functions as a palliative ideological device within capitalism defines his ideological limitations. In The Political Unconscious, Jameson writes that the "philanthropic experiment" is a narrative strategy characteristic of bourgeois realist writers.

Yet it is as a narrative phenomenon that the philanthropic mission is surely most revealing; to introduce this ameliorative project into the heart of realistic representation is to pass implicit judgment on the quality of empirical being, and its fitness as literary raw material. . . . this is the situation in
which the great realistic novelists, "shepherds of Being" of a very special, ideological type, are forced by their own narrative and aesthetic vested interests, into a repudiation of revolutionary change and an ultimate stake in the status quo. Their evocation of the solidity of their object of representation—the social world grasped as an organic, natural, Burkean permanence—is necessarily threatened by any suggestion that that world is not natural, but historical, and subject to radical change." (194-195)

As a prototypical bourgeois realist, Dickens attempts to depict society in its totality, as it really is, and although he sees its contradictions (in the omniscient narrator's storyline), he cannot bring himself to advocate radical change. If he were to admit to himself that the social world as he finds it is not natural, but historical and therefore changeable, he would have to revise his literary goal to depict the world as a solid, organic whole. Instead, Dickens resorts to the double narrator strategy, in which the omniscient narrator depicts the world as it really is, historically and politically, while Esther's romance tempers this potentially radical analysis through her humanistic philanthropism which shifts attention away from the system and back to the "eternal individual", thus preventing revolutionary change.

Although Esther is forever protesting that her story is merely the story of all those who "are in a conspiracy to make her happy", it is she who becomes the vessel and the center of Dickens's dream of humanism: her forgiveness and love, her understanding and her active compassion are contrasted with the "telescopic philanthropism" of the Jellyby and Pardiggle order and with the indifference of a sprawling, industrial metropolis. Esther does what needs to be done: she cleans
up the Jellyby children and nurses Jo, and she inspires a nearly religious loyalty and love in all those with whom she comes into contact. We are indeed tempted to believe—and who would not love to believe it?—that all could be made well again with love, pity, and human kindness. Esther's active humanism counterbalances and eventually effaces the bitterness and the sarcasm of the omniscient narrator. In the end, the reader is quite willing to settle for the resolution of the lawsuit, Esther's marriage, and all the other little human happy endings that make this novel such delightful and comforting reading. What the reader—and certainly Dickens—may not have realized is that Esther is the protagonist and narrator of a romance, a literary paradigm with powerful ideological content which suggests that it is not the system that is at fault; if things go wrong for the individual, it is because the system has been warped by "evil" forces invading it from outside, or because the individuals within the system have warped and abused it.

It is a telling indication of the integrative function of the romance paradigm at work, for example, that Tulkinghorn's murderess is a foreigner, the volatile Frenchwoman Hortense. Hortense is consistently portrayed as pathologically jealous, ambitious, and as subject to powerful passions. She is a Frechwoman from "somewhere in the southern country about Avignon and Marseilles—handsome but for a certain feline mouth. . ." (147); "a She-Wolf imperfectly tamed" (147). When Hortense chooses to walk barefoot through the wet grass after being reprimanded by Lady Dedlock, it is generally agreed upon
that she would as soon walk through blood as through water (240). As Hortense is thus set up as the most likely perpetrator of a crime of passion, her foreignness is increasingly foregrounded. In the "Springing a Mine" chapter, in which Bucket exposes her as the murderess of Tulkinghorn, Dickens emphasizes her unidiomatic English, her unfeminine aggressiveness towards Bucket, and her mediterranean physique. She is variously described as having a "dark cheek" (685), "black eyes darting fire" (686), and as "panting, tigress-like" (691). It is evident from these observations that this turn of events offers a convenient solution for the British inhabitants of Bleak House's novelistic world: everything evil is concentrated in a foreigner, a dark, threatening, animalistic invader who has disturbed the peace, but who will have to pay for her crimes. After Hortense is apprehended, after the lawsuit has come to its long-wished for conclusion, and after Esther has become the mistress of her own Bleak House, peace reigns again. The community of the novel is snugly reestablished, and the ideological goal of the romance has been elegantly achieved once again.

I want to reemphasize in this place that there is not necessarily a neat congruency between Esther's portions of the plotline and the romance storyline. The omniscient narrator actually contributes substantially to the development of the romance storyline: the Lincolnshire sections, for example, as well as all the sections of the narrative having to do with the trooper George, Mrs. Rouncewell, and the Bagnets are told by the omniscient narrator, with the exception of
the short interlude of Esther's visit at the prison, where the omniscient narrator's domain intersects with Esther's personal narrative. Similarly, it would be reductive to argue that the omniscient narrator is at all times critical and satirical—as a matter of fact, his satirical attacks upon a dehumanizing system are informed by a deep humanism, the same ideology which characterizes Esther's narrative. Thus, it must be concluded that ideological lines are not neatly drawn in Bleak House. While the omniscient narrator stands for the more rational, radical and political tendencies in Dickens' subjectivity, this is only true as a general tendency. From an overall perspective, both the omniscient narrator and Esther reflect aspects of Dickens' bourgeois humanism and thus trace the outlines of the ideological determination of Dickens' subjectivity.

One last aspect of the complex structure of Bleak House needs to be discussed: given that there are two fairly separate (on an analytical, not a functional level) storylines, how does Dickens manage to interweave them so skillfully, leaving the reader with an impression of a rich totality rather than the fragmentation of narrative? The answer is that Dickens uses minor characters, in particular detective Bucket, as "glue" to connect the two storylines. Bucket, an early "colleague" of another, more famous Victorian detective, Sherlock Holmes, distinguishes himself by his uncanny ability to find the right way of talking to all members of a very heterogeneous society. He flatters his way into the affections of the unsuspecting Bagnets, exhibits just the right amount of awe for Sir
Leicester's superior social position, and talks to Jo and the brickmaker's wife in terms they can understand. Bucket is an expert at "psyching out" the weaknesses of others—be it money, as in Harold Skimpole's case, or vanity, when he entreats Mercury, the footman, to have his likeness taken by a Royal Academy sculptor. These verbal feints of Bucket's, small masterpieces of psychological analysis, are veritable gems of comedy set in the midst of the mystery plot.

As a detective, Bucket has official sanction to gain access to the private homes of people in all walks of life. He is as comfortable in Sir Leicester's mansion as he is in Tulkinghorn's office, in the Bagnet's kitchen, or in Tom-All-Alone's. It is this mobility which qualifies him as the structural "binder" of the novel, the bridge which holds the two storylines together and helps to fuse them into one. Bucket has his network of informants everywhere and he knows the city inside out. It is mainly through Mr. Bucket that the reader gets to know London, its mansions and slums, its parlors, shops, courtyards, and alleys. He takes the novel to the street adding an element of local color and, at the same time, educating both the reader and the characters in the novel about the real class structure of Victorian society.

Between his two conductors, Mr. Snagsby passes along the middle of a villainous street, undrained, unventilated, deep in black mud and corrupt water—though the roads are dry elsewhere—and reeking with such smells and sights that he, who has lived in London all his life, can scarce believe his senses.  

(288)
Bucket is the vehicle that enables Dickens to alternate between a sweeping view of Victorian society to an extremely intimate, privileged view of individual characters.

Given that Bucket works for "the Law", it is remarkable that he has remained untainted by the dehumanizing ideological influence which has warped Tulkinghorn, Gridley, Ms. Flite, and all the other grotesquely deformed characters who have come within its sphere of influence. Bucket has retained his humanity, perhaps, as Dickens would like us to believe, due to the deep humanism that pervades all of Bucket's actions. Bucket fully comes into his own as a character in chapter 59, in which Esther recounts their harrowing search for her mother in a race against fate and time. Bucket displays superior powers of deduction, persuasion, and cunning by unraveling the knot of deception Lady Dedlock devises to conceal her path. He grows on the reader as he takes gentle care of the distraught Esther, showing himself to be a truly humane, sensitive human being. In short, Bucket combines the ideological function of the omniscient narrator with that of Esther: he is mobile and insightful enough to convey to the reader an accurate picture of an entire society, while simultaneously containing it within the framework of bourgeois humanism.

It is hardly a new recognition that Dickens is a bourgeois humanist, and I do not pretend to have made an original discovery in saying so. But if Dickens' work is placed within a historical framework and in light of the questions about subjectivity and
ideology which were posed at the outset, important new conclusions can be drawn. Robinson Crusoe's subjectivity is unproblematic and largely externalized, at one with his environment and in control of it. His struggle for subjectivity was the struggle for survival and self-assertion against the forces of nature. Crusoe's inwardness is as yet fairly undeveloped and perhaps scarcely deserves the label "subjectivity". In Bronte's novel, written more than a century later, Lucy struggles for subjectivity within her own mind. Lucy suffers from the ideological contradictions which hem her in, but at the same time they energize her and impart to her the strength to form a highly complex subjectivity in opposition to the current ideology. Dickens, whose Bleak House was published almost simultaneously with Bronte's novel, represents yet another stage in the dialectic of subjectivity and ideology. While he possesses a keen, independent inwardness—as is proven by the critical voice of the omniscient narrator—this criticism is subverted by the ideology of bourgeois humanism, which functions as a "control mechanism" for a subjectivity which has become too overtly political. Thus, Dickens' novel reflects, structurally and in its content, the literary development we had expected to see at a time in history when capitalism has established itself as the dominant mode of production in a rapidly industrializing society: subjectivity is increasingly subverted and controlled as it becomes more and more complex and, potentially, the source of rebellion. The two-narrator-structure of Bleak House is a structural representation of Dickens' struggle for an independent subjectivity, yet the ultimate
dominance of the romance paradigm and of Esther's saccharine humanism indicates the cooptation of Dickens' inwardness by ideology.

Endnotes
1. It is intriguing to surmise what it might be about the figure of the 19th century orphaned governess that seems to predispose these women to become the central figures and narrators in so many novels and short stories. In his study of the Bronte sisters, Terry Eagleton argues that as governesses, the Brontes moved physically into the genteel class into which they spiritually belong, while simultaneously feeling culturally and educationally superior—but they were forced by economic necessity to interact with the gentry and members of the rich upper class from the subservient position of a governess. I think that this contradiction in the class-relations between the middle and the upper classes, that is, a contradiction between a subservient social and economic position and a sense of self-worth based on a superior education and inner culture, embodies a tension that is central to bourgeois consciousness—and it is for this reason that the governesses become the narrators in 19th century novels. Also refer to Chapter II, note 4.

2. One need only think of novels like Faulkner's As I Lay Dying, which is produced through the intersecting narratives of several narrators, to illustrate this point.

3. George Orwell and Joseph Gold are among the critics who classify Dickens as a radical moralist.
4. It is not a coincidence, therefore, that there is not a single child at Chesney Wold, whereas there are many children in most of the bourgeois families: the little Coavinses, the Pardiggles and Jellybys (although their lot is less than enviable), the little Bagnets and the Iron Master's offspring, and lastly, there is the everpresent throng of street urchins filling the alleys of Chancery Lane: bourgeois London is crawling with children, but Chesney Wold's sterility remains unrelieved. The only glimpse of youth and beauty is young Rosa, Lady Dedlock's chamber maid; but Rosa is already affianced with young Rouncewell and is leaving Chesney Wold to get an education and become part of the future that will give the death knell to the Dedlock's way of life.

5. It becomes very difficult, here, not to submit to the fallacy of solely blaming Tulkinghorn as an individual for the abuse of an otherwise justified body of law. It is crucial to recognize that the law is the embodiment of the ideology of capitalism which creates and fosters powerhungry individuals.
"Madame Bovary is an immoral novel about a woman who confuses literature with life." This is a critical opinion often voiced about Flaubert's novel. Martin Turnell and others have argued that Emma is irremediably alienated from "real life" because she has read too many bad romantic novels and is now constantly searching for fiction in life. I cannot agree with such an analysis of Madame Bovary's dilemma. In the first place, any work of art, any novel, can only touch readers where they are already susceptible to its touch. Most readers will share the experience that a certain novel which once had nothing to say to them all of a sudden gains new relevance and emotional meaning when reread a few years later. Sometimes personal experience has to "catch up" with the novel, one has to "mature into it." At any rate, there needs to exist a kind of sympathetic susceptibility for the reader to be influenced by a novel. It seems highly unlikely that a happy, well-adjusted person could be thrown into such confusion about the nature of reality merely by reading a few novels, however detrimental they may be. Thus, if Madame Bovary is affected by romance novels the way she is, it is because various factors within herself combined to make her susceptible to the
seductive ideological message contained in these novels. Emma Bovary is not the victim of literature, she is the victim of an ideology which undermines the formation of an independent subjectivity.

In the late 18th and early 19th centuries, Romanticism was a progressive, sometimes even revolutionary body of thought which engendered an intellectual and social atmosphere that can perhaps best be compared to the period of the 1960s and 1970s in the United States and Western Europe. After Voltairean rationalism and cynicism, Romanticism offered a validation of emotion, sensation, and intuition. It provided a theoretical base for the desire to know the universe directly, through immediate perception and intense feeling. This new and anarchic idea denied hierarchic structures and the validity of received knowledge. Romanticism had offered a way of seeing the world anew, of recreating it from the point of view of the subject. And because the subject, and subjectivity, are central concerns of romanticism, literary criticism likes to call the Romantic period the "Age of the Subject." But when subjectivity becomes such a concern, it is quite likely to be already problematic. The dialectic of desire always presupposes a lack: we desire what we do not have, and the obsession of Romanticism with subjectivity heralds the threat to its viability. Emma Bovary's doomed attempt to live life as a romance is a study in the demise of bourgeois subjectivity in 19th century France.

In France, Rousseau's exhortation to lead a simple life close to nature engendered an unprecedented validation of rural life in a
culture which had traditionally idealized urban refinement, as represented by Paris. Perhaps more than in any other Western country, in France the provincial— and especially the peasantry—was heaped with ridicule and contempt. No one with literary aspirations had been interested in peasant life before. No one thought dairy maids particularly appealing. No one even thought of nature as particularly impressive. Landscapes were there to be lived in, to be cultivated, crossed on one's way to a distant city, or avoided altogether, not to be raved about. Rousseau must be credited with laying the seeds for "the sense of nature" which has played such an important role in Western literature and philosophy.

Like an epidemic the new sensation spread through Europe. Everyone wished to see what Rousseau had seen, to experience the same ecstasy. Everybody visited Switzerland and climbed the Alps. This had not happened before Rousseau. It was then that the Alps became a tourist attraction. Previously they had been an obstacle; a walk through the mountains had had few delights; the views were not in any way exceptional. Even in 1750, Henault, a poet and a friend of Voltaire's, crossed the Jura and the Alps without the least enthusiasm, merely observing, "There is always a creek at my side and rocks above my head, which seem about to fall in the creek or upon me." These words would nowadays disqualify him as a poet—besides compromising his claim to be a human being. (62-63)

The writer of the essay quoted above, Van den Berg, goes on to argue that our admiration of nature is "learned behavior" caused originally by modern men's consciousness of their remoteness from nature. As it is more and more exorcised from man's life, nature is increasingly objectified. It is viewed as an alien realm exterior to men, and, simultaneously, it becomes the object of admiration. Man's
"inner space" is now sharply delimited against external reality, thus engendering an inside/outside dichotomy which complicates matters further: man is no longer just part of nature, but at the same time, he is also no longer at home within himself, because his inner space is being usurped by stronger and stronger ideological controls. Thus, the concern with and about the self is the inheritance of a late, decadent strain of Romanticism whose most famous proponent is Byron. In "Don Juan" and "Manfred," nature is no longer viewed as a gateway to higher knowledge; it is merely the stage for the capricious exploits of a rather megalomaniacal selfhood. While Wordsworth strove for the beauty of simplicity in language, Byron's language is cerebral, calculated to excite, refined in a courtly, decadent manner. Wordsworth's poetry is inspired, enthusiastic—Byron's is disillusioned and cynical. With Byron, Romanticism had already lost its epistemological power and had become a "style", which could then easily be ideologized. Emma's mad hunt for sensation represents this stylized, ideologized version of "Romanticism".

Emma Bovary's experiences of de-limitation are not, then, an epistemological experience in the tradition of Wordsworth and the great mystics. Her sensory orgies do not result in the formation of a critical subjectivity and a new sense of empowerment as does, for example, Lucy Snowe's drug-induced dream walk in the part of Villette. Emma's hunger for sensation is not aimed at gaining higher knowledge about herself. She is not looking for the truth about herself or life. She seeks only pleasure, immediate gratification,
sensation for its own sake. She is morbidly concerned with herself—an ironic preoccupation, since all there is to be concerned about is an ideologized non-self. And if the heroines of romance novels are yearning to be swept up in a whirlwind of emotions and to live in a swoon of passion, one must conclude that their desires to experience the most extreme emotions reflect a societal preoccupation with the stability of the subject. Thrilling with passion, quivering with rage, trembling with fear, swooning with boundless love—these are the sensations which allow human beings to "feel themselves". And because passion is experienced differently by each person, it makes everyone feel unique. The freshness and uniqueness of passionate feeling is thus easily confused with the development of a truly individual, independent subjectivity. In the absence of such a subjectivity, intense sensation can at least provide the framework for an "intelligible" personality structure.

In *A Future for Astyanax*, Leo Bersani argues that the notion of the coherent, intelligible self organized by hierarchically structured desires and passions is a central ideological tenet of Western societies (56). In fact, the coherent self has become so central to Western cultures that its historicity is obliterated and it is simply viewed as part of the "natural" order of things. As Bersani points out, however, it is a relatively recent historical creation whose purpose is the hierarchical sublimation of anarchic ("scenic") desire. He argues that realistic novelists of the 19th century are desperately aware of the fragmentation of the self in contemporary society. As a
reaction to this unsettling knowledge, they strove to contain reality within the meaningful form of the novel and within a coherent character structure.

The realistic novel gives us an image of social fragmentation contained within the order of significant form... The novel makes esthetic sense out of social anarchy. And the society being judged subtly profits from this novelistic order, even though the order includes a great deal of social criticism. A good part of the realistic novelist's imaginative energies - whatever his intentions may be - is devoted to sparing his society the pain of confronting the shallowness of its order and the destructiveness of its appetites. The ordered significances of realistic fiction are presented as immanent to society, whereas in fact they are the mythical denial of that society's fragmented nature. In a sense, then, the realistic novelist desperately tries to hold together what he recognizes quite well is falling apart. (61)

In Madame Bovary, Flaubert portrays a seemingly coherent ego, which, at second glance, turns out to be a rather flimsy construction. Emma's psyche is structured by her desire; or perhaps it would be more precise to say that Emma's psyche is organized by the continuous act of desiring. Desire, according to Bersani, is "an activity within a lack... an appetite stimulated by an absence" (10). What Emma desires most is "to be someone other than herself", a desire which inspired Flaubert's early critic Jules de Gaultier to coin the term "Bovarysme". In view of Bersani's definition of desire, Emma's compulsion to be someone other than herself betrays her deep anxiety about the lack of substantiality at the core of her being. It is this intuitive awareness of the emptiness at the center of her selfhood which makes Emma so vulnerable to religious mysticism, romantic literature, and the adulterous quest for passion. For Emma,
religion, literature, and sex are means to an end: they are pretexts for sensation, with the help of which Emma wants to assure herself that she does, in fact, possess an independent subjectivity. There is in her a disquieting sense of a self on the point of disintegration—not an ego which is ordered by desire, but a pseudo-ego which exists only in the act of desiring. It may well be that this ideologically dangerous exposure of the hollowness at the center of modern man, not so much the portrayal of Emma's adulterous trysts, accounts for the vicious attacks on Flaubert after the publication of his novel.

Flaubert describes Emma Bovary as a creature of exquisite susceptibility to sensation. In convent school she "succumbed to the mystical languor induced by the perfumes of the altar, the coolness of the holy-water fonts, the gleaming of the candles" (40); later, Rodolphe, in his final letter to Emma, deplores "that marvellous intensity of feelings" (228) that causes her so much pain. During her visit to the opera at Rouen, she is so responsive to the multitude of new sensuous impressions that she feels herself "vibrate to the very fiber of her being, as though the bows of the violins were playing on her nerve-strings" (251). Madame Bovary possesses an unprecedented capacity for sensuous perception in literature. In this one respect Emma is the precursor of Proust's narrator in Remembrance of Things Past; while a refined sensatory sensibility is a prerequisite for the creation of an independent, critical subjectivity (both in literature and in life), it does not suffice. For sensation needs to be transformed into perception and reflection upon it in order to become
the foundation for an independent subjectivity. It is this faculty of reflection upon experience and sensation that Emma lacks (and that Proust's narrator possesses to an astounding degree). But strong emotions like Emma's need a rationale, an organizing form to contain them, and Emma chooses the culturally available kitsch version of literary romanticism.

Emma consistently substitutes the conveniently coined terminology and imagery of kitsch romanticism for authentic feeling and expression. This strategy is particularly evident during her first encounter with Leon in the Lion d'Or on the eve of the Bovary's arrival in Yonville. Madame Bovary and Leon are both using the iconic terminology of kitsch romanticism to test each other, to play a verbal mating game. Soon, Emma feels that she has found a soulmate in Leon, another suffering soul who is being suffocated by the denseness and the lack of sensibility of those around him. Indeed, Leon does everything to create the Byronic image of a pale, suffering Romantic who is stuck among unfeeling and unappreciative provincials. He tells Emma of long, lonely hours of reading and melancholy walks culminating in the solitary contemplation of sunsets. Emma, cued by the keyword "sunset", immediately provides the obligatory analysis of sunsets by the seashore:

"Don't you have the feeling," asked Madame Bovary, "that something happens to free your spirit in the presence of all that vastness? It raises up my soul to look at it, somehow. It makes me think of the infinite, and all kinds of wonderful things." (93)
Flaubert presents this scene as unmediated dialogue and abstains from authorial comment, and by letting Madame Bovary speak, he achieves a sharp irony which would not have been possible through authorial comment. It is indeed ridiculous to hear Emma wax eloquently about "soul", "spirit", "the infinite, and all kinds of wonderful things", as if she were talking about a beautifully decorated shopwindow. Emma's tendency to mix the abstract with the all-too-concrete betrays her inability to understand abstract concepts—a character trait which Flaubert points out early on and which needs to be remembered if one is to understand Emma's mad quest for sensation.

In her enthusiasms she had always looked for something tangible: she had loved the church for its flowers, music for its romantic words, literature for its power to stir the passions; and she rebelled before the mysteries of faith just as she grew ever more restive under discipline, which was antipathetic to her nature. (44)

In part perhaps because of her peasant background, Emma is, at bottom, thoroughly non-idealistic. Unlike the majority of French Romantics, she cannot identify with Rousseau's idealization of the simplicity and innocence of rustic life. As a matter of fact, it is just such simplicity (and the boredom of rural life) that she yearns to escape.

Had her childhood been spent in cramped quarters behind some city shop, she might have been open to the lyric appeal of nature—which usually reaches us only by way of literary interpretations. But she knew too much about country life: she was well acquainted with lowing herds, with dairy maids and ploughs. From such familiar, peaceful aspects, she turned to the picturesque. She loved the sea for its storms alone,
cared for vegetation only when it grew here and there among ruins. She had to extract a kind of personal advantage from things; and she rejected as useless everything that promised no immediate gratification—for her temperament was more sentimental than artistic, and what she was looking for was emotions, not scenery. (41)

It is evident, then, that Emma's motivation in watching sunsets is not the experience of the "infinite", but the experience of the melancholy passion she knows from her novels. In fact, she is only "milking" the natural setting for the emotions it is said to engender. What Emma seeks to achieve through her version of Romanticism is not self-knowledge or a new understanding of the oneness of all being -- she will settle for the concrete, for sensation, instead of the substance of experience. Emma's devouring of Gothic literature and cheap romances is thus not the cause, but the symptom of her illness. Her "illness" is the atrophying of subjectivity. Only a full, independent subjectivity can experience life fully in its double aspect of physical experience and critical thought. Emma does not have an independent subjectivity, and she is thus reduced to experiencing life on the level of sensation only.

Emma attempts to gloss over the emptiness through her desperate quest for passion -- a passion, any passion, "some vow that she might accomplish" (40) -- anything which could provide a structure for a coherent sense of selfhood. This is not to imply that Emma is at all aware of either her lack of selfhood or the reason for her desperate pursuit of "happiness, rapture, and passion". What she is aware of, however, is the effect of the absence of a strong sense of selfhood:
she feels forever at odds with the role she is forced to play as the wife of a provincial officier de santé, and she yearns for the life which momentarily becomes reality during the ball at Vaubyessard. Because she is not sure who she is, Emma needs the admiration of others to establish a precarious, provisional sense of identity. Emma is so conscious of her effect upon others, because it gives her "clues" to her own identity. And she is so furious with Charles after he has botched the surgery on Hippolyte's leg, because he has destroyed the provisional identity of a famous surgeon's wife which she had already constructed for herself with the help of Homais's newspaper article and the general admiration of the Yonville public. It is not her pride only which causes the violent repulsion she feels for Charles -- on a deeper, ontological level, she has realized in a final way that she cannot define herself through Charles. And it is as a result of this realization that she feels redoubled desire for Rodolphe, who must now become the sole support of her fragile selfhood.

Tragically, Emma is limited, by her own ideologized consciousness, to sensory experience as it is prescribed by pseudo-romantic models, which have been instilled within her during her convent years and which she finds later on in the books from the infamous lending library in Rouen and in the magazines from Paris.

They were invariably about love affairs, lovers, mistresses, harassed ladies swooning in remote pavilions. Couriers were killed at every delay, horses ridden to death on every page; there were gloomy forests, broken hearts, vows, sobs, tears and kisses, skiffs in the moonlight, nightingales in thickets; the
noblemen were all brave as lions, gentle as lambs, incredibly virtuous, always beautifully dressed, and wept copiously on every occasion. . . . The sentimental songs she sang in music class were all about little angels with golden wings, madonnas, lagoons, gondoliers—mawkish compositions that allowed her to glimpse, through the silliness of the words and the indiscretions of the music, the alluring, phantasmagoric realm of genuine feeling. (41-42)

It is just this genuine feeling which forever escapes Emma's grasp. Because she has uncritically internalized the model of love, passion, and happiness described in these pseudo-romantic novels, Emma is unable to recognize love when it is offered to her in her own life. To be sure, Charles is singularly unfit for the role of the dashing, aristocratic lover, and Emma's hopes to find her ideal romantic love in her marriage to Charles are quickly disillusioned.

Flaubert obviously intended to portray in Charles a severely limited provincial personality. A second Candide, loveable, loyal, and singularly luckless, he is thoroughly mediocre at everything he attempts to do. "Pacific by nature" (8), young Charles lets himself be manipulated into a medical career by his mother, who had dreamed of glamorous careers for him. Although he is well-meaning enough, he lacks native intelligence and has not a trace of ambition. Soon, he gives in to the temptations of tavern life and the "joys of love" with servant girls. As a result, Charles flunks his medical exams and is forced to retake them. His mother manipulates him into a marriage with a rich widow who turns out to be poor; their married life is joyless and different from what Charles had imagined, but he docilely accepts life for what it is, as he will later, when Emma's
contemptuous, cold treatment of him would have elicited a reciprocal response in anyone else. Charles lacks what Emma has to an extraordinary degree: the desire to be someone other than himself.

He is not one of the modern self-made men who figure so prominently in the novels of Balzac and Zola. At bottom, Charles is a peasant who is at home only with the slow rhythms of nature; he does not question life, he simply lives it. His love for Emma completely redefines his universe. Even though this universe "went not beyond the silken circuit of her petticoat" (38), it is Charles who experiences what Emma is yearning for: a love that transforms the world for him. In a sense, he is the only true Romantic in the novel—without ever so much as thinking about it. His love for Emma is so great that it becomes quite immaterial whether she loves him back. It outlasts her rejection of him, it outlasts her death, and it cannot even be squelched by the discovery of her deceit. In fact, his love is the kind of love "romantic" novels are forever talking about — but Emma is quite unwilling to consider that possibility.

For her, the substance of emotion is inseparably linked to the settings in which it is shown to be experienced in her novels, and since her life with Charles does not supply her with the exotic settings for love, she does not even consider the possibility that she is being loved.

In her longing she made no difference between the pleasures of luxury and the joys of the heart, between elegant living and sensitive feeling. Didn't love, like Indian plants, require rich soils, special temperatures? Sighs in the moonlight, long embraces, hands bathed in
lovers' tears—all the fever of the flesh and the languors of love—were inseparable from the balconies of great idle-houred castles, from a silk-curtained, thick-carpeted, beflowered boudoir with its bed on a dais, from the sparkle of precious stones and the swank of liveries. (66)

Emma's equating luxury with love is the result of subtle ideological conditioning. Blake's and Wordsworth's Romanticism hinged upon a rejection of aristocratic refinement and the classical forms of literature. They asserted the primacy of spontaneous feeling in an unconventional, new language and in forms inspired by the common speech of simple people and the folk ballad. As the Romantic body of thought was integrated into the hegemonic society, the focus on the lower classes and the peasantry was more and more deemphasized. Peasant life and its symbiotic unity with nature was once again relegated to the decorative cameo existence of idyllic tableaux in the rococo style. "Romantic" feeling was increasingly associated with wealthy settings, thus reenforcing the bourgeois ideal of accumulating wealth while blending it with a new admiration for aristocratic leisure and refinement.3

The ball at Vaubyessard brings Emma closest to this ideal life, and for a few brief hours she achieves a momentary congruence between the emotions she desires to feel and the setting which can elicit these emotions. For a few hours only her dream world has become reality. Neither the doddering senility of the old Duc de Laverdiere nor the self-satisfied dandyism of the young aristocrats serve to disillusion her with the world of her romance novels. Instead, she is even more infatuated with those men so different from Charles.
There was an air of indifference about them, a calm produced by the gratification of every passion; and though their manners were suave, one could sense beneath them that special brutality which comes from the habit of breaking down half-hearted resistances that keep one fit and tickle one's vanity—the handling of blooded horses, the pursuit of loose women. (57)

I think it is obvious that this passage is not Emma reflecting about her experience -- it is Flaubert's analysis of an experience which remains, for Emma, entirely on a sensatory level. But it is fascinating how accurately Flaubert analyses the appeal of the potential for brutality which so captivates Emma (whether or not she is consciously aware of the reasons for this fascination). According to Bersani, there is both a masochistic and sadistic impulse in such flirtation with potential personal destruction. Like the victimized "O" in Bersani's analysis of Pauline Reage's novel L'Histoire d'O, Emma is fascinated by the power she can wield over men by becoming weak, and the stronger her "master", the greater her power over him. Thus, the Vaubyessard episode foreshadows Emma's affair with Rodolphe, an exact copy of the young men at the ball: he is a masterful, reckless man who finds pleasure in dominating Emma, while Emma has a way of defining her selfhood through her sexual power over him.

The sadistic impulse coexisting in Emma with her fascination with total subjection to mastery is represented by Emma's relationship with Charles and with Leon. Emma, herself a person without a strong subjectivity, immediately senses their weakness. Both men are intimidated by her capacity to create scenes and her unbridled pursuit of passion. She terrorizes Charles with her inexplicable moodiness,
and she demands of Leon to "make himself look like the portraits of Louis XIII" (315) in order to conform to her idea of a romantic lover. She criticizes his clothes, his room, his letters, she terrifies him with the intensity of her passion and her absolute disregard of conventional morals. He gets frightened when she demands of him to embezzle money to pay for her debts, but it is questionable whether he would have had the strength to cut loose from her, had she not liberated him through her suicide.

What is at stake for Emma in her sexual relationships is the search for a selfhood for which she looks to men. "Why was life so unsatisfactory? Why did everything she leaned on crumble instantly to dust?" Emma asks herself. For someone else, this question might have been a first step towards an honest assessment of her situation. But Emma immediately goes on to reduce her question to a romanticizing yearning for the "right man":

But why, if somewhere there existed a strong and handsome being—a man of valor, sublime in passion and refinement, with a poet's heart and an angel's shape, a man like a lyre with strings of bronze, intoning elegiac epithalamiums to the heavens—why mightn't she have the luck to meet him? (322)

Emma's "weakness for strength" is the symptom of a subjectivity searching for a way to reassure itself of its existence, and the passion she extracts both from mastering and from being mastered provides such momentary reassurance. In being mastered, she is swept up into the subjectivity of a stronger, more powerful human being, and in mastering others, she usurps their subjectivities. For Emma, life is merely a sequence of settings for sensation. Charles, Berthe,
Leon, Rodolphe—all are pretexts, points of crystallization for, but never the cause of her emotion. In all these people, Emma merely sees the possibility to "try on" a new emotional role: her marriage to Charles offers her the tempting opportunity to play the role of the happy bride. But unlike the fisherman's daughter, whose story Felicite naively recounts, Emma does not find salvation in marriage. The "fog in the head" that had caused the young peasant woman's depression lifts off with marriage. "'With me', said Emma, 'it was after I was married that it began.'" (124). When Emma's hope to find a sense of selfhood through romantic marriage is disappointed, her pregnancy opens up the possibility of experiencing intense emotions in the role of the loving mother. But Berthe disappoints her hope for vicarious fulfillment through a son, and Emma loses any interest in her child. Rodolphe and Leon constitute attempts to stimulate her passion through extramarital affairs, but, ultimately, they fail as well. "We shouldn't maltreat our idols: the gilt comes off on our hands." (320) writes Flaubert, and Emma, who has become more and more critical of Leon's weakness, is terrified when she feels her infatuation with her role as Leon's lover lessen. Panicked at the thought of again losing this relationship—not as a relationship to another person, but as a way of defining her dispersed identity, she tries to fan the flames of her infatuation by artificial means learned from her books. Unable to generate authentic feeling, she once again resorts to the stock repertoire of "romantic" love: flowery letters, poetic excesses, "the moon and the stars" (321). But soon Emma
realizes that she needs a stronger drug even than her adulterous passion to keep experiencing the transports she craves—for she can only feel herself when she is literally "other than herself", transported outside the self which is an empty shell. When she can no longer delude herself about the status of her affair with Leon, she tries to deny it by abandoning herself to an almost macabre parody of passion. But passion cannot be willed, and Emma's passion is tinged with existential despair:

She continually promised herself that the next rendezvous would carry her to the peak of bliss; but when it was over she had to admit that she had felt nothing extraordinary. Each disappointment quickly gave way to new hope; each time, Emma returned to him more feverish, more avid. She could hardly wait to undress: she pulled so savagely at her corset string that it hissed around her hips like a gliding snake. Then she would tiptoe barefoot to see once again that the door was locked, and in a single movement let fall all her clothes; and, pale, silent, solemn, she would fling herself against his body with a long shudder. There was something mad, though, something strange and sinister, about that cold, sweating forehead, about those stammering lips, those wildly staring eyes, the clasp of those arms—something that seemed to Leon to be creeping between them, subtly, as though to tear them apart. He didn't dare question her; but realizing how experienced she was, he told himself that she must have known the utmost extremes of suffering and pleasure. What had once charmed him he now found a little frightening. (321)

The stammering lips, the cold, sweating forehead are a foreshadowing of the near madness and death which are Emma's fate. What justifiably frightens Leon about her is that she is beginning to give up even a pretense to affection for him and single-mindedly pursues sexual gratification. Although a mistress who dares to truly abandon herself to passion may be the fantasy of every bourgeois male
(as Homais reveals in his deliciously risque self-representation as a connoisseur of women during his dinner with Leon), Leon does not feel at ease when this fantasy becomes reality for him. He fears that his will is being subverted and his personality submerged by Emma's strong sensuality. It is clear from Flaubert's choice of language that he, too, feels vaguely threatened by her: the corset strings she pulls savagely off her body "hissed around her hips like a gliding snake", an image which evokes associations with the Fall of Eve and the Lamia who seduces and eventually kills her lover. 6

Profoundly disturbed in his own bourgeois (though not petty bourgeois) sensibilities, Flaubert somewhat helplessly asks himself and the reader: "Her depravity was so deep and so dissembled as to be almost intangible: where could she have learned it?". (316) The question misses the point: Emma's life cannot be measured in terms of good or evil, purity or depravity. Emma lacks a coherent self and an independent subjectivity and therefore substitutes sensatory stimuli, which allow her to experience a momentary "clustering" of selfhood around the source of intense sensation, be it a novel, religion, the theater, or a lover. This sensation can be judged by its intensity alone, not by its ethical aspects. Like a drug addict, Emma needs more and more intense stimulation to achieve the same momentary sense of centeredness she had first experienced when she became Rodolphe's mistress:

She remembered the heroines of novels she had read, and the lyrical legion of those adulterous women began to sing in her memory with sisterly voices that enchanted her. Now she saw herself as one of those amoureuses whom she had so envied; she was becoming, in reality,
one of that gallery of fictional figures; the long dream of her youth was coming true. She was full of a delicious sense of vengeance. How she had suffered! But now her hour of triumph had come; and love, so long repressed, was gushing forth in joyful effervescence. She savored it without remorse, without anxiety, without distress. (183)

Emma is thrilled with the possibility of defining herself as an amoureuse, and not for a moment does she think about the ethical and moral implications of her action. In a sense, Emma's lack of even a coherent selfhood—let alone an independent subjectivity—is far too existential a predicament to bother with moral questions. The categories of "purity" or "depravity" are irrelevant to a person who is seeking for a way to avoid "coming apart". Emma uses passion as a drug to mimic existential fullness. But her experiences of passion exhaust themselves in sensation. There is no reflection upon experience, and it thus remains empty, only a fleeting cluster of sensations which cannot become the building blocks of an independent, critical subjectivity. Numerous critics have diagnosed Emma as suffering from a peculiar "vagueness of personality". That this perception of "vagueness" cannot be due to a lack of detail is attested to by critics who call Flaubert's novel a "prolonged autopsy", in which the acute vision of the novelist has permeated bourgeois life as with a surgeon's knife. If, in spite of the wealth of detail, we still perceive this strange nebulousness of character in Emma, we must assume that this effect is due to a deep, existential lack which the novelist successfully portrayed in his protagonist.
Like Emma, the author himself remains vague and elusive. The reader never gets enough hints about the narrator to create a coherent image of him. After reading *Villette*, one has a strong image of the first person narrator, Lucy Snowe, and after reading *Bleak House*, one could describe fairly easily the values and characteristics of the omniscient narrator and of Esther. Nothing of this sort is possible in Flaubert's novel. The opening sentence, which begins with "we were in study-hall when the headmaster entered, followed by a new boy not yet in school uniform..." introduces what is presumably a group of students, but the reader is never introduced to any one of them, nor does she ever find out anything else about the "I" narrating the novel. The narrator remains a disembodied voice who exists only in the act of reading, his history disseminated over the novel itself. I can think of Esther and the way in which she told her story -- but I cannot think of Flaubert's narrator as a person. Perhaps this "lack of substance" of the narrator is the expression of Flaubert's desire to maintain a reflective, objective distance towards his characters, to avoid alignment with any one of them and to purge himself as thoroughly as possible of ideological patterns of thought.

In his biography of Flaubert, Philip Spencer writes that Flaubert led the life of a recluse in Croisset to retain an impartial, lucid mind fit for detailed observation. He could afford to do so, argues Spencer, because he came from a thoroughly bourgeois family whose solid wealth enabled him to pursue his writing in comfort and free of financial cares.
Living in the brief bourgeois interregnum between domination by the aristocracy and domination by the managerial class, he incarnated the bourgeois artist, economically independent of both patronage and State aid, but free to emit anarchic and subversive doctrines about the basis of his own position. (10)

Flaubert took tremendous satisfaction from ridiculing the Bourgeoisie and showing up its narrow-mindedness, its greediness, its lust for power. In Madame Bovary, he creates an archetypal image of the bourgeois in Homais, the pharmacist. In the following, the figure of Homais is analyzed against the backdrop of Emma's failed search for an identity. While Emma latches on to the sensatory aspect of bourgeois Romanticism, Homais merges it successfully with Rationalism and Franklinian Pragmatism, which allows him to define himself as a disseminator of progress, as the most authoritative and powerful man in Yonville. And while Emma's subjectivity is entirely constituted by ideology, Homais' may in fact be more complex than hers. The question is whether Flaubert portrayed in Homais a narrowminded, powerhungry bourgeois who is subjectively at one with himself, without hidden depths, or whether Homais is a Macchiavellian, using bourgeois ideology to rise to a position of power. This would imply a degree of analytic distance to the ideology he is using, which forces us to reexamine our usage of "critical subjectivity" as a synonym for "independent subjectivity".

In the previous discussion, we have gradually become accustomed to equate an independent subjectivity with a subjectivity which is critical of the prevailing ideology. It is the subjectivity of someone who is struggling to free herself from the mental limitations
of the ideology produced by the existing power structure. Crusoe's homo economicus—subjectivity, which, as we have seen, has laid the groundwork for psychic developments crucial for the rise of capitalism, is a subjectivity at odds with the ideology prevailing at the time. In a still largely feudal, patriarchal society, it was a new idea to look upon nature as a "field for economic action" and to think about it in terms of investments and the profits to be extracted from it. In a patriarchal, clannish society, it was also new to create a character who is isolated on an island, shaping his own life in godlike independence and forging only tenuous connections with one human being. In Villette, to quote another example, Lucy Snowe is struggling for selfhood in an ideological structure which, simultaneously, penalizes her for being its product and also for resisting it. As a result of the classic ideologically determined division of labor between the sexes, Lucy, as a woman, is a sensitive and feeling person. However, this "weakness", "naturally" disqualifies her for participation in the economic process. But Lucy's situation is even more complex—it is ideologically overdetermined: she is not only a woman, she is also poor and is forced to provide for herself, since capitalism has destroyed the traditional familial support system for single women. And at the same time that women are excluded from participation in the economy, self-reliance is extolled as a supreme virtue. As a result of these contradictions, Lucy becomes critical of the ideology that has produced the parameters of her dilemma — and she must resist it in
order to survive. In *Bleak House*, finally, the conflict is acted out in the "duet" (or should we say duel?) of the two narrators: the omniscient narrator critically undermines Esther's highly ideologized romance. Thus, as a rule, an independent subjectivity is created against the prevailing ideology. It is therefore easy to equate "independent subjectivity" with "critical subjectivity". The figure of Homais opens up the question whether this equation is permissible. Could there possibly be an independent subjectivity which is not critical of the hegemonic ideology?

Homais' is the subjectivity of a man who recognizes the uses of ideology in his society and employs it for his own purposes. However, he is not critical of the prevailing ideology, because he is part of that class in whose favor it works. Yet he is acutely aware of the power relationships in society and subtly manipulates them to further his own ends. He woos the Bovarys, for example, because he wants to ensure that Charles will overlook his secret practicing of backroom medicine. Hiding behind the fortifications of science and armed with his professed ideals of reason and progress, Homais pursues his own stratagem that eventually earns him the order of the legion of honor and "une clientele d'enfer". The difference between Homais' kind of independent subjectivity and that of a Lucy Snowe or Dickens' omniscient narrator in *Bleak House* is that they are self-critically self-aware, including their own mental precepts in a radical self-inquiry; theirs are active, reflective, mobile minds, whereas Homais's psyche is rigidly organized by his "will to power".
He successfully manipulates the capitalist ideology of progress and its concomitant faith in science to serve his private desire to gain power. He is not self-reflective, but self-important; he has become petrified even by using the ideology of power for his own purposes, thus illustrating Lukacs's thesis that no one can use ideology as a tool without falling prey to it themselves. Thus, Homais may be conscious of the uses of capitalist ideology for the advancement of his own personal power, but he does not possess an independent subjectivity, because his very lack of critical distance undermines the creation of an independent subjectivity. Hence, in further discussions, we can feel free to use the term "independent" and "critical" subjectivity interchangeably, and in one sense only: it means the subjectivity of a person who is reflecting upon the effects of ideology on his or her own psyche and is struggling against it.

The creation of a critical, independent subjectivity is therefore always a progressive -- even revolutionary -- project. In conclusion, we find that Homais and Emma represent two aspects of the ideologization of subjectivity in 19th century French society. It would be reductive to determine which of the two characters is "more complex" -- with respect to what, anyhow? Emma is certainly very complex in her responses to fiction and sensatory impressions. Homais has a very acute awareness of power relationships and positions himself accordingly. The only useful distinction between both these ideologized subjectivities is, in my opinion, the fact that in Homais' life ideology is quite tangible, quite concrete revealing itself as a
power tool in his hands. The ideology Emma absorbs through her books is more elusive, although its results are no less real and just as insidious as Homais' power schemes. What we can observe here is perhaps an illustration of the different effects of ideology on the bourgeois male and female: men have the option to actively use bourgeois ideology for their ends—after all, it is meant for just that, while women are passive receptacles of the ideology produced by male bourgeois society. But both the male and the female "subjectivities" (again, this term is used sous erasure) represented by Homais and Emma are severely limited by ideological controls.

Homais' rise to power traces the decline of the political and philosophical ideals of the French Revolution. Or, in other words, the rise of the post-revolutionary, reactionary bourgeois Homais is a symptom of the "defusing" and integration of romantic thought into existing social structures. This process happened as gradually as the incorporation of rock music and health food into mainstream society in our own time. As the once revolutionary bourgeois class becomes more and more conservative, its romantic ideals are scaled down to household size. What was once an epistemology deteriorates into a fashionable stance, a kind of decoratively "progressive" railing against contemporary mores, or affected bohemianism. These scraps of "romantic" thought are frequently intermingled with rationalist thought and an unshakeable belief in science, creating a strange "brew" of ideologies. Homais's "revolutionary credo" at the Lion d'Or is a perfect example of such an ideological hodgepodge:
"My God is the God of Socrates, of Franklin, of Voltaire, of Beranger! My credo is the credo of Rousseau! I adhere to the immortal principles of '89!"

Socrates' methods of inquiry, Franklin's profit-oriented pragmatism, and the modern belief in science are hardly Romantic ideals, nor are Homais ostentatious anti-clerical stance and his professed atheism. But the pharmacist, whose sons are named after his idols, Franklin and Napoleon, does not seem to be ill at ease about the diversity of his spiritual ideals, and his glorious ascent to power proves how useful this combination of ideals has been to him.

But these were the philosophies which provided the capitalist bourgeoisie, with its ideological foundation. Anti-clericalism helped to erode feudal power structures, facilitating the supersession of traditional by capitalist values, exploding traditional family and community structures, and work relations. Homais' "revolutionary Romanticism" is opportunistically superimposed and relates specifically to the French Revolution, in which the bourgeoisie seized power. His "Romanticism" has nothing in common with the epistemological Romanticism of Wordsworth or Rousseau. It is a kind of ad hoc, decorative "Romanticism" which is meant to give a "progressive", slightly daring air to an inveterate bourgeois who is in fact pursuing his power schemes with singular determination.

There is only one bourgeois who gets a better treatment from Flaubert: Dr. Lariviere. And it is only in the passage describing his arrival in Yonville -- and perhaps in one other one, the scene in
which old Catherine Leroux is awarded the medal of honor, that we
catch a glimpse of the narrator's emotions.

He belonged to that great surgical school created by
Bichat—that generation, now vanished, of
philosopher-practitioners, who cherished their art with
fanatical love and applied it with enthusiasm and
sagacity. Everyone in his hospital trembled when he was
angry; and his students so revered him that the moment
they set up for themselves they imitated him as much as
they could. There was scarcely a town in the district
where one of them couldn't be found, wearing a long
merino overcoat and a full black tail coat, exactly like
his. Doctor Lariviere's unbuttoned cuffs partly covered
his fleshy hands—extraordinary hands, always ungloved,
as though to be the readier to grapple with suffering.
Disdainful of decorations, titles and academies,
hospitable, generous, a father to the poor, practicing
Christian virtues although an unbeliever, he might have
been thought of as a saint if he hadn't been feared as a
devil because of the keenness of his mind. His
scalpel-sharp glance cut deep into your soul, exposing
any lie buried under excuses and reticences. His manner
was majestic and genial, conscious as he was of his
great gifts and his wealth and the forty years of hard
work and blameless living he had behind him. (363-364)

This is not the usual, disengaged objectivity one knows from the rest
of the novel. In describing Lariviere, Flaubert gives up his
disengagement. He talks of him as an extraordinary man, always ready
to help the poor and stave off suffering, a man who despises titles
and riches, a philosopher, a healer, a saint, a man who can see to the
depths of one's soul. Nowhere else does Flaubert use so many nouns
relating to abstract values and virtues. Nowhere else do we learn as
much his own values. For example, if he lauds Lariviere for being a
"father to the poor", we can conclude that, by implication, Flaubert
considers kindliness and pity to be virtues. We must ask ourselves
why it is that Flaubert gets so emotional when he introduces this
rather minor character. It is evident that he feels that there is something at stake here: he is signalling to the reader that Dr. Lariviere is an exception, he is a better kind of bourgeois. Literary historians assure us that Lariviere is really a portrait of the writer's father, Monsieur Flaubert the elder, a widely respected surgeon. Flaubert's admiring portrayal of Dr. Lariviere can be seen as an act of atonement to his father for the dissection of the bourgeoisie as a class in Madame Bovary. Thus, the apology to the father is really an apology to the class which produced him, of which he is a part, but which he is treating ironically in his work.

But I do not think that this "family romance" can fully explain the emotional urgency which is suddenly breaking through the otherwise marble-cool surface of the text. Flaubert is not merely talking about Dr. Lariviere as a figure representing his father, or even the bourgeoisie; Dr. Lariviere represents a type of bourgeois which is beginning to be historically superseded by the powerhungry bourgeois of the Homais type. Dr. Lariviere could be called a true follower of Socrates and Franklin: his mind is unfettered by superstition or religious beliefs; but he is a true humanist, a Christian in his actions if not by creed. "Disdainful of decorations"—unlike Homais—he does not seek the approval of men for what he does. Cultured and erudite, he is a freethinker and a man of science with a mind who does not shy away from any truth. He is simple, unassuming but self-confident. There is nothing grovelling about him and he despises Homais' unctuous servility. Flaubert effectively contrasts
Homais and Lariviere as two very different types of bourgeois in the scene around the dinner table at the Homais household following Emma's suicide.

Homais blossomed in his role of proud host, and the thought of Bovary's distress added something to his pleasure as he selfishly contrasted their lots. Moreover, the doctor's presence excited him. He displayed all his erudition, dragging in, pell-mell, mention of cantharides, the upas, the manchineel, the bite of the adder... Madame Homais reappeared, bearing one of those rickety contraptions that are heated with alcohol, for Homais insisted on brewing his coffee at table—having, needless to say, previously done his own roasting, his own grinding and his own blending. "Saccharum. Doctor?" he said, passing the sugar. Then he called in all his children, eager to have the surgeon's opinion on their constitutions. Finally, when Monsieur Lariviere was about to leave, Madame Homais asked him to advise her about her husband. His "blood was getting thicker" because of his habit of falling asleep every evening after dinner. "Oh, he's not thick-blooded!" And smiling a little at his joke, which passed unnoticed, the doctor opened the door. (366)

The marvellously controlled funniness and irony of Homais' "Saccharum, Doctor?" is, in my opinion, a masterpiece of efficiency in characterization. It contains all of Homais inflated self-importance, united with a lurking sense of inferiority, and the fierce desire to be included among those in power. The little detail about Homais' insistence on brewing his own coffee is also particularly revealing in that it can be seen as a symptom of the new bourgeois' subliminal suspicion that his field of unfettered activity is severely limited and prescribed by his society. Little things, like roasting, grinding, and brewing one's own coffee become extremely important, since they symbolize a Crusoe-like self-reliance which has become
impossible in reality. In portraying Lariviere and Homais side by side, Flaubert presents to the reader an analysis of what has happened to the once revolutionary bourgeoisie: Lariviere is the "residual" type—to employ Raymond Williams' terminology—of the enlightened freethinker, the Bildungsbürgertum, as the Germans say. A "Bildungsbürger" is usually a member of the bourgeois upper class, a well-educated and cultured person, as opposed to the petty bourgeois, the Kleinburger, whom Homais represents. But it is the petty bourgeoisie which is the new, dominant type of the bourgeoisie.9

When he visits Leon in Rouen for "a night on the town", Homais uses the fashionable language of a Parisian bohemian.

...he asked the clerk many searching questions about life in the big city. He even talked slang in order to show off in front of the "bourgeois," using such terms as turne, bazar, chicard, chicandard, the English "Breda Street" for Rue de Breda and je me la casse for je m'en vais. (317)

There is supreme irony in Homais', the petty bourgeois par excellence, posing as a bohemian. But in fact, there could have been no better device for Flaubert to bring out the petty bourgeois' true nature: after indulging in a lavish dinner and a corresponding amount of spirits, he sets forth "certain immoral theories concerning women" and even goes so far as to impart to Leon the "sure signs of temperament in a woman", classified by ethnic origin. In short, Homais indulges in the favorite pastime of the bourgeois male who is, at times, perhaps a little resentful of the erotic limitations imposed on him by his entirely respectable existence, a bit of verbal philandering, a safe verbal excursion into the adventurous regions of
a life less subject to sublimation. But Homais returns to Yonville unsullied in body, though perhaps not in mind, with a supply of cheminots for Madame Homais wrapped in his foulard handkerchief.

But Monsieur Homais' petty bourgeois passions are not all as harmless as his erotic gourmandising. Homais' intolerance for those who are different, his contempt for the weak, and his ruthlessness in rooting out those who might stand in his way reveal themselves in his pitiless persecution of the blind scrofulous beggar who comes to him to find a cure for his illness. When Homais cannot make good on his promise to cure him, the beggar tells everyone about the pharmacist's failure and thus becomes the target of Homais' hatred.

He must get rid of him at all costs, he decided, for the sake of his own reputation; and he launched an underhand campaign against him in which he revealed his deep cunning and his criminal vanity. (389)

The result of Homais' scheming is that the beggar is locked up in an insane asylum for the rest of his life. Emboldened by this success in local secret diplomacy, Homais continues his scheming to consolidate his power base. Before long, he becomes a man to be reckoned with. Everything occurring in the district becomes his concern. He presents himself as the driving force of "progress" in the region, so progressive, in fact, that he "felt it a disgrace to be a bourgeois. He affected bohemian ways, he even smoked!" (390-91).

The final sentence of the novel informs the reader that Homais has just been awarded the cross of the Legion of Honor, the goal of all his scheming and the tangible symbol of his power. This award to Homais reenforces Flaubert's bitter, cynical message: it is the
cunning petty bourgeois, the ruthless, self-important Homais who prospers, because he is the dominant type of his age. The weakly but loyal Charles dies soon after Emma and Berthe has to earn a meager living in a mill. The Bovary household is auctioned off, and all the beautiful things that were the props of Emma's feverish fantasies are gone. In Homais, Emma, Leon and many of the minor characters in his novel, Flaubert created different versions of the ideologization of bourgeois consciousness. He succeeds in portraying a society which has been stultified by mindless materialism and numbed by the disillusionment following the disappointed hope of the revolution.

Life under the July Monarchy in the France of the early 1800s certainly had little of the glamour and revolutionary fervor that had inspired earlier generations. Under a succession of weak Bourbon kings and, finally, Louis Philippe of Orleans, the once revolutionary bourgeoisie settled into complacent enjoyment of its political power, focusing on making money and carefully monitoring any tendencies in intellectual and political life which might change the status quo. Perhaps never before had there been as stark a contrast between the heroism and revolutionary enthusiasm of a class and its eventual decline into political reaction once it had come into power. The colorlessness and narrow-mindedness of bourgeois life with its exclusive focus on utility, the pursuit of money, status, and the maintaining of social convention all contributed to creating a stale and stifling intellectual atmosphere which must be appreciated if one is to understand the rapture with which French youth greeted the
literature of Romanticism. Being a follower of Romantic writers and poets like Gautier, Musset, Lamartine, or Sand, meant to adopt an iconoclastic platform, a new way of thinking and feeling diametrically opposed to that of the ruling bourgeoisie.

Young Flaubert, by nature an unusual, perhaps even an eccentric youth, seized upon Romanticism as an ideology which provided a "method for his madness", a rationale for his scorn for bourgeois life in Rouen, his hometown in Normandy. His desire for a more adventurous life found an outlet in his writing of bizarre and bloody dramas in the Romantic mold, in his fantasies of the chivalric Middle Ages and his longing for the colorful scenes of the Orient. Much more than just a youthful fancy, this obsession remained so powerful that it could only be exorcised by living it out: in 1849, Flaubert left France for a two-year journey through Egypt and the Middle East. After his return in 1851, although still a Romantic at heart, he began work on a novel dealing with a bourgeois theme set in a Norman village: Madame Bovary was in the making. Flaubert wrote this novel as a lesson in "exactness, simplicity, and force" (Steegmuller 229). For more than four years he submitted to the exacting standard of discipline he enforced upon himself, writing and rewriting each paragraph until his ideal of lucid simplicity, truthfulness to his inner image of the events, and harmony of meaning and sound had been achieved. Thus, one of the greatest, most passionate novels of the 19th century, which reads as if it were written effortlessly, "naturally", and which is perhaps the most eloquent depiction of the
demise of Romantic ideals, was written by an incurable Romantic and was the result of unparalleled self-discipline and painstaking attention to detail.

Flaubert is counted among the great realists of his time, but aside from the fact that he despised the banal subjects of realism (including the subject of his own novel) and never had much love for Balzac and other realist writers, I simply do not think that the adjective "realist" is adequate for the novel Flaubert created. In Madame Bovary, Flaubert performed a feat of "negative capability". The author becomes, in Emerson's terms, "a transparent eyeball", whose function it is not to filter and interpret, but to see, see, see. He manages to take himself almost completely out of the narrative process, withholding comment and evaluation, and presenting the plot in highly objective, concise language. At times, the author's disengaged description creates a coldness of tone which is almost cruel. In fact, I suspect that much of the outrage which followed the publication of Madame Bovary was a reaction not so much to the plot of the novel--for there had been numerous amoureuses before Emma Bovary in literature--as to Flaubert's coldly objective descriptive style. The scenes describing Emma's death, for example, are scientifically objective, creating an effect both brutal in its unfeelingness and fascinating in its observation of detail and the novelty of aesthetic vision:

Emma's head was turned toward her right shoulder. The corner of her open mouth was like a black hole in the lower part of her face; her two thumbs were bent inward toward the palms of her hands; a kind of white dust powdered her lashes; and the outline of her eyes was beginning to disappear in a viscous pallor, as though spiders had been spinning cobwebs over her face. (374)
This unsentimental close-up view of death is cinematic in its lingering intensity. It is a decidedly modern vision of death. There is no attempt made to palliate the horror of the "black hole" of the dead woman's mouth. At the same time, Baudelaire could have written the line about the spiders spinning cobwebs over the corpse's eyelids. The density of the image is so astounding and it is of such poetic beauty that one quite forgets the stark reality of death and incipient decomposition from which it sprang. Flaubert is a writer of uncompromising honesty. He describes everything there is to be seen, whether it be ugly or beautiful in conventional terms.

Flaubert was a bourgeois artist, and, at the same time, it is obvious from his work and from his letters to friends that he passionately despised any manifestation of the bourgeois. This contradiction can be sorted out, to a degree, by insisting that Flaubert views himself as a bourgeois in the grand tradition of the cultured, humanistic Weltburger and despised the dominant type of the petty bourgeois. Nevertheless, it would be reductive to ignore the internal conflict which results from Flaubert's innermost awareness that he was, in fact, part of a society he despised. Not even holing himself up in his beloved Croisset could change that fact. But Flaubert obviously took great pleasure in shocking the bourgeois wherever he could find him, though he limited his shocking activities to parading in Arabian gowns on his Croisset balcony and to brandishing the sword of irony. In a letter to his sister Caroline he
writes about a dinner invitation at the home of bourgeois acquaintances:

Naturally Monsieur and Madame Daupias, who are frantic philippistes—who attend court and therefore, like Madame de Sevigne after dancing with Louis XIV, cry "What a great king!"—were very shocked by the way I spoke of him. But as you know, the more indignant I make the bourgeois, the happier I am. So I was thoroughly satisfied with my evening. (Steegmuller 17)

Flaubert's inexplicable attacks, which left him weak and unfit for a conventional profession, permitted him to beat a dignified retreat from the bourgeois life of a lawyer which his father had had in mind for him. His illness thus saved him from the crippling effects of a bourgeois profession, a fate which had been so horribly exemplified to him through the life of his youthful soulmate, Alfred Le Poittevin. Unpractical and passive, languid and literary by temperament, Alfred lets himself be nudged into the legal profession and a "good" marriage. He escaped into alcoholism, knowing that he had failed his own calling, and died a premature death.

As an "invalid", Flaubert has earned the right to abstain from practical occupation. In January 1845, he writes to a friend.

My illness has brought one benefit, in that I am allowed to spend my time as I like, a great thing in life. For me I can imagine nothing in the world preferable to a nice, well heated room, with the books one loves and the leisure one wants. (Steegmuller 23)

Flaubert is quite open about the fact that he welcomes his illness, because it justifies the only way of life that will allow him to be a bourgeois and to be an artist critical of the bourgeoisie at the same time.
The only way not to be unhappy is to shut yourself up in Art and count all the rest as nothing. One's pride, if it is well founded, makes up for everything else. As for me, I've really been fairly well since resigning myself to perpetual illness. You're aware, aren't you, that there are many things lacking in my existence? That I had it in me to be as lavish as the richest men in the world, every bit as tender as the greatest lovers, every bit as sensual as the most unbridled libertines: However, I do not regret the absence of riches, or love, or the flesh, and everyone is astonished to see me behaving so sensibly. I have said an irrevocable farewell to the practical life. My nervous illness was the transition between two states. From now until a day that is far distant I ask for no more than five or six quiet hours in my room, a good fire in winter, and a pair of candles to light me at night. (Steegmuller 31)

The conflicted bourgeois artist chose the life of an ascetic within the safe confines of his home at Croisset. Afraid of an "outside world" dominated by the bourgeois utilitarian, profit-oriented ideology of capitalism, Flaubert hides in Croisset and behind his dedication to art, because it it only through art that he can maintain the protective rational distance to other human beings—a distance he stubbornly maintained to everyone outside his immediate family and a few close friends. In the passage quoted above, Flaubert describes himself as, potentially, "every bit as tender as the greatest lovers". Indeed, he was a human being with a capacity for deep thought and deep feeling. He was deeply attached to his sister, Caroline, to his mother, to Alfred Le Poittevin and his lifelong friend, Louis Bouilhet -- but he lost all of them in the course of his life, which must have confirmed his conviction that life can only be lived happily in ascetic withdrawal and in dedication to art. Unlike Robinson Crusoe, Flaubert did not have the privilege of living on an
island, isolated from the noxious influence of bourgeois ideology by a vast ocean. Thus, in order to save his critical subjectivity from "ideological contamination", Flaubert created his own islands: first Croisset, and, finally, the isolation of his own mind.

Even from his isolation in Croisset, however, Flaubert waged a spectacular war with bourgeois society. Upon the publication of *Madame Bovary*, he was attacked by a veritable army of outraged critics. Only Baudelaire really enjoyed and understood the novel. What perhaps outraged Flaubert's bourgeois critics most is his refusal to take a moral stand. Even relatively recent critics, like Martin Turnell, react most angrily to Flaubert's "cataloguing" items without displaying any "interest" in his subject. Turnell then goes on to chide Flaubert's lack of "normal" and "healthy" standards which he interprets to be indicators of Flaubert's "lack of maturity" (310, 303). He further criticizes Flaubert for not presenting a coherent, intelligible character, just "a series of moods" (307), which leaves the reader with "a sense of hollowness at the centre" (311). Turnell identifies the problem correctly, but his own ideological determination, as a bourgeois critic who believes in the ideology of a coherent self, makes it impossible for him to see the root cause of this problem. Emma desires for the sake of desiring and kills herself when there is nothing left to desire and when she realizes that "adultery . . . could be as banal as marriage." (330). The reader is forced to acknowledge that Emma exists only as a vehicle for desire and that she has very little "substance" as a "personality."
Flaubert does not portray a readily intelligible, coherent personality in Emma, because it is not what he sees in reality. Emma is a type, though artfully individualized in her circumstances, of the young bourgeois woman who is defined only by her desire. It does not matter what the goal of this desire is—it is always a desire that cannot be satisfied, because its cause is the defectiveness of the desiring "subject". Emma's desire is anarchic, "disruptive" or "scenic" desire, as Bersani calls it. Its exposure in Flaubert's novel is threatening to the very structure of bourgeois society, because it explodes the cultural myth of the coherent, intelligible self. In Emma, writes Bersani, "Flaubert creates an insubstantial center of consciousness" and "in spite of the fact that she is, after all, part of a realistic fiction in which characters have names, social positions and personalities, she almost succeeds in existing without what the realistic novel generally proposes as an identity." (93). It is this threat which is the true "scandal" in Flaubert's "indecent" novel. The recognition that ideological structures are substituting for what used to be independent selfhood, and that there really is no coherent self outside ideology, is not what bourgeois critics wanted to hear. But Flaubert was only the beginning: Virginia Woolf's novel To the Lighthouse goes even one step further. In this novel, Woolf shows us the highly developed subjectivity of Mrs. Ramsay, who seeks relief from the burden of selfhood in de-individuation, and, ultimately, in death. In a novelistic world without any human agent, we are confronted with the extreme of
ideological domination: the eradication of subjectivity, and, finally, the involution of this process and the creation of a newly defined, non-capitalist subjectivity.

Endnotes

1. The term "selfhood" is here used *sous erasure* in Jacques Derrida's sense: we cannot justly speak of "selfhood" or "subjectivity" where the absence of such a formation is the focus of our inquiry. At the same time, however, we need to use the terms for lack of a better expression. Derrida's solution to this quandary is to use the term "under erasure", actually crossing it out in his text, to signal the brittleness of the language we are forced to employ.

2. I have been asked why Flaubert chose Emma and not Charles for his protagonist, since Charles is certainly another example of a seriously limited subjectivity. I think there are several reasons: first, Charles is too inert by nature even to desire strongly; he does not have enough imagination to even conceive of being someone else. He is at peace with his existence and finds contentedness and a sense of selfhood in his roles as a father, husband, and an officier de sante. This sense of selfhood is very rigid and non-reflective and does not result in the development of an independent subjectivity. Of course, Emma does not succeed in developing an independent subjectivity, either, but her psychology is so much more complex and interesting as a vehicle for Flaubert's project than Charles's. She has an extraordinary
ability to process sensatory impressions; she is very susceptible to subtle ideological messages, she dreams, desires, and frets with her fate, thus representing millions of other bourgeois women who have been similarly conditioned by ideology. Emma is the dominant type of bourgeois womanhood as far as the formation of her consciousness is concerned, whereas Charles is a residual type, a peasant who could have lived in feudal times. In fact, he might have been much happier as a good farmer; as an officier de sante, he is painfully mediocre and is really out of his depth, as his failed surgery of Hippolyte's leg shows. The last, and perhaps the most important reason why Flaubert focused on Emma instead of Charles, is that as a woman, Emma does not pursue a career and therefore is not measured by worldly success, whereas Charles is viewed as little short of a failure, because he lacks the drive to get ahead in life. With a female heroine, Flaubert can concentrate on Emma's inwardness only. She is who she is—not a doctor, a lawyer, or a merchant. There is less societal and economic ballast to cut through in order to get to the central concern of the novel, ideology and how it impacts upon human subjectivity.

3. The equation of wealth with the experiencing of emotional fulfillment is further effective in deflecting criticism: those who do not share in power blame themselves for their unhappiness and dissatisfaction and cannot recognize the preprogrammed nature of their dilemma. Emma believes that she might be happy -- if she
lived in Paris, or if she lived with Rodolphe in a small, idyllic fishing village by the Mediterranean in a stylishly simple setting, spending her days languidly swinging in a hammock. She blames her lack of emotional fulfillment on the absence of the trappings of passion and is thus unable to recognize the true cause of her emptiness, the lack of an experiencing subjectivity.

4. Emma's need to make Leon conform to her mental image of a romantic lover speaks to a fatal inability to experience life first-hand, to see the individual before her. She suffers from a kind of radical "literalness", in that she insists that life should literally conform to literature. In spite of her subtle sensatory abilities, there is no hint in the novel that she is capable of loving other human beings for their own sake, abstracted from her own need for them. We already suspect that Emma cannot love others and give of herself, because there is no self to give. This intuition is theoretically buttressed by Lacan and other post-Freudians who would argue that she has never resolved the crisis caused by the young child's beginning awareness of the separation between the self and the world, a process which is crucial to subject-formation. She still grieves for the primeval unity with the world experienced by the infant, and her impotent desiring replicates the young child's anger at the inescapable realization that there is indeed a rift between the self and the object world. I largely agree with this analysis, although it
needs to be put into its historical context to reveal its full relevance to Emma's case. Emma substitutes the act of desiring, which is a persistent denial of reality, for the necessary acknowledgement of the separation between self and world. Bourgeois ideology facilitates and promotes this deception, because it suggests that reality is malleable, shapeable, and that the world can be made one with the self, that it can indeed be made to express the self. While this may have been possible in Crusoe's time, it is untrue for most people living in the late 19th century, and especially for a young woman trapped in a Norman country town, thus creating painful discrepancies of ideology and reality which can only be bridged by the constant act of desiring. This activity, which is in reality a non-activity, undermines life and reality further and draws its strength from Emma's already very weak sense of selfhood. The more she hates her Yonville life, the more strongly she desires a more romantic life, and the smaller are her chances to liberate herself from the fatal netting of ideology.

5. It is interesting that the incident which brings Leon closest to breaking with Emma is her demanding of him to break bourgeois property laws. While truly romantic heroes, such as Schiller's Karl Moor in Die Rauber, cheerfully take from the rich, Leon's balking at the idea of breaking bourgeois law emphasizes his true class alliance and exposes his romantic melancholy as a stance.
6. That this discomfiture with women who are driven by sexual passion is by no means a 19th century phenomenon is evident from the gut-wrenching fear experienced by the modern audiences of Fatal Attraction, a film which stars Glenn Close as a jilted mistress who will not be put aside and haunts her happily married bourgeois lover (Michael Douglas) and his family. While the initial script called for the mad heroine's suicide, previewing audiences clearly needed a more retributive and final ending to restore their mental balance. As a result, the script was rewritten and the bourgeois world order is restored as the erring husband's faithful wife shoots and kills the demonic intruder into their happy life. Glenn Close's role in this film was so upsetting to some movie-goers that she actually received death-threats from several anonymous callers.

7. It must be noted, however, that I am not implying that Homais espouses the true spirit of Socratic thought. Homais is not motivated by the desire to reveal preconceived notions and to see things as they truly are, free of ideological accretions, but merely by his power schemes.

8. Sartre argues that Flaubert portrays Lariviere ironically. I fail to see the irony, but I accept this possibility as part of a complex psychological refraction of Flaubert's ambiguity about his father and his own class origins.

9. The revolutionary liberal ideals of liberte, egalite, fraternite which had made the bourgeoisie the most successful revolutionary
class to date are adulterated and watered down in this historical transition. The petty bourgeoisie retains only those ideals pertaining to economic activity: pragmatism, materialism, and utilitarianism. From the enlightened early bourgeois' confidence in the powers of reason and in science, the petty bourgeois retains a technocrat's faith in technology and efficiency. The democratic precept of the inherent equality of all human beings as to their rights as citizens is interpreted as equality of economic opportunity, and "liberty", the native political right of all human beings, becomes the liberty to try one's luck in the economy and the "choice" to succeed or fail.

10. A term coined by Keats. It refers to the ability of the artist to take his own personality out of the work of art. Keats held that the true poet had no personality in the conventional sense; he was the "chameleon poet", whose subjectivity becomes the foil for the emotions he portrays in his art. Flaubert himself gives an excellent explanation of the necessity for this kind of authorial withdrawal from the text to achieve unvitiated truthfulness in art.

He avoided conclusions of any kind, scientific or not, and his reluctance to pass judgement derived from two sources: his reading of literature, which showed him that geniuses like Homer and Shakespeare never revealed their opinions, and his philosophic scepticism, which he had learnt from Spinoza and confirmed by observing the endless variety of intellectual dogma. "In order to live," he told one of his correspondents, "one must give up having downright ideas about anything. Humanity is as it is; our job is not to change it but to know it. . . Throw away all hope of an explanation. The explanation lies with God; He alone possesses it.
and He doesn't pass it on." This hesitation to pronounce an ultimate opinion was linked with his belief in the moral virtues of dispassionate observation and crystallized in his doctrine of impersonality. Perhaps impersonality was an unfortunate word to choose: all too often it has been taken first by his correspondents and then by his critics to mean an inhuman detachment from every emotion, painful or pleasant, whereas Flaubert intended it to convey a rejection of the personal only so far as the personal distorted and vitiated art. If an author expressed his own opinions, the effect was to limit the operations of his characters, to hamper them with an irrelevant individual prejudice. "The less one feels a thing, the more suited one is to express it as it is (as it is always in itself, in its generality, stripped of all its ephemeral contingents). But one must have the faculty of making oneself feel it." (Spencer 139-140)
Virginia Woolf's To the Lighthouse reflects a further stage in the crisis of bourgeois subjectivity. In examining the development of subjectivity in chapters one through four, I have been shown that a critical subjectivity grows out of the critical consciousness of one's social and historical situation and can then be used to actively change and transform the existing social and economic structure. However, as the pressures of ideological control upon human subjectivity intensify, it either perishes altogether—as in Emma Bovary, or the critical subject is forced into an inner exile, unable and unwilling to exercise any control over a world which is increasingly seen as meaningless and chaotic. Woolf's central character, Mrs. Ramsay, reflects this development toward a subjectivity which disengages itself from reality. She expresses a yearning for de-individuation which implies the rejection of history and a final act of capitulation before the destructive influence of ideology. This analysis will explore Woolf's representation of the dialectic of subjectivity on the level of the main characters (the plot level), Mr. and Mrs. Ramsay and Lily Briscoe, and on the structural level, through an examination of the writer's narrative technique.
The new aspects of Mrs. Ramsay's subjectivity, in the first part of *To the Lighthouse*, can be best appreciated when seen within a historical context that spans all four novels we have examined in the previous chapters. I have shown that subjectivity is a historically charged construct both fostered and checked by capitalism. In *Robinson Crusoe*, subjectivity is shown in its infant stage: Crusoe has developed an inner space, a kind of inwardness from which he reflects upon his experience which is a new phenomenon in literature. But on the whole, Crusoe's subjectivity is almost entirely externalized into his economic activity on the island. Crusoe is what he does. He makes the island a reflection of his own inwardness. In Crusoe, subjectivity exhibits in its purest form the double aspect which makes it so attractive to capitalism: it is an inner space which has been created as a result of the subject's critical reflection upon his or her social and historical situation, and it has also an active, outgoing component which imprints itself upon and transforms the external world.

In *Villette*, more than one-hundred years later, we encounter a narrator-protagonist with a much more complex but also a conflicted inwardness. The narrator's mind has become the stage of the novel, but the narrator also uses various defensive strategies against the reader to protect herself from the sanctions dealt out by the dominant ideology of her time, which punished women who dared break out of proscribed roles. In the course of the novel, Lucy Snowe develops from the frightened and disheartened young woman who strives to be "as
inoffensive as a shadow" and is firmly resolved to live her true life in the mind, into a troubled but courageous, complex and mature woman who has become a successful entrepreneur and accepts the choices she has made in her life. In this novel, one can already see the tug of war between an ever more complex subjectivity and the ever stronger ideological controls that are imposed upon it. The impact of these controls manifests itself in the temptation Lucy feels to accept the dissatisfying nature of reality and to withdraw into a substitute fantasy life, resigning herself to it as the natural fate of poor women. However, in Villette, Lucy is still capable of overcoming this tendency. After a severe emotional crisis she takes control of her own life. Her subjectivity is thus still an empowering space, a vantage point from which she can become an active participant in the economy and an independent historical subject in Lukacs' sense.

In Madame Bovary, Flaubert depicts a triad of characters who represent different historical stages of the ideologization of bourgeois subjectivity, which I correlated with Raymond Williams' categories of the "residual", "dominant", and the "emergent". In the novel, they coexist as a result of the unevenness of social, historical, and psychological development. Emma represents the dominant ideology: her inwardness is entirely ideologized and her sensibility remains entirely on the sensory level, a hunger for more and different sensory stimuli, without developing a corresponding faculty of critical reflection. Homais is the type of the emergent petty bourgeois. Driven by his will to power, he is ruthless and
self-serving, giving lip service to revolutionary ideals, to scientific principles, and to a progressive humanism while unerringly pursuing his power schemes. Homais is contrasted with the "residual" Lariviere, he is the representative of the educated, freethinking, cosmopolitan, entrepreneurial bourgeoisie of the revolutionary period. But Lariviere's character is an anachronism; he is the representative of a dying breed of bourgeois. What is important here is to recognize the stranglehold which ideological controls have on the mind of the major characters. Emma does not have a viable subjectivity and Homais is a creature of ideology, even though he himself is one of the wielders of power.

In *Bleak House*, the ideological conflict which was contained within a single character's subjectivity in earlier novels is externalized into the narrative strategy. By creating the socially critical omniscient narrator, Dickens could afford to depict an almost entirely untroubled subjectivity in Esther. It has been shown that in order to get an accurate picture of the actual dimension of the ideological conflict going on in *Bleak House*, one must view these two narrators as a "coping strategy" of the embattled subjectivity of the author.

In *To the Lighthouse*, finally, we can trace both a new development in the main character's, Mrs. Ramsay's, subjectivity, and an extremely innovative way of representing the impact of ideological controls upon the author through the narrative technique. The latter aspect will be
analyzed in depth in my examination of the "Time Passes" section of the novel. Before turning to that, however, I would like to embark upon a closer examination of Mrs. Ramsay and the two other major characters, Mr. Ramsay and Lily Briscoe, who complete and complement Woolf's portrayal of Mrs. Ramsay's modern subjectivity. Although the Ramsay family is shown to be anything but rich, Mrs. Ramsay is a genteel upper middle class lady who has never had to work for a living outside the home. Thus, while she shares with Lucy Snowe a very acute sensibility and a reckless clear-sightedness, she cannot share with her the sense of empowerment that comes from Lucy's successful "crossing over" into the traditionally male sphere of economic activity. Mrs. Ramsay still very much views the world as being bifurcated along gender lines, where it is the task of the woman to protect men against their own obsessive nature and their "fateful sterility".1 In spite of this limitation, Mrs. Ramsay possesses a highly developed inwardness. Her mind is the stage of almost the entire first part of the novel.

Instead of following an external plotline, the author traces the intricate paths of Mrs. Ramsay's reveries, in which both time and space become intertwined in the eternal present of the mind. As Jean Guiguet writes in *Virginia Woolf and Her Works*, time and space become the contents of the mind and are absorbed into Mr. Ramsay's subjectivity (385-386). The world of the novel is thus total subjectivity. In my analysis of Bronte's *Villette*, I had found that Lucy Snowe's subjectivity had become the stage of the novelistic
action. The reader is forced to rely on the narrator for all information about Lucy Snowe and the world of the novel. However, while Lucy roughly adheres to a chronological narrative sequence and thus respects the external, objective nature of space and time, this is no longer true in Woolf's novel. Everything has become interiorized. Since both time and space are subjectivized, there are no longer any outside, objective standards. This process of extreme interiorization is accompanied by an inability to act and a sense of entropy. As a result, Mrs. Ramsay's complex but weak inwardness eventually succumbs to ideological pressures.

However, it would be reductive to look exclusively to the character of Mrs. Ramsay as an indicator of Woolf's representation of subjectivity in this novel. Mrs. Ramsay occupies merely one position in a complex field of energy which she shares with the other characters, in particular Mr. Ramsay and Lily Briscoe. Mrs. Ramsay's subjectivity cannot be understood in isolation, but as complemented by the alternatives developed through the other characters. It is my thesis that Mrs. Ramsay represents, in Raymond Williams' terms, the "dominant" subjectivity, whereas Mr. Ramsay and Lily Briscoe represent "residual" and "emergent" types of subjectivity, respectively.

In Mr. Ramsay, Woolf paints the portrait of a 20th century Robinson Crusoe turned philosopher. Ramsay is the product and proponent of Western rationalism and logocentrism, two aspects of a system of thought within which capitalism has prospered. He believes that the universe is governed by an inherent but hidden order; he
believes that it is knowable, through the efforts of science and philosophy, and controllable by the economic activity of man. Ramsay insists that the world is an alphabet to be deciphered by man if his mind could only "get from Q to R". He believes that the human will can shape and control reality and force it to yield meaning, which he thinks is inherent in a rational universe.

He is seen by his wife, children, and the summer guests as an egocentric tyrant who constantly demands of all around him that they pay him homage and bolster his ego so that he may continue the illusion of his own strength. He needs reassurance, because at bottom he knows that rationalism is not tenable in the face of a chaotic reality. Ultimately it is his inability to confront reality as it is, which makes him the pitiable creature which he sometimes seems. Mrs. Ramsay pities and protects not only her husband, but, in fact, the entire male sex.

Indeed, she had the whole of the other sex under her protection; for reasons she could not explain, for their chivalry and valour, for the fact that they negotiated treaties, ruled India, controlled finance; finally for an attitude towards herself which no woman could fail to feel or to find agreeable, something trustful, childlike, reverential; (13).

She pities men because they seem to be so brave, chivalric, efficient, and worldly, but in reality, they are quite unable to cope with life. There is always the strange duality between admiration for the achievements of the public man and pity for—sometimes even ridicule of—the private man, a duality of feeling which seems to have been true of Virginia Woolf's attitude towards her own father, Leslie
Stephen, the model for Mr. Ramsay. Lily Briscoe also expresses this
duality of feeling about Mr. Ramsay: she wonders why "so brave a man
in thought should be so timid in life" (70).

It was his fate, his peculiarity, whether he wished it
or not, to come out thus on a spit of land which the sea
is slowly eating away, and there to stand, like a
desolate sea-bird, alone. It was his power, his gift,
suddenly to shed all superfluities, to shrink and
diminish so that he looked barer and felt sparer, even
physically, yet lost none of his intensity of mind, and
so to stand on his little ledge facing the dark of human
ignorance, how we know nothing and the sea eats away the
ground we stand on—that was his fate, his gift. (68-69)

In the realm of philosophical inquiry, Mr. Ramsay is as lonely and
courageous as Robinson on his island; he is even physically
courageous, a fact which is shown by his reacting with equanimity to
old Macalister's report of the drowning of three men (305-306). He
belongs to the age of the colonizers and explorers, the scientists and
entrepreneurs, when the British Empire spanned the globe and the world
indeed seemed knowable and controllable. Yet with the cataclysmic
events of the 20th century, this belief is shattered. When it comes
to facing the possibility that it may in fact be impossible to get
from "Q to R", because there is no order, no alphabet of human
knowledge, Mr. Ramsay cannot accept this truth. He is looking for
certainties in an age that cannot offer certainty any more.

Woolf employs here an interesting division along gender lines:
men, as represented by Mr. Ramsay and Tansley, function successfully
in society. They are the scientists, the philosophers, the leaders of
armies, the politicians, the businessmen and bankers. But the very
mindset which enables them to function in a capitalist society makes
them unable to accept the chaos which lurks just below the surface of a precarious order. In other words, men, to a much higher degree than women, have been shaped by an ideology which hinges upon the assumption that life can be shaped and controlled. This conditioning leaves them helpless in the face of an uncontrollable, unpredictable reality; thus, men in *To the Lighthouse* are shown to be dependent on women to protect them from their own narrowness of vision, which leads to the "fatal sterility" which Mrs. Ramsay so pities in every man.

Women, on the other hand, are largely excluded from the "field of power" (politics, finance, industry) which men have created for themselves. In a society in which this field of power exercises more and more crushing ideological control over human subjectivity, exclusion from participation in this power-game can in fact give some women the space needed to retain a degree of inner freedom. It is therefore not surprising that in *To the Lighthouse* it is the women, Mrs. Ramsay and Lily Briscoe, who have remained critical, reflective, and courageous enough to face any truth about life and their own selves. Mrs. Ramsay has always been keenly aware of the discrepancy between the ideologically prescribed roles of mother and wife and her deeply personal need for an individual existence: it is an almost anachic impulse toward pure self-realization, even at the cost of all the human ties of emotion and love. The necessity to conceal this strong need to "be herself" from a society which quite explicitly holds up to women the ideal of self-sacrifice may have made her more aware of all forms of ideological control.
But one will have to differentiate among different female subjectivities in *To the Lighthouse*: although Mrs. Ramsay and Lily Briscoe have much in common (they have in fact often been analyzed as doubles), they live their subjectivities differently. What is more, I will argue that they represent different stages in the struggle for an independent subjectivity: Mrs. Ramsay represents the "dominant" subjectivity, while Lily may point the way towards a new, "emergent" subjectivity in renewed and stronger opposition to ideology. It must be noted, however, that in labeling Mrs. Ramsay as the representative of the "dominant" type of subjectivity, I do not mean to imply that her subjectivity is that of the majority of the people. In Virginia Woolf's novels we are never dealing with the "masses". Her novels always encompass the genteel lives of a privileged group of of people, and in *To the Lighthouse* this group consists of a poet, a scholar, a philosopher, a painter, and, of course, Mrs. Ramsay, a cultured and gracious upper-class lady. Thus, in speaking of her as representing the "dominant" subjectivity, I mean that in the literature of the early 20th century, this type of subjectivity is the most frequently represented and the most influential one, and I view this as an accurate reflection of the condition of the intellectuals and artists in this period.

As a devoted wife and the mother of eight children, Mrs. Ramsay sometimes feels herself to be "a sponge sopped full of human emotions" (51), with "scarcely a shell of herself left for her to know herself by" (60). Like Dickens' Esther Summerson, she longs to be "taken off
the flaming necklace of life", to be herself alone, and, ultimately, to find rest in not being herself, in a state of blissful deindividuation.

For now she need not think about anybody. She could be herself, by herself. And that was what now she often felt the need of—to think; well, not even to think. To be silent; to be alone. All the being and the doing, expansive, glittering, vocal, evaporated; and one shrunk, with a sense of solemnity, to being oneself, a wedge-shaped core of darkness, something invisible to others. Although she continued to knit, and sat upright, it was thus that she felt herself; and this self having shed its attachments was free for the strangest adventures. When life sank down for a moment, the range of experience seemed limitless. . . This core of darkness could go anywhere, for no one saw it. They could not stop it, she thought, exulting. There was freedom, there was peace, there was, most welcome of all, a summoning together, a resting on a platform of stability. Not as oneself did none find rest ever, in her experience (she accomplished something dexterous here with her needles) but as a wedge of darkness. Losing personality, one lost the fret, the hurry, the stir; and there rose to her lips always some exclamation of triumph over life when things came together in this peace, this rest, this eternity; and pausing there she looked out to meet that stroke of the Lighthouse, the long steady stroke, the last of the three, which was her stroke. . . (96-97)

Mrs. Ramsay's truly self-effacing desire to shed the fetters of selfhood comes at the end of two centuries' development towards an ever more complex subjectivity in the novel and represents, simultaneously, a new high point and a total reversal of this development. Mrs. Ramsay's turning away from historical reality and her yearning for ecstatic delimitation are reflected in the narrative technique and the form of the novel, and, beyond the novel itself, this new desire is reflected in much of the literature of the early 20th century. In To the Lighthouse, Mrs. Ramsay withdraws from life
into the recesses of her mind. In a parallel move, Woolf no longer presents to the reader a novel which enacts significant external events. Instead, the first part of the novel is an extended reverie of Mrs. Ramsay's, and intertwined with it, there are fleeting glimpses into the consciousnesses of other characters, especially that of Lily Briscoe. Thus, life is not represented directly, as it is lived but life as it is remembered, life as a text woven of memories. This tendency towards a removal from the direct experience of life towards ever increasing textualization and aestheticization is characteristic of much modern literature.²

In the Ramsays' lives there is an unprecedented sense of remoteness from the flow of history. I do not mean to imply that Virginia Woolf ought to have written a social documentary or a historical novel, but both Dickens and Bronte, for example, are historical in a much more concrete way. The texture of 19th century history as it is lived in daily life is palpable in their novels, while it is genteelly absent from the lives of the Ramsays. Both Bronte and Dickens dramatize the dialectics of subjectivity, as does Woolf, but the result in her novels is an inwardness without a well-developed historical consciousness. Ultimately this explicit rejection of historicity is itself an accurate rendering of early 20th century British society, which began to turn away from the historical reality of the decline of the empire and the coming of World War I. The tendency to live life as memory, as a text, is very strong in To the Lighthouse. There is a pervasive sense that Mrs. Ramsay knows
about, but chooses to deny, the dark truths underlying her comfortable life: she thinks of the roll of the breakers on the beach as threatening; she becomes irritated when she thinks of her Swiss maid's father dying of cancer; she knows that there is no justice to be had, and she certainly knows that there is no merciful God. Because we know that Mrs. Ramsay has had all these thoughts, we also know that we are not dealing with a character who is incapable of sophisticated thought. But instead of facing reality, she turns inward, living her true self in her reveries and yearning for a release from all the many ties that bind her to others. She no longer wants to be a "sponge sopped full of emotion"—she wants to be a single core of darkness, a self which is entirely centered and, simultaneously, oblivious of selfhood and without consciousness.

Lukacs writes in *History and Class Consciousness* that, in order to act as a historical subject, one has to know history. I will rephrase this statement and say that, in order to escape ideologization and to maintain an independent subjectivity, one must confront history. Mrs. Ramsay does not do so. Woolf chooses to let her die unceremoniously, behind the scenes, so to speak. Her death is shocking, because the way in which Woolf reports it breaks with literary conventions, but it really does not come as a surprise. It is the fulfillment of the suicidal yearning for deindividuation which is discernible throughout the first part of the novel. It is not usually advisable to argue from biographical material, because it is often a reductive shortcut. Yet one cannot help but feel that Woolf
dramatized her own hardly suppressed desire to shed the burden of consciousness, as she did, years later, when she took her own life. There is very little indication in Woolf's novel that she has any ironical distance to Mrs. Ramsay, or Lily Briscoe; there is no ironic break between the author and her characters. It seems therefore justifiable to argue that *To the Lighthouse* depicts the status of subjectivity as Woolf sees it and lives it herself. Her protagonists' withdrawal from historical reality and the yearning for deindividuation in fact may have been her only solution to escape the "violation of one's soul" (as Septimus puts it in *Mrs. Dalloway*) by the pressures of ideology.

The drive towards timelessness and death as it is dramatized in Mrs. Ramsay expresses her desire for a moment of stability in a constantly changing reality. Mrs. Ramsay knows that "not as oneself did one find rest ever" (96), and in saying so Woolf implies that the self, the "I" is in fact always and inextricably historical, mutable, and inherently unstable and that stability and enduringness can be found only as a non-individual entity and in death. The modern recognition that change is the only constant and that there is not preexistent, external order that could invest the world with meaning is frightening, because it places the burden for creating order and meaning on the individual.

If I were asked to say, in one sentence, what *To the Lighthouse* is about, I would say that it describes the reaction of several characters to the recognition that they are living in a world of
unpredictable, chaotic change and that the burden for creating order and meaning is upon them alone. It is the acceptance of this central recognition that takes the measure of modern man. Mrs. Ramsay accepts the responsibility for creating meaning and order, however limited and momentary, and she embraces the chaotic nature of life. Like Clarissa Dalloway, whose parties are "offerings" of communion in an increasingly atomized society, Mrs. Ramsay views it as her task to extract from the chaotic flow of life moments of stillness and beauty. Like a sculptor shapes the clay, she uses human beings as her "material" to create her work of art: a magic knitting of human lives into a moment of communion that will endure in the memories of those she assembles around her dinner table. As she begins the dinner ceremony, she feels the separateness of all the human beings gathered around her table:

Nothing seemed to have merged. They all sat separate, and the whole effort of merging and flowing and creating rested on her. Again she felt, as a fact without hostility, the sterility of men, for if she did not do it nobody would do it... (126)

Mrs. Ramsay is the pole around which all the others group themselves. After Mrs. Ramsay's death, the summer home becomes "a house full of unrelated passions" (221).

With her finely tuned sensibility, she intuitively senses the reticence of William Bankes, the angry defiance of Charles Tansley, and the power struggle he engages in with Lily Briscoe. She deftly gives each of them their chance to assert themselves, thus creating a basis for interaction which fuses the little group of separate
individuals into a party of interconnected human beings. Human communion itself, not an individual's rationality, becomes the principle which momentarily orders chaos and suspends the flux of time. Yet by skillfully opposing the warm glow of the candlelight on the faces around the dinner table to the darkness and chaos beyond the window panes, Woolf emphasizes how fleeting and precarious this moment of communion and peace really is.

Now all were lit up, and the faces on both sides of the table were brought nearer by the candle light, and composed, as they had not been in the twilight, into a party round a table, for the night was now shut off by panes of glass, which, far from giving any accurate view of the outside world, rippled it so strangely that there, inside the room seemed to be order and dry land; there, outside, a reflection in which things wavered and vanished waterily. Some change at once went through them all, as if this had really happened, and they were all conscious of making a party together in a hollow, on an island; had their common cause against that fluidity out there. (147)

Woolf does not, in fact, say that the world within the house actually is an ordered world—it just seems to be ordered in comparison to the world outside. In contrast, the world beyond the window panes is described as being without order, distorted, and closer to the liquid element.

The darkness and the wild sea outside are associated with chaos, but also with the flux of life, while the scene within is a kind of still-life, a momentary stasis within the realm of chaos. Mrs. Ramsay's presence is the catalyst which forges this moment of human togetherness and textualizes it in the memories of each individual.

There it was, all round them. It partook, she felt, carefully helping Mr. Bankes to a specially tender piece, of eternity; . . . there is a coherence in
things, a stability; something, she meant, is immune from change, and shines out (she glanced at the window with the ripple of reflected lights) in the face of the flowing, the fleeting, the spectral, like a ruby; so that again tonight she had the feeling she had had once today already, of peace, of rest. Of such moments, she thought, the thing is made that endures. (158)

Mrs. Ramsay does not attempt to deny the essential dynamic nature of life. But her magic moments of human communion are the lasting links she has created between the past and the future, thus immortalizing herself in their memories and gaining a measure of continuity and enduringness.

They would, she thought, going on again, however long they lived, come back to this night; this moon; this wind; this house; and to her too. It flattered her, where she was most susceptible of flattery, to think how, wound about in their hearts, however long they lived she would be woven; and this, and this, and this, she thought, going upstairs, laughing, but affectionately, at the sofa on the landing (her mother's); at the rocking-chair (her father's); at the map of the Hebrides. All that would be revived again in the lives of Paul and Minta; (170)

It is conspicuous in this passage that, for Mrs. Ramsay, there is a peculiar "democracy of meaningfulness" which includes the object world in the moment of duration: the sofa, the rocking-chair, and the map of the Hebrides. Because meaning no longer preexists in the world but must be created, it is disseminated in all that participates in creating that moment of meaningfulness. Thus, the furniture and articles of daily use are as essential to the moment that "partakes of eternity" than Mrs. Ramsay herself, or Paul and Minta. In this dissemination of meaning into the object world and
apart from human consciousness, Woolf lays the foundation for a strategy which she is to explore fully in "Time Passes".

The masterfulness of Mrs. Ramsay's work of art lies in its naturalness: an artistically created naturalness through which she allows her family and guests to indulge in the momentary illusion that there are spots in time which are inherently meaningful. Only Lily Briscoe, herself an artist, recognizes the createdness of these moments of meaningfulness. Her reaction to this recognition is twofold, contradictory and yet of one piece. On the one hand, she identifies very strongly with Mrs. Ramsay and on the other hand she feels keenly the ridiculousness of Mrs. Ramsay's mania for "presiding with immutable calm over destinies which she completely failed to understand" (78). Early in the novel, leaning against Mrs. Ramsay, Lily imagines her to possess sacred knowledge that "would teach one everything" (79) and wishes to be one with her. Lily's equally strong rejection of Mrs. Ramsay grows out of her identification with her, because she fears the same fatigue, the same obliteration of an independent selfhood which she is witnessing in her. "Mrs. Ramsay had given," she muses as she stubbornly refuses to give in to Mr. Ramsay's persistent pleas for sympathy during her second visit to the Ramsay's summer house ten years later, "Giving, giving, giving, she had died. . . "(223).

It is only in the context of her existential fear of being enticed into marriage by Mrs. Ramsay and of losing her selfhood in the process, that Lily's elation becomes comprehensible, when she
discovers, in a kind of epiphany, that she need never get married, if she moves the tree to the center of her painting. The tree, of course, can be seen as her own selfhood, which is now moved to the center of her life. She need not subordinate herself to anyone. The very act of painting is an act of resistance against Tansley's insistence that "Women can't paint." Painting thus becomes both an act of defiance and an act of self-creation, or perhaps it would be more precise to call it an act of self-collection, as sunrays are collected and focused in a magnifying glass.

Always (it was in her nature, or in her sex, she did not know which) before she exchanged the fluidity of life for the concentration of painting she had a few moments of nakedness when she seemed like an unborn soul, a soul reft of body, hesitating on some windy pinnacle and exposed without protection to all the blasts of doubt. (236-237)

The circumference of the canvas provides a controllable space within which Lucy records her own interpretation of reality, assigning meaning, overcoming the flux of life as she does so. Yet the underlying chaos is not conquered, it is merely subdued, welling up even within the painting, in the form of empty space. That painting is in fact a battle with the forces of chaos becomes evident when one subjects the following passage to a close reading:

The brush descended. It flickered brown over the white canvas; it left a running mark. A second time she did it - a third time. And so pausing and so flickering, she attained a dancing rhythmical movement, as if the pauses were one part of the rhythm and the strokes another, and all were related; and so, lightly and swiftly pausing, striking, she scored her canvas with brown running nervous lines which had no sooner settled there than they enclosed (she felt it looming out at her) a space. Down in the hollow of one wave she saw the next wave towering higher and higher above her. For
what could be more formidable than that space? Here she was again, she thought, stepping back to look at it, drawn out of gossip, out of living, out of community with people into the presence of this formidable ancient enemy of hers - this other thing, this truth, this reality, which suddenly laid hands on her, emerged stark at the back of appearances and commanded her attention. (236)

The empty space, which is closely associated with the forces of chaos, stands out from the painting, claiming its right as an equal next to the lines that contain it. Lily's painting becomes rhythmical, dancelike, granting equal importance to the pauses (the space in between two strokes) and to the brushstrokes. It is no coincidence that the description of painting as a way of holding emptiness and chaos in abeyance is interwoven with the theme of the sea and the lighthouse. The rhythmic movement of the paint brush is associated with the rhythm of the waves: "Down in the hollow of one wave she saw the next wave towering higher and higher above her."

While the brushstrokes are equivalent to the strokes of the beam of light from the lighthouse, cutting through chaos as with the blade of a sword and creating order by its rhythmic appearance, the space in between brushstrokes is equivalent to the midpoint in between two waves. This deepest point in between two waves is a breathless moment of suspension, a moment of stasis in chaos. "For what could be more formidable than that space?" muses Lucy. The bulwarks of human reason and order weaken for a moment, opening the mind towards the emptiness beyond, permitting her to catch a glimpse of "this other thing, this truth, this reality" which comes to her in the form of a vision.
The act of painting is intimately associated with the author's evaluation of the status of human subjectivity in *To the Lighthouse*. Woolf's striking description of the brushstrokes descending intermittently upon the empty canvas, and the comparison of the brushstrokes with the pattern of the ocean waves, must also be read as a representation of modern subjectivity. Both Mrs. Ramsay and Lily know that emptiness and chaos are lurking just beneath the surface of life, of the painting; but through their art, both women attempt to straddle the abyss of nothingness underneath the fragile structures of life by giving it meaning and duration. I will further argue that this representation of modern subjectivity *en abyme* through painting has great significance, since Woolf finds it necessary to use a different artform working in a different medium to communicate her message. Evidently, the author has arrived at an impasse of traditional literary techniques in her attempt to represent modern subjectivity. To analyze the nature of this impasse, it is necessary to reflect upon the "native realm" of writing and the Fine Arts.

In his seminal essay *Laokoon: Oder Ueber die Grenzen der Mahlerey und Poesie*, Lessing laid out the fundamental differences of "poesy" and the Fine Arts: they differ both in the media they employ and in their technical means. Essentially, the Fine Arts are dealing with shape and color in a three-dimensional space. The effect of a painting or a piece of sculpture is based upon simultaneous impact on the observer of the composition of these components in space. In contrast, the effect of a piece of writing (poetry, a novel, a short
story, etc.) is necessarily sequential. Writing consists of stringing letters into words and sentences so as to describe characters and their actions in a particular, predetermined sequence, which is the equivalent of the spatial composition in the Fine Arts. What is crucial here is the Lessing's distinction between simultaneity as being characteristic of the Fine Arts, and sequentiality in time as characteristic for "poesy".

Woolf's description of Lily in the process of painting enters a strange twilight zone between the two art forms of painting and writing. Technically, Woolf stays within the boundaries of "poesy", but one can feel the strain and the pulling away from the enforced sequentiality of writing towards the simultaneity of representation characteristic of painting. If Woolf has trouble representing Lily's modern subjectivity in writing, as a development in time, it is because the historical perspective of the individual has itself become problematical. As both Mrs. Ramsay and Lily know, change happens so quickly and unpredictably that it is quite difficult to trace a historical development of any sort, but especially in a society that wants nothing more than to escape from history and its disasters.

This pulling away from history and ordered sequentiality explains why Woolf, and many of her contemporaries, are moving away from the traditional causative and sequential writing techniques and are adopting literary techniques stemming from the Fine Arts. This is a tendency that can be observed already in Madame Bovary, where Flaubert makes use of the "cinematic" techniques of the sustained close-up, and
it is intensified in the tableau-like dinner table scenes in *To the Lighthouse*. These techniques permit the author to achieve a "scenic" effect in which he or she can let the image speak for itself. Similarly, Mrs. Ramsay's fleeting reveries, an early form of the stream-of-consciousness technique, must be seen in this context: the seemingly random order in which these scenic memories rise in Mrs. Ramsay's mind reflect the chaotic, ahistorical and non-causative nature of the modern world-view. The writer strings images, scenes, and memories together, without authorial comment, and without trying to "make sense" of them for the reader. But in order to develop a strong and independent subjectivity a sense of history is indispensable. If history is reduced to unrelated scenes, if human history is superseded by natural time, as it is in "Time Passes", then modern men have indeed lost the struggle for their independent subjectivities.

On the other hand, there is strong evidence of a more positive evaluation of the status of modern subjectivity in the novel. Woolf implies that Lily Briscoe and Mrs. Ramsay share the vision which enables Lily to complete her painting and to reach out to Mr. Ramsay. Both women certainly share an awareness of the chaos underlying reality: Lily knows it, for she subdues it in her painting; and Mrs. Ramsay comes to terms with the absence of any lasting order or meaning in life by creating special moments of "stillness and loveliness"—moments of union between human beings, which make of the fleeting moment something akin to a work of art. The meaning that is absent
from human life in any absolute sense is created by setting moments of human connection against "that fluidity out there". As Lily recognizes a decade later, Mrs. Ramsay's dinner party is indeed a work of art, which, in a different medium, life, achieves the same momentary victory over chaos that Lily achieves in completing her painting.

Mrs. Ramsay saying, "Life stand still here", Mrs. Ramsay making of the moment something permanent (as in another sphere Lily herself tried to make of the moment something permanent) - this was of the nature of a revelation. In the midst of chaos there was shape.

The intimate connection between Mrs. Ramsay and Lily is reemphasized by Woolf's skillful orchestration of the completion of Lily's painting with the achievement of her vision and the arrival of the Ramsay party at the lighthouse. Lily experiences her vision as she reminisces about Mrs. Ramsay's power to knit the lives of all those around her, to compose them into oneness out of the chaotic disconnectedness of human life. Although Mrs. Ramsay has been dead for a decade, she still has the power to elicit in Lily the need both to give and to receive this human closeness. As Lily experiences her visionary moment, it is both a vision of Mrs. Ramsay and of connectedness to others, in particular to Mr. Ramsay:

"Mrs. Ramsay! Mrs. Ramsay!: she cried, feeling the old horror come back - to want and want and not to have. Could she inflict that still? . . . .

And as if she had something she must share, yet could hardly leave her easel, so full her mind was of what she was thinking, of what she was seeing, Lily went past Mr. Carmichael holding her brush to the edge of the lawn. Where was that boat now: And Mr. Ramsay? She wanted him.

(300)
What Lily recognizes in her vision is that life is indeed chaotic and not intrinsically meaningful, yet that the potential for the revelation of meaning lies in the ordinary, which can take on ecstatic, even visionary, qualities:

One wanted, she thought, dipping her brush deliberately, to be on a level with ordinary experience, to feel simply that's a chair, that's a table, and yet at the same time, it's a miracle, it's an ecstasy. The problem might be solved after all." (300)

As Lucy completes her painting and achieves her vision, one feels in her a new commitment to fight the common plight of separateness and chaotic disconnectedness that links all human beings. Mrs. Ramsay's artistic achievement was the composing of human lives in the "ordinary" medium of daily life. Lily's artistic act is the achievement of her painting and the simultaneous insight into the interconnectedness of all life and the human responsibility in giving it meaning.

Thus, in Lily, Woolf portrays a character who both represents and yet points beyond the demise of subjectivity in modern literature. In William's terms, Lily can be seen as an "emergent" type, who may in fact overcome the damage inflicted upon subjectivity by the pressures of ideological controls. But the figure of Lily is by no means a total reversal or an unambiguous transcendence of the dialectic of subjectivity and ideology. It is merely a development pointing in a new and different direction. Lily is certainly not unaffected by ideological constraints, as is shown by her anxiety about Tansley's statement that women can't paint. And she is not an innately happy,
expansive person who relates easily to others. In fact, she is quite reserved by nature. She leads a spinsterly life, isolated by her task of nursing her infirm father and suspicious of involvement with others lest it could disturb her precious self-containedness and independence. Although Lily's subjectivity has not been destroyed, she has maintained it at the price of isolation from others. It seems that for Woolf and many other modern authors, loneliness and isolation is the fate of those with a complex inwardness struggling against the pressures of modern societies. As the excursion party led by Mr. Ramsay approaches the lighthouse, James muses about his father that "he looked as if he had become physically what was always at the back of both their minds - that loneliness which was for both of them the truth about things." (301). It is this loneliness, this disconnectedness, which Lily overcomes, for an ecstatic moment, in her vision and in her painting.

One has the sense, in Woolf's portrayal of Mr. and Mrs. Ramsay, that one is witnessing terminal point in the history of subjectivity in the novel. Mr. Ramsay is the product of the kind of subjectivity which came into being with men of the mindset of Robinson Crusoe. Mr. Ramsay's relentless pursuit of "the truth", his unswerving faith in the rational structure of life, and his childish egocentrism are the late results of Crusoe's struggle with the forces of nature on the island. This kind of subjectivity is no longer viable in a modern world, which becomes increasingly uncontrollable and in which man begins to feel more and more alienated.
In contrast, Mrs. Ramsay discovers a new sense of peace in letting go of individual subjectivity. She accepts the chaotic nature of life and the concomitant responsibility for creating her own moments of stillness and connectedness through her magic weaving of human lives. One can disagree about whether Mrs. Ramsay's tendency towards disengagement and her death within the novel are to be seen as a statement of defeat or as a possible new beginning, an alternative way of creating an independent subjectivity outside the limitations circumscribed by capitalist ideology. I would argue that the latter is true, in particular if one looks at Mrs. Ramsay's character in combination with that of Lily Briscoe, who is so closely aligned with Mrs. Ramsay and who inherits her visionary quest through her painting.

It is true that Mrs. Ramsay dies in the novel (and may thus be interpreted as having failed to find a better way of escaping the "violation of the soul" by ideological pressures), but her memory is alive in her children and the guests who have shared the dinner party. She has created a moment of community which transcends the limitations of individual selfhood and which endures. It is this memory of Mrs. Ramsay the hostess, the mother, the wife, the sorceress knitting the lives of people together, which sparks Lucy's vision and enables her to complete her painting. Lily's vision is important on at least two levels: on the plot level, the completion of the painting is important to Lily, because it has become the touchstone of her ability to paint. She does not care whether the painting will endure or whether it will be famous—it is merely important that women can
paint, and that she has put on the canvas her own, personal vision of reality. The achievement of her vision also has another, hopeful meaning relating to the central question of subjectivity: as Lily recalls Mrs. Ramsay sitting by the window and knitting her brown stocking a decade ago, the memory is so powerful that it transcends natural time, overcoming chaos and the insensibility of nature. Thus, Lily's vision and her artwork constitute a reaffirmation of the human element within chaos, which, at least potentially, may mark the emergence of a new kind of subjectivity.

Woolf's assessment of the status of human subjectivity is, however, not only contained on the plot level and in the characters. It is also—and perhaps most impressively—expressed in the very structure of the novel. Thus, an analysis of novelistic form is indispensable for a full understanding of Woolf's place in the sequence of novels we analyzed previously. Through the characters of Mrs. Ramsay and Lily Briscoe, Woolf has opened up the possibility of achieving a kind of visionary connectedness with all living things in the act of artistic creation. But this visionary goal amounts to an acknowledgment of the fact that human life, and all of nature, are in fact inherently chaotic and meaningless. It requires human effort to create momentary order and to wrest meaning from a meaningless reality. For most human beings, as for Mrs. Ramsay, this sustained effort of "giving, giving, giving" is too much to bear, and threatens the loss of one's sense of selfhood in the act of giving. Lily Briscoe, in completing her painting, finds a momentary balance between
Mrs. Ramsay's loss of selfhood through her intense involvement with others and her own tendency towards protective detachment. As she finishes her painting, she knows who she is and can thus permit herself to give to others. Such a vision could become the basis for a new kind of subjectivity which is not based on the notion of the stable and unassailable self set against nature. Yet there is no guarantee that Lily will retain this vision for more than a moment—and Woolf does not seem to feel a need for such certainties. It is enough, for Woolf's characters, to achieve moments of visionary wholeness and integrity, moments in which they glimpse what it would mean to be an integral human being, independent and yet part of a meaningful whole.

On the structural level, Woolf depicts the eradication of human subjectivity in a striking and utterly fascinating way: in the second section of To the Lighthouse, entitled "Time Passes", she has created a haunting structural concretization of a world without human subjectivity.

Now, day after day, light turned, like a flower reflected in water, its sharp image on the wall opposite. Only the shadows of the trees, flourishing in the wind, made obeisance on the wall, and for a moment darkened the pool in which light reflected itself; or birds, flying, made a soft spot flutter slowly across the bedroom floor. So loveliness reigned and stillness, and together made the shape of loveliness itself, a form from which life had parted; solitary like a pool at evening, far distant, seen from a train window, vanishing so quickly that the pool, pale in the evening, is scarcely robbed of its solitude, though once seen. Loveliness and stillness clasped hands in the bedroom, and among the shrouded jugs and sheeted chairs even the prying of the wind, and the soft nose of the clammy sea airs, rubbing, snuffling, iterating, and reiterating
their questions, - "Will you fade: Will you perish?" - scarcely disturbed the peace, the indifference, the air of pure integrity, as if the question they asked scarcely needed that they should answer: we remain. (194-195)

This passage from "Time Passes" is the product of a thoroughly modern sensibility. Its lyrical quality moves it very close to poetry, stretching the limits of the novel form and exploring new territory. But what makes it truly, and with necessity, modern, is the absence of a human consciousness in this entire section, of which the passage quoted above is only a small part.5

Before the 20th century, novelistic action focused upon a—usually human—agent. Nature and the object world merely provided a backdrop upon which the action takes place. In "Time Passes", it is the object world and the forces of nature which are foregrounded. No human consciousness, aside from that of the author herself, apprehends or interprets the action, and Woolf seems to have attempted to make herself as "transparent" as possible, to become the master of "negative capability", in order to perceive without changing that which is perceived. While this section has always confused and divided critics, everyone has found it possible to agree on the attributes "lyrical", "poetic", and "achronological". Some, especially early critics such as Arnold Bennett and Edwin Muir, view "Time Passes" as a failed attempt to make the reader feel the passage of ten years 6, and most critics agree that this section constitutes a rupture with the plot of the novel. It is my contention that "Time Passes" is not "alien" to the concerns of the other two section with
their more traditional novelistic plot, and that in fact it is the concrete enactment of the core issue of the novel: how human subjectivity deals with the knowledge that modern man lives in a precarious world held up only by the meanings we ourselves impart, with chaos seeping in at all the seams.

In "Time Passes", this theme is liberated from the literary confines of character. It is no longer bound to the reflections of a Mrs. Ramsay or Lily Briscoe. Human subjectivity is absent and time itself becomes the protagonist: but it is natural time. Human time breaks into the narrative only within parentheses. Human history is put into a cosmic perspective which makes it seem ludicrously irrelevant and unimportant. By describing the Ramsay's summer house in the absence of all human consciousness, Woolf achieves a Brechtian estrangement effect which forces the reader to reexamine and reevaluate the familiar. Woolf employs this estrangement effect to emphasize the existential questions asked by the sea winds, "Will you fade? Will you perish?". Although these questions are asked by non-human agents, they are deeply relevant to human life, and by contrasting their answer, "We remain" with historical human experience, the reader arrives at a poignant awareness of the transigence and essential irrelevancy of human existence to nature.

It is therefore not a cruel quirk of Virginia Woolf's to "let Mrs. Ramsay die" in a half-sentence within parentheses—it is an ontological statement which relates directly to Mr. Ramsay's quest to
discover the relation of "Subject and object and the nature of reality" (38). "Time Passes" is the literary equivalent of this philosophical pursuit.

[Mr. Ramsay, stumbling along a passage one dark morning, stretched his arms out, but Mrs. Ramsay having died rather suddenly the night before, his arms, though stretched out, remained empty.] (194)

[Prue Ramsay died that summer in some illness connected with childbirth, which was indeed a tragedy, people said, everything, they said, had promised so well.] (199)

[A shell exploded. Twenty or thirty young men were blown up in France, among them Andrew Ramsay, whose death, mercifully, was instantaneous.] (201)

With dismay, the reader realizes that the belief that individual human beings are "more important", and therefore somehow "more enduring" than the object world, is false and presumptuous to boot. "Time Passes" drives home the fact that it is human beings who are transitory, while all the things we view as being merely the backdrop of our lives, remain. Those unimportant objects—a bowl, a cup, a coat, a pair of boots, a mirror—resist time and change, while human life passes, an interlude in the larger cycles of nature. To put this recognition more pointedly: it is individual subjectivity that perishes while the chaos of life itself triumphs. In To the Lighthouse: Virginia Woolf's Winter's Tale, Maria Dibattista writes that "Time Passes" dramatizes "the estrangement between consciousness, which seeks order, and Nature, which languishes in disorder" (180). Dibattista feels that the lack of a human consciousness in "Time Passes" engenders a "nightmarish" quality, which is only interrupted
by the bracketed passages, rescuing parts of the historicity of human 
life from the general insensibility of nature. It is in itself a 
significant statement about the power of capitalist ideology that most 
of the critics writing about *To the Lighthouse* react with discomfort, 
sometimes even panic, to the absence of an individual, human 
consciousness to which the reader could "latch on". Obviously, this 
panic reaction—which most of us would share—is the result of 
ideological conditioning which teaches us to value individuality and 
an independent subjectivity (although, in most cases, this 
subjectivity is so ideologically determined that it cannot be critical 
and truly independent.) If one approaches Woolf's writing as much as 
possible without this ideological notion and tries to let the prose 
work its own magic, it is possible to remain open to alternative 
conclusions about the absence of a human consciousness in "Time 
Passes".

Woolf does not mean to convey to her readers a sense of terror or 
disintegration. Rather, "Time Passes" is the fulfillment and concrete 
realization of Mrs. Ramsay's vision. "Not as oneself did one find 
rest ever," muses Mrs. Ramsay, and in "Time Passes", this vision of 
liberation from selfhood is finally consummated. Like the "core of 
darkness" that Mrs. Ramsay identifies with her innermost selfhood, the 
little airs that roam the empty house can go anywhere. They cannot be 
stopped, they are free. The stroke of the lighthouse, which is 
associated with Mrs. Ramsay's sternness, her steadiness, her beauty, 
and her desire for the truth, still lights up the empty rooms, marking
its own time. Those events which mark human time—the war that shakes all of Europe, are heard only from afar, muffled, and reflected in the cracking of a tea-cup or the tinkling of tumblers inside a cupboard (200). And "the sleeper" who goes down to the beach "fancying that he may find . . . an answer to his doubts"(193) must now come to the recognition that nature is not a sympathetic mirror and is in fact indifferent to man. This is the warning of the "ghostly roll of drums" Mrs. Ramsay hears in the monotonous noise of the waves. She understands that man is not at home in nature. The belief that nature is a kindly Mother, a mirror of man's soul, is shown to be an illusion. Nature is indifferent; it does not care about the fate of the individual. Nature cares only about the flux of life, about life itself—and not necessarily even human life. This is an entirely new, modern relationship to nature. It is as if the entire universe had become strange and terrible.

Did Nature supplement what man advanced? Did she complete what he began? With equal complacence she saw his misery, his meanness, and his torture. That dream, of sharing, completing, of finding in solitude on the beach an answer, was then but a reflection in a mirror, and the mirror itself was but the surface glassiness which forms in quiescence when the nobler powers sleep beneath? Impatient, despairing, yet loth to go, (for beauty offers her lures, has her consolations), to pace the beach was impossible; contemplation was unendurable; the mirror was broken. (201-202)

The Western myth of man's centrality in nature is exploded. The reality, the truth about the relation of subject and object, lies outside of man. Mr. Ramsay, the proponent of rationalism and
logocentrism, can indeed not get "from Q to R" in the alphabet of human knowledge for as long as he insists that human knowledge is central.

In "Time Passes", Woolf dramatizes her conviction that human knowledge is only a tiny part of the totality of nature. Nature exists without human beings to perceive, measure, analyze, and shape it, and Nature predates and is shown to survive the encroachment of human history upon it.

In spring the garden urns, casually filled with wind-blown plants, were gay as ever. Violets came and daffodils. But the stillness and the brightness of the day were as strange as the chaos and tumult of night, with the trees standing there, and the flowers standing there, looking before them, looking up, yet beholding nothing, eyeless, and so terrible. (203)

With or without the Ramsay's to see it and tend it, the garden around the dilapidated summer house brims over with flowers. Objectively, a flowering summer garden is a lovely sight, yet in the passage above, Woolf shows traces of her own ideological conditioning, as a result of which she experiences nature in the absence of a perceiving human consciousness as eerie and frightening. Perhaps like most of us, Woolf had been shaped by an ideology which validates the individual very highly, and the vision of nature existing for and within itself, independently of a human agent is frightening, because it denies human beings the privileged place in the "natural scheme of things" which we have been accustomed to occupy throughout the history of the Judeo-Christian cultures.
That discomfort with a novelistic world without a human subjectivity is indeed an ideological response becomes even more evident if we compare this reaction with the teachings of Eastern philosophies, in which the attainment of de-individuated existence is viewed as the highest goal. "Not as oneself . . . does one find rest ever"—this is one way of describing the prerequisite for reaching a state of freedom from desire, nirvana, in which the believer loses existence as an individual, yet gains peace and becomes part of the stream of life which links all of creation. This state of de-individuated all-oneness is similar to the sense of mystic unity which Mrs. Ramsay experiences after her dinner party.

she felt, with her hand on the nursery door, that community of feeling with other people which emotion gives as if the walls of partition had become so thin that practically (the feeling was one of relief and happiness) it was all one stream, . . . (170)

With _To the Lighthouse_ we have then, finally, arrived at an end point—and perhaps a point of new departure—in the representation of subjectivity in the novel. It has been shown that Virginia Woolf employs a triad of characters to represent different stages of the modern subjectivity: Mr. Ramsay exhibits the now "residual" subjectivity of an age of entrepreneurial adventurers and of unbroken faith in rationalist scientific inquiry. Mrs. Ramsay represents the dominant (for intellectuals of her age) sense of forlornness in a hostile and meaningless universe; however, this sense of forlornness is modified by her unique talent of creating moments of meaningfulness and enduringness which move this character towards an alternative
subjectivity, which is developed more clearly in the character of Lily Briscoe. We have come to the conclusion that through her painting and her vision Lily accepts the interconnectedness of all life in which human life does not have a priority. This new acceptance of the world as it is could conceivably become the foundation for a new subjectivity which could be an alternative to the entrepreneurial subjectivity of the past.

It has further been shown that the "Time Passes" section, and the passage in "The Lighthouse" in which Woolf describes the act of painting, are concrete representations of the breakdown of subjectivity as we have know it in the novels of the past. While subjectivity is embattled in Villette and in Bleak House, and largely ideologized in Madame Bovary, it is hard to envision a passage devoid of a perceiving human consciousness in any of these novels. It took the 20th century and Virginia Woolf to represent with such brutal honesty the effects of ideological pressure upon subjectivity in the very structure of her novel. In Bleak House, the author deals with ideological pressures by bifurcating the narrator into a critical, progressive voice and an uncritical, humanist and ideologized voice, which allows him to cope effectively with his own ideological contradictions. In To the Lighthouse, Virginia Woolf has gone one step further: in "Time Passes" and through the use of spatial representational techniques, she dramatizes the threat of the total eradication of independent subjectivity where human consciousness becomes swallowed up by the ahistorical timelessness of a chaotic
nature. But Woolf shies away from this somber conclusion—perhaps as a result of her own conditioning: in the characters of Mrs. Ramsay and Lily Briscoe, Woolf offers the tenuous hope for an independent subjectivity gleaned from rare moments of visionary insight into the interconnectedness of all life on earth.

Thus, the quest for an independent subjectivity, which was initially set off and fostered by capitalism's need for independent and entrepreneurial agents, has gradually, and under pressure from ideological constraints, emancipated itself from the realm of economic activity and has increasingly become a pursuit in opposition to the dominant political and economic structure. For example, Lily does not strive for economic participation and success—she wishes only to define her selfhood through the act of painting, however obscure her painting may remain. Its completion is important only to herself. But the sense of selfhood she derives from painting becomes the foundation of her independent subjectivity and enables her to reach out to others, thus externalizing, on a non-economic level, her newly-found sense of empowerment.

Endnotes:
1. It is an interesting feminist sideline that in the novels we have analyzed the only woman who does make the transition into the work force, Lucy Snowe, also remains childless, thus sharing the "fateful sterility" with the male characters. Madame Beck, the other woman-entrepreneur, is shown to be cold and unemotional
towards her offspring. The women who stay at home, however, are loving and nurturing mothers, as is shown by Esther Summerson, Paulina, and Mrs. Ramsay.

2. It is no coincidence that the aestheticist movement, impressionism, expressionism, in short, much of modern art that found its reflection in literature, is profoundly ahistorical. One must remember, however, that "ahistorical" refers merely to the author's intention and to the plot level. As works of art, these works are just as representative of the historical circumstances under which they were produced as any historical novel could be. There was a prevailing perception among modern artists that Western logocentrism and rationalism had failed. Their reaction was to seek alternative ways of relating to reality. One way of dealing with a confusing and alienating reality is to turn it into an object of aesthetic contemplation and thus to distance oneself from it. This trend is further to be seen as a reaction to the increased pressure of ideology on the individual. Forced into inner exile, the artist explores aestheticism and mysticism. Faulkner and Proust, for example, write about a physical concretization of memory which they have termed "body memory", a kind of timeless, ahistorical reflection through the body. Both these authors, I think, have withdrawn from direct contact with the historical reality they lived in. They aestheticize life by turning it into a literary text.
History is perceptible in their novels only as it is mediated through the process of textualization that goes on as life is transformed into personal memory. The focus on the ability of human memory to rearrange life and to turn life-as-it-is-lived into a work of art is conspicuous in such great works of literature as Proust's Swann's Way, Joyce's Ulysses, and, of course, in much of Virginia Woolf's artistic work. The focus is here entirely on the sense-impressions of the present, on the personal experience without the depth of collective social experience. This development is inherently harmful, since "the aesthetic" has typically been viewed by bourgeois philosophers and literary critics as a realm exempted from ideological influence, as a realm of free play where "true" art exists in an atmosphere purified of the accretions of history. The purity of the aesthetic is, of course, itself an ideological assumption with powerful implications, for we are most likely to be dominated by ideology where we least suspect its existence. Along the same lines, the focus on personal reverie, on immediate sense impressions and on tableau-like imagery in To the Lighthouse reflects a society which has begun to lose its sense of a collective history.

3. Along similar lines, the time frame covered by modern novels seems to shrink. While Robinson Crusoe dramatizes the long years of Crusoe's exile on the island, while Villette deals with Lucy Snowe's years at Madame Beck's establishment, and while the action
of *Bleak House* and *Madame Bovary* unfolds over several years, *To the Lighthouse* spans merely an afternoon and evening, and then another morning separated from the first day by ten years of non-human history. It is evident that modern authors do not feel confident enough to represent large-scale historical events. There is a trend towards a minimalist perspective, a tendency towards the personal and subjective, perhaps one crucial day in the life of a character. Although I would agree that such a novel can be very historical, as for example, Christa Wolf's *Kassandra* shows, it seems significant that the *Bildungsroman* is so decisively a thing of the past. In the *Bildungsroman*, the main theme is the development of a human being's selfhood, as it is shaped by circumstances and events over time. Such comprehensive and causative literary approach seems no longer possible in a world which is characterized by random change and indifference toward human life.

4. There is a semantic distinction in the word "meaningless" which is perhaps worth making and will allow us to arrive at more subtle conclusions: "Meaningless" need not necessarily be interpreted as a negative term, i.e., in the sense of "having no meaning and being therefore without value" or "senseless, useless, in vain". It could simply mean that the cosmos is "free of meaning", i.e., it is open to interpretation by man. This more neutral interpretation of "meaningless" also has the advantage of revealing the act of imparting meaning as an act of
interpretation, which is always an ideological act. Thus, Mrs. Ramsay's and Lily's acts of artistic creation are also ideological acts. They are, however, in opposition to the dominant ideology, because their goal is to overcome the fatal atomization of the individual in capitalist society and to reunite human beings with each other and with nature.

5. In *The Elusive Self. Psyche and Spirit in Virginia Woolf's Novels*, (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1981), Louise A. Poresky writes that in "Time Passes" "chronological time vanishes and psychological time prevails" (130). This interpretation of "Time Passes" as reflecting psychological time is, in my opinion, unjustifiable; for there is no dramatized human consciousness through which this section could have been seen. It is precisely the radical innovation of Woolf's novelistic vision that she could have conceived of letting the reader experience the flow of time first-hand, without the intermediation of another human subjectivity. There is, of course, the subjectivity of the author, who actually tells the story. Yet Woolf attempts to portray a material reality which exists outside of and independently from human subjectivity. In her effort not to falsify this non-human, ahistorical reality, Woolf attempts to become a "transparent eyeball", merely an instrument that perceives and speaks without changing what it perceives. Thus, in a sense, both the author herself and her characters in *To the Lighthouse* undergo a process of depersonalization or de-subjectivization.
6. They argue this position in their respective reviews of *To the Lighthouse* in *Evening Standard*, 23 June 1927, page 5, and in *Nation and Athenaeum*, 2 July 1927, page 450.
CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study has been to trace the effect of bourgeois ideology on subjectivity through an analysis of five representative novels spanning more than two centuries. It was originally inspired by the contradictory analyses of modern subjectivity developed by sociologist-historian, Edward Shorter, in his book The Making of the Modern Family, by Walter Davis' Inwardness and Existence, and by Marxist literary critics like Althusser, Derrida, Jameson, and others. While most Marxist critics argue that capitalism has caused the "death of the subject", Shorter argues that the rise of capitalism effected economic, social and psychological changes which constituted an effective break with the traditions of the past and which led to the development of a sense of independent selfhood which, liberated from the constraint of traditional community-defined roles, is at the root of the entrepreneurial virtues so crucial to capitalism. This new sense of selfhood dialectically interacts with the development of an ever more subtle inwardness, which is both the basis for the development of a critical subjectivity and its result. It has been the goal of this study to trace the development of subjectivity as it is affected by ideological constraints and as it is reflected in five representative novels from three centuries.
Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*, published early in the 18th century, showed the formation of a new sense of self and of an incipient inwardness. Crusoe is the son of a wealthy merchant who was naturally expected to follow in his father's footsteps. Instead, Crusoe escapes paternal authority and the restraints of communal expectations by running away and going aboard ship. After his ship founders in the storm and he finds himself the sole survivor of the shipwreck, Crusoe does not waste much time lamenting his fate. He calmly assesses his advantages and disadvantages as if he were writing up credit and debit sheets, retrieves what he can from the wreckage and begins to build his new realm with singular determination. It has been pointed out before that Crusoe's way of coping with his new situation is quite uncharacteristic of a member of a traditional, communal society and exhibits unmistakable traces of a new individualistic and capitalist mindset. Crusoe views himself as the lord and master of his island and considers its fauna and vegetation the material he must manipulate to achieve well-defined economic goals. Unlike the tribal peoples who visit the island to celebrate their cannibalistic rituals, Crusoe does not live in nature—he lives against it and views it as an enemy to be subdued.

Crusoe's subjectivity is still heavily dominated by the religious training he has received, but it already contains the outlines of a more secular inward space which is to become the locus of 19th and 20th century modern fiction. Crusoe's inwardness is still fairly rudimentary and may have little in common with the complex
subjectivities of a Lucy Snowe or Mrs. Ramsay. But it is already a thoroughly modern subjectivity, which reflects the transition in values concomitant with the rise of the market economy in 18th century England. Because Crusoe is the epitome of the new type of the entrepreneur, he is at one with the emergent ideology of the new, capitalist age and is therefore relatively unconflicted. It has been shown that his subjectivity is largely externalized, which is to say that Crusoe defines himself inwardly through his outward activity as a colonizer and cultivator of the island. There is no tension between Crusoe's role in life and his subjectivity. Our analysis of the succeeding four novels written in the 19th and 20th century has shown this balance between Crusoe's role in life and his sense of selfhood to be unique to the time in which Defoe wrote and certainly also to the setting of his novel. It has been my thesis throughout that there was a window in time during which the changes wrought by capitalism brought on a new emphasis on independent action which actually encouraged and supported the development of an independent subjectivity. The character of Crusoe reflects such a window in time. From the analyses of the four other novels, it is clear that Crusoe's relatively untroubled inwardness was the privileged child of a unique configuration of socio-historical and psychological circumstances. Already in Bronte's Villette, the configuration of forces has shifted and the result is a protagonist who develops a complex subjectivity in opposition to social and ideological forces which would direct and control her inwardness.
In *Villette*, the stage of the narrative is not the natural world to be dominated but the mind of the narrator and protagonist, Lucy Snowe. Through her narrative, Lucy is actively struggling to create the internal space out of which she fashions her complex subjectivity. It is by actually creating a language for her experience that Lucy eventually succeeds in her struggle for subjectivity. Since the stage of the novel is Lucy's mind, the narrative itself reveals the ideological contradictions with which Lucy must come to terms to achieve her goal. She is at a social and economic disadvantage because she is a woman and has neither status nor money. But because she must work to support herself, Lucy finds unsuspected strength and motivation within herself, which shakes her out of her lethargy and resignation and challenges her to rise to the occasion. Lucy begins to take control of her own life, and finds pride in her hard-won independence. When the novel closes upon Lucy as the directrice of her own pensionnat, Bronte has shown the reader an example of a woman who has come into her own against many odds.

More important than even the storyline, however, are the techniques through which Bronte presents the plot: she employs a language which is unprecedented in its intimacy and passion, unheard of in its depth of feeling and painful intensity. It testifies to the existence of a rich inner life, of a subjectivity which is painfully aware of itself and the constraints under which it must labor. One of the most frightening and truly "modern" insights this novel has to offer its readers is the recognition that it no longer takes a
shipwreck and an island to experience Crusoe-like isolation and loneliness. In fact, Lucy Snowe is lonelier among her friends, who do not know her for who she really is, than Crusoe on his island. Defoe had to transplant Crusoe to a tiny deserted island to make his isolation comprehensible and credible to his readers: Crusoe had to be physically isolated to explain his loneliness, because in a traditional, communal society it would have been difficult to be as existentially lonely as Lucy Snowe, since everyone was a member of the community, playing a well-defined role within it. However, in problematizing human isolation—albeit in an adventure yarn—Defoe signals to the critic that the communal society was indeed coming to an end. Villette heralds the beginning of a new stage in the achievement of human subjectivity, and, by the same token, the commencement of an entirely new type of solitariness and isolation from others—no longer physical but psychological, which is in fact often more severe and unforgiving than the remotest and loneliest island could ever be.

Bronte's subtle and highly emotional language is both an expression of this new sense of isolation within one's own mind, which quickly becomes the primary object of inquiry, and, simultaneously, an attempt to overcome this isolation by making oneself understood to others. The reader can sense in Lucy's narrative a great need to create a record of herself as an individual and to "make herself understood". In a traditional society, this desire would have been viewed as a rather odd thing, since each member of a community lived
by the same rules and values, and the lives of others held few secrets for anyone. Clearly, this has changed by the time Bronte is writing *Villette*. Lucy's is not an average life either in its physical circumstance or in the depth of feeling documented in this novel. A new sense of singleness and uniqueness result in both unprecedented loneliness and a great sense of empowerment as Lucy begins to trust her own strength to create a life for herself in subjective territory as yet uncharted by middle-class 19th century women.

It has been pointed out in its place that Lucy's narrative is not free of ruptures and breaking points which illustrate the ideological tension under which she is laboring. We have seen that Lucy employs a strategy of obfuscation and elision to hide her true feelings, because she cannot survive in a hostile and intensely competitive society if she admits to her emotional vulnerability. Thus, the narrator/author's ideological dilemma is directly translated into narrative strategy.

In *Bleak House*, Dickens' own ideological limitations are reflected in his use of Esther and the omniscient narrator, and of two storylines, which are skillfully connected through characters like detective Bucket, the trooper George, the Rouncewells and the Bagnets, and, of course, through the carefully drawn urban environment. The cynical omniscient narrator and his scathing depictions of the inequality and injustice of 19th century British society enables Dickens to create in Esther a relatively untroubled, simple character whose all-embracing Christian humanism is presented as the solution to
society's problems. Dickens was shown to have a very complex subjectivity indeed, a subjectivity which enables him to keenly analyze the causes of social injustice through the omniscient narrator; and yet this subjectivity is subverted through the "controlling ideology" of bourgeois humanism in the figure of Esther. Thus, the dual narrator in Bleak House is a structural reflection of the cooptation of an independent subjectivity through the dominant ideology, which is created by bourgeois society to enable it to live with its own contradictions.

Flaubert, in Madame Bovary, does not attempt to hide from himself and his readers the total capitulation of human subjectivity to the pressures of the dominant ideology, as Dickens did in Esther Summerson. In Emma Bovary he has created a frightening image of the totally ideologized personality. The reader is forced to acknowledge that through her schooling, her reading, and her uncritical acceptance of the materialistic ideology of her society, Emma exists merely as a vehicle of desire. Flaubert has been chided for creating such an "insubstantial center of consciousness" (Bersani, 93), but in fact this is exactly what Flaubert set out to convey. Flaubert's novel moves towards the extreme of a total breakdown of subjectivity in the dialectic of subjectivity and ideology which this study has traced.

In To the Lighthouse, Woolf dramatizes the possibility of a total eradication of human subjectivity in the "Time Passes" section of the novel. In this central section, no human agents appear—they are represented only as "traces" in the objects they left behind and
through the short asides on historical events mentioned in parentheses. Woolf has managed to concretize in literature what it might mean to lose independent human subjectivity, and with it the better part of human consciousness, in the historicity of a chaotic nature. However, although Woolf explores this somber vision in "Time Passes", she does not ultimately endorse it. Instead, she uses it as the "background" upon which her triad of characters, Mr. Ramsay, Mrs. Ramsay, and Lily Briscoe enact their subjectivities. It has been shown that, in Raymond Williams' terms, Mr. Ramsay represents the residual subjectivity of the bygone age of the entrepreneurs, while Mrs. Ramsay represents the dominant subjectivity of the present age with the pervading sense of emotional exhaustion and forlornness so characteristic of the intellectuals of the 1920s. Although she is by no means a simple synthesis of Mr. and Mrs. Ramsay, Lily Briscoe unites Mr. Ramsay's pioneering mind with Mrs. Ramsay's intuitive recognition of the interconnectedness of all life. Her painting provides Lily with an alternative space out of which to define herself against the dominant ideology.

Clearly, the creation of an independent subjectivity is the focus of great anxiety for modern writers. The scores of modern novels whose protagonists are paranoid, neurotic, or mad testify to the fact that it is anything but easy to forge and maintain a critical subjectivity in the 20th century. It is true that in today's capitalist societies the majority of "the masses" are indeed so completely constituted by ideology that they cannot even conceive of
what it would mean to have an independent subjectivity. But those Marxist critics who categorically proclaim the death of subjectivity are both ahistorical and undialectical. For every area of repression defines an area of resistance, and the struggle for an independent subjectivity has become the central arena for resistance to the dominant culture. These attempts—some successful, some not—can be traced in many areas of contemporary culture.

Without going into depth, one can list areas of resistance such as the struggles for civil rights, for women's rights, for worker's participation in decision making, and for environmental protection, which have allowed many people to define alternative subjectivities in opposition to the dominant ideology. Naturally, I cannot argue conclusively that these struggles were successful in a final way, for all of them are still going on. But while capitalism has proven itself to be resilient and capable of absorbing and defusing potentially subversive counter-ideologies, it is also important to recognize that the system in fact had to change and make concessions to the demands of massive subsections of society in order to survive. The unceasing (re)emergence of such counter-ideological movements shows that even in modern capitalist systems it is possible for individuals to define an independent subjectivity against the dominant society—as is illustrated by the figure of Lily Briscoe.

In conclusion, I would like to return to the issue of literature and subjectivity. There are naturally many areas of cultural activity which reflect the subjectivity produced by the culture in question:
literature, dance, painting, music, and film, to mention only a few. In this study I have limited myself to an analysis of subjectivity in the novel only, because it is my conviction that literature, and in particular the novel, provides the richest and most complex stage for an analysis of the dialectic interaction between subjectivity and the dominant ideology of a society at any given point in time. Every work of literature is a "freeze frame" image of a small section of the language of its age, and contains and preserves the ideological baggage with which this sample of language is fraught.

Bakhtin argues, in "Discourse in the Novel", that language is the uncertain demarcation line between self and other (The Dialogic Imagination 293). The difficulty for the creation of an independent subjectivity is that language is never neutral and is always already filled with ideological meaning.

The word in language is half someone else's. It becomes "one's own" only when the speaker populates it with his own intention, his own accent, when he appropriates the word, adapting it to his own semantic and expressive intention. Prior to this moment of appropriation, the word does not exist in a neutral and impersonal language (it is not, after all, out of a dictionary that the speaker gets his words!), but rather it exists in other people's mouths, in other people's contexts, serving other people's intentions: it is from there that one must take the word, and make it one's own . . . Expropriating it, forcing it to submit to one's own intentions and accents, is a difficult and complicated process. (293-294)

Those who do not succeed in reappropriating the language to themselves are forced to use the "alien", heavily ideologized language of the dominant culture. And since consciousness is in great part predicated upon and shaped by language, those who have not been able
to reappropriate language for their own purposes and meanings must
remain alienated from themselves. Or, to phrase it differently, their
consciousness will be entirely constituted by ideology, which makes it
impossible for them to define an independent subjectivity.

Bakhtin proceeded from the observation that human societies in all
historical ages have been heteroglossic and that every human being
must struggle for language as a prerequisite to acquiring selfhood.
This study has traced some episodes of the "difficult and complicated
process" of reappropriating language in the more narrowly defined
context of the novel. It has been shown that success and failure in
defining an independent subjectivity are not distributed randomly, but
can be correlated with a historical progression in the development of
capitalism. In the early stages of competitive capitalism, its newly
dominant ideology strongly encouraged the formation of an independent,
entrepreneurial subjectivity: Robinson Crusoe is a particularly clear
example of this historical trend. As capitalism becomes more
established and as its ideology begins to permeate all areas of public
and private life, "reappropriating" one's language comes to mean that
one must redefine oneself in opposition to the dominant ideology of
capitalism. That this enterprise becomes progressively more difficult
and sometimes even impossible, has been traced in my analyses of
Villette, Bleak House, and Madame Bovary. The nadir of subjectivity,
and a new departure towards the definition of an alternative
subjectivity, is portrayed in Virginia Woolf's To the Lighthouse: its
"Time Passes" section concretizes the haunting vision of a world
without human consciousness, while simultaneously offering hope for an independent subjectivity based on non-capitalist values as represented by Lily Briscoe. The extended analysis of the dialectical interaction between capitalist ideology and subjectivity presented in this study now enables us to discern a progression in the representation of inwardness in the novel. While the progressive interiorization of novelistic characters throughout the 19th and early 20th centuries has been noted by many critics, there has not been, to my knowledge, any one theory which allowed us to view this development within one overarching theoretical framework, independently of such unreliable categories as literary periods or literary trends. Marxist literary theory has enabled me to avoid the patchiness of orthodox literary history and textual interpretation and to develop a set of analytic tools which made it possible to identify two dialectical forces—subjectivity and ideology—whose dynamic in essence creates and provides the key to the history of the novel.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


