

PHENOMENOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES ON
SPACE IN THE READING OF DRAMA:
AN ANALYSIS OF THERESE RAQUIN, VOR SONNENAUFANG,
AND THE THREE SISTERS

by

ANTOINETTE DE KIR

Graduate Programme in Comparative Literature

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ANTOINETTE DE KIR

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THE THREE SISTERS

Committee in Charge:

Professor J.T. Stevenson, Chairman
Professor C.H. Bedford
Professor C. Hamlin, Supervisor
Professor E. Kushner, External Examiner
Professor O.J. Miller, Internal Appraiser
Professor P.W. Nesselroth
Professor M.J. Valdés

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ABSTRACT

In the Introduction chapter, the thesis outlines a basic premise concerning the reader of drama. This premise is then applied to three dramatic texts: Thérèse Raquin, Vor Sonnenaufgang, and The Three Sisters.

The Introduction uses some of the writings of Roman Ingarden and Wolfgang Iser as a basis, although it does not rely on them exclusively. Following Ingarden, the thesis posits that the entities of author, text, and reader are necessary (but not exclusive) components in the existence of the literary work of art and states that it will concern itself specifically with the entities of text and reader. Within the text/reader relationship, it focuses on the reader's apprehension of the dramatic literary text as regards space. The thesis does not concern itself with the ontological status of the literary work as such, but works from the premise, as elaborated by Ingarden and, subsequently, by Iser; that the literary text needs a reader in order to fulfill (at

least some of) its potentialities as a text.

It also posits that the process of reading is already partially prepared for within the text itself, i.e., that the text presumes future de-coding of itself by a reader and makes room for his collaboration towards the generation of a certain amount of meaning. The reader's most helpful tool in this participation process is the text's essential indeterminacy. During the linear process of reading, the reader is forced by the text's indeterminacy to fill gaps, make connections between the sometimes scattered schematized views, anticipate what is to come, or think back on what has already been read. Each text "intends" by its very "availability"; that is, because it has a certain number of pages upon which are arranged, in a chosen order, a set number of entities which allow for interpretation and manipulation by the imagination of the reader. No teleology or specific generation of meaning is intended by the thesis, however, when it says that the reader co-operates with the text in order to bring to fruition (some of) its "intention".

Some of the specific problems which are inherent in treating the topic of the reading of drama are also discussed in the Introduction. The thesis maintains that, despite the traditional dichotomy that

exists between text and performance, or drama and theatre, there is as much legitimacy in exploring the relationship between the reader and the dramatic literary text as there is in exploring the relationship between the reader and any other literary work of art. Since the dramatic text always implies the visual and aural, however, it must always be read with performance in mind, and it thus sets up its own convention(s).

The subsequent analysis of the three dramatic texts is done by focusing solely on the topic of use of space. The choice of texts is relatively arbitrary in that it is not meant to proclaim what has been called the period of "naturalism" as the only or the best period to explore. The results of the analyses vary with the complexity of the texts chosen. However, the thesis concludes that the application of the theoretical stance outlined in the Introduction is just as legitimate for the dramatic literary text, within its own conventions, as it is for any other literary work.

PREFACE

The topic, and the particular plays chosen for analysis in the following dissertation were the result of two separate factors. The first of these was the area of concentration which I chose for my comprehensive examination in February, 1974: naturalism in the drama. The second was a seminar conducted by Prof. Wolfgang Iser at the University of Toronto in the fall of 1974 entitled: "The Hermeneutics of Reading".

Among the seminal theorists whose work Prof. Iser used as background for his argument was Roman Ingarden; the latter's essay on "The Functions of Language in the Theatre", appended to The Literary Work of Art, became, in turn, a pivotal part of my work on this thesis. Both the theories of Ingarden and the concepts of Prof. Iser are based on the non-dramatic, fictional literary work of art, however. Prof. Iser, in his seminar, used as examples for his theory the works of 19th and 20th Century novelists. In "The Functions of Language in the Theatre", Ingarden sets the dramatic literary text apart by calling it "a borderline case of the literary work of art"¹, and he does not include it in the mainstream of his argument.

The foregoing factors constituted a challenge, in

that the time seemed ripe to attempt to apply the theories of Ingarden and Iser to the dramatic literary text; this dissertation will be an essay in that direction. The texts that I have chosen to analyze are among those that I had been treating in my study of naturalism in the drama. The choice resulted, therefore, from familiarity with the period, but it was also arbitrary, in the sense that it did not constitute a conscious wish to proclaim this as the "only" or the "best" period of drama to explore. The approach used will not be historical or thematic, nor will it concern itself with defining the concept of dramatic naturalism or determining whether and how the authors chosen adhered to its dogmas. Instead, the theoretical principles explained in the Introduction will be used in a close analysis of each of the three plays, in order to explore to what extent such an analysis is possible for a dramatic text. For clarity and focus, I also decided to limit the study of the dramas to one topic: the use of space.

NOTES

¹ R. Ingarden, "The Functions of Language in the Theatre".

In: The Literary Work of Art, p. 377.

CURRICULUM VITAE

NAME: Antoinette De Kir
AGE AND DATE OF BIRTH: 34; July 7, 1946
PLACE OF BIRTH: Sofia, Bulgaria
CITIZENSHIP: Canadian
MARITAL STATUS: Single

1965-1969 B.A., Modern Languages and
Literatures, University of
Toronto

1969-1970 M.A., French Literature,
University of Toronto

1970-1971 Courses in modern German
literature, University of
Münster, Germany

1971-present Graduate Programme in Compa-
rative Literature, University
of Toronto; concentration on
modern French and German
drama

AWARDS

1969-1970 Ontario Graduate Fellowship
1970-1971 Rotary Foundation Graduate
Fellowship
1972-1974 Canada Council Doctoral
Fellowship

Prepared December, 1980

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University of Toronto

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INTRODUCTION

One of the basic prerequisites in drama is the indication of space. If dramatic action is to occur, it must have a locus of some sort, and the nature of this locus must be indicated even to the reader of the play.

In performance, even a bare stage must represent something, must orient the spectator as to its essential signification.

This may of course be done by a variety of means (verbal, acoustical, technical), but in any case, it is a basic necessity for drama. As J. Honzl has pointed out,

one theatrical function is to locate a play spatially: to signify a lawn or barroom, to represent a cemetery or a banquet hall. This is an essential function of the stage which must be implemented just as much by a stage using constructions as by a stage using scenery, and just as much by a stage located in the midst of the spectators as by one that is traditionally located. Signs whose function is to promote the spectators' understanding always involve the designation of a space.

If a reader orients himself by means of a multitude of factors in a drama, certainly one of the fundamental and most necessary of these is space.

The object of this study, therefore, will be to examine three dramatic texts from the point of view of their presentation and manipulation of space and to

describe in what way a reader of these texts is aided in his comprehension of them by an understanding of the spatial element. This basic approach borders both on semiotics and on phenomenology, but the study is not meant to be either strictly semiotic or strictly phenomenological in its methodology. Instead, it will proceed from the point of view of two basic premises:

- 1) that the literary text exists neither solely as the product of the author's subjectivity, nor as an entity unto itself, but finds its ultimate realization during the process of being apprehended by a receiving or de-coding subject, i.e.; the reader, and
- 2) that the process of reading is already partially prepared for within the text itself, by the use of certain techniques or conventions that are included in the text to serve as orientation for future readers; i.e., that the text itself already presumes future de-coding of itself by a reader and makes room for his collaboration towards the generation of a certain amount of meaning.

Both premise one and premise two are complex entities, however, and will have to be further explained before we can proceed to a more specific discussion of space in drama.

To explain premise one, we must begin by examining the three components which are generally associated with the existence of a literary work: the author, the literary text, and the reader of the text. It can be agreed upon

that a literary work is usually produced by an author, exists in some sort of written or printed form (text), and does so in order to be de-coded, apprehended; or read by one or by a succession of persons. Both Roman Ingarden and René Wellek, in discussing the existence or "ontological status" of a literary work, also use the same three categories which, together, go to make up the literary work of art. Wellek stresses that the literary work is neither solely "the experience of the author"², nor solely "the experience of the reader"³. Nor is it solely "an 'artefact'"⁴; that is, it cannot be considered as merely "identical with the black lines of ink on white paper or parchment or, if we think of a Babylonian poem, with the grooves in the brick"⁵.

Although all three (author, text, and reader) are therefore necessary (but not exclusive) components in the existence of the literary work of art, what this study will concern itself with will be the entities of text and reader. More specifically, it will focus on the reader's apprehension of the literary (and, in this case, dramatic) text as regards space. Unlike Ingarden and Wellek, we will not be concerned with the ontological status of the literary work as such. However, we will be working from the premise, as elaborated by Ingarden and, subsequently, by Wolfgang Iser, that the literary text needs a reader in order to fulfill (at least

some of) its potentialities as a text. Both Ingarden and Iser stress the importance of the role of the reader vis-à-vis the text. They state that he is a necessary component without whose collaboration (during the reading process) the text would merely remain in a state of unfulfilled potentiality. Ingarden leads up to this conclusion in The Literary Work of Art by conducting a phenomenologically-based examination of the literary work of art in general. He stresses that, unlike an object existing in the "real" world, the literary work of art is incomplete and can never achieve the same state of wholeness as "real" objects⁶. The literary work of art presents us with segments, portions of "a still largely undetermined world"⁷; "it is always as if a beam of light were illuminating a part of a region, the remainder of which disappears in an indeterminate cloud but is still there in its indeterminacy"⁷. Thus the literary work (the text) will always contain a greater or lesser amount of gaps⁸, or spots of indeterminacy and will proceed in a series of what both Ingarden and Iser call "schematized views", i.e., portions of events or things, presented either in continuous or in interrupted sequence during the course of the text. What is important is that the text, by itself, is always a fragment, can only present portions of things, characters, and events, and can only attain wholeness (or a certain type of fullness) during the process of being

read. It is only during reading that at least some of the gaps of the text can be filled, and some of the schematized views or aspects connected by the intermediacy of the reader. Both Ingarden and Iser thus stress the vital role of the reader vis-à-vis the literary text, for the text needs the reader in order to attain a certain amount of "wholeness". Ingarden calls the various readings of the text "concretizations" and states:

The most radical difference between a literary work and its concretizations appears in the aspect stratum [i.e., the schematized views or aspects]. From mere preparedness [Parathaltung] [sic] and schematization in the work itself, aspects attain concreteness in the concretization and are raised to the level of perceptual experience (in the case of a stage play) or imaginational experience (in a reading).

Wolfgang Iser takes up Ingarden's argument also, explaining it further and in slightly different terms, but again stressing the importance of the reader:

The work [the literary work of art] is more than the text, for the text only takes on life when it is realized, and furthermore the realization is by no means independent of the individual disposition of the reader - though this in turn is acted upon by the different patterns of the text. The convergence of text and reader brings the literary work into existence, and their convergence can never be precisely pinpointed, but must always remain virtual, as it is not to be identified either with the reality of the text or with the individual disposition of the reader.¹⁰

Moreover, it is the reader who "sets the work in motion"¹¹, since it is his activity of anticipation and retrospection, his mental uniting of the schematized views and his creation of patterns in the text which "causes the literary work to unfold its inherently dynamic character"¹¹. In some texts, as Iser has pointed out in connection with Joyce's Ulysses, so few connections or links are offered that the role of the reader in this respect is highly important and extremely difficult:

Das Lesen vollzieht sich als Kompositionsvorgang. Dafür sind vornehmlich zwei Gründe ausschlaggebend. Der Roman Ulysses entwirft kein einziges "Bild", das den Anspruch erheben könnte, eine repräsentative Ansicht dieses Alltags zu sein. Statt dessen bietet er Strukturen. Struktur soll hier nur so viel heißen, dass in den Textsegmenten eine gewisse Anzahl von Zeichen so gruppiert ist, dass sie zu einem Zusammenhang erweckt werden können. Dieser ist aber nicht formuliert, sondern wird erst vom Leser eingelöst.¹²

Finally, in regard to the importance of the reader, mention must also be made of Arthur Nisin and Harald Weinrich, who have both advocated a stressing of the crucial relationship between reader and text. Although Nisin's La Littérature et le lecteur takes a markedly socio-historical point of view, one which will not be taken by this study, he nevertheless also rightly stresses to what extent the literary text is dependent on the reader for its realization. He says in the Introduction to his book:

L'oeuvre [d'art littéraire] est objet, certes. Mais cet objet reste virtuel aussi longtemps qu'aucun regard ne l'actualise.¹³ L'oeuvre ne vit que sous ce regard, n'achève d'exister que grâce au lecteur et en lui, n'"a lieu" qu'en lui.¹⁴

Similarly, Harald Weinrich, who mentions Nisin in his argument, calls for a literary history of the reader. He suggests such a history might be based on the fundamental linguistic principle of considering the text as a message which needs both sender and receiver:

Die Mitteilung wird dabei vom Sprecher in Sprachzeichen verschlüsselt, vom Hörer wiederentschlüsselt. Aus diesem Modell ergibt sich, dass die Kommunikation nur dann zustande gekommen ist, wenn nicht nur die Verschlüsselung, sondern auch die Entschlüsselung gelungen ist.¹⁵

This is not to say that our method will be a linguistic one, nor that we wish to imply undue emphasis on the "Sprecher" or author of the message, or on his intentionality. We must be careful not to conclude from Weinrich's statement that the author would have specific information to convey, i.e., a message that would have to be understood by the receiver or reader as one meaning. We wish merely to point out how well Weinrich's linguistic analogy explains the importance and necessity of the role of the reader.

It must also be stressed, before we proceed with an explanation of premise two, that this study will not present either a psychological or a sociological point

of view of the reader and his role. The study will proceed on the premise that, even though each individual reader necessarily involves or brings into play his experience and his personality during the process of reading, he does so only to the extent that it is feasible within the limits of the text itself¹⁶. Weirich proposes, among other things, that it would be necessary for a literary history of the reader "mit den Methoden der literarischen Interpretation jene Leserrolle zu beschreiben, die in dem Werke selber enthalten ist"¹⁷. It is with this approach in mind that this study will proceed, for Wellek is right when he says: "It is true, of course, that a poem can be known only through individual experiences, but it is not identical with such an individual experience"¹⁸. In addition, the sociology of the reader will not be the object of this study because we will restrict ourselves to the dictates of the text. This is not to say, however, that we can ignore literary convention and literary themes, or social, cultural, and historical allusions insofar as they relate to the background knowledge necessary for a reader's satisfactory functioning in trying to generate a certain amount of meaning within the text.

We must now turn to a further elaboration of premise two. This premise stated that the process of reading is already partially prepared for within the

text itself. How, we may ask, does a text "prepare" for its reader? The most fundamental answer is that the text does so simply by its very nature. In order to explain this, we must go back to Ingarden's examination of the ontological status of the literary work of art. Ingarden's methodology is phenomenological and will not be transferred directly to our study, but his explanation of the ontology of the literary work is crucial for our understanding of the kind of role which then falls to the reader of literary works. Ingarden begins by defining the characteristics of "real" objects (i.e., those existing in the everyday world). Each real object, according to him, is "unequivocally, universally (i.e., in every respect) determined", and "every real object is absolutely individual"¹⁹. By comparison with real objects, the literary work of art can never be unequivocally and universally determined, since it consists of a series of "represented objectivities" whose essential distinguishing property is that they contain "spots of indeterminacy"²⁰. Not only can the literary work never achieve the completeness of a "real" object, but the indeterminacy which it contains is indeed created by the very wish of the literary text to be determinate. Ingarden states:

These spots of indeterminacy in principle cannot be entirely removed by any finite

enrichment of the content of a nominal expression.²¹ [..]

In consequence: the represented object that is "real" according to its content is not in the strict sense of the term a universally, quite unequivocally determined individual that constitutes a primary unity; rather, it is only a schematic formation with spots of indeterminacy of various kinds and with an infinite number of determinations positively assigned to it, even though formally it is projected as a fully determinate individual and is called upon to simulate such an individual. This schematic structure of represented objects cannot be removed in any finite literary work even though in the course of the work new spots of indeterminacy may continually be filled out and hence removed through the completion of newer, positively projected properties. We can say that, with regard to the determination of the objectivities represented within it, every literary work is in principle incomplete and always in need of further supplementation; in terms of the text, however, this supplementation can never be completed.²²

Wolfgang Iser reiterates this view, especially in "Indeterminacy and the Reader's Response". He takes up Ingarden's ideas on indeterminacy, schematized views, and gaps, but while he is in agreement with him on the ontological status of the literary work, he takes a slightly different view on the function of gaps. As in Ingarden, the text for Iser does not correspond directly to anything in the "real" world since it cannot be fully determined²³. It consists instead of a series of schematized views which touch on one another, yet whose degree of connection is

not stated, but has to be inferred²⁴.

What, then, is the role of the reader? In fact, this essential property of the text, its indeterminacy, is his most helpful tool. It is the text's natural and inevitable way of enticing the reader to participate in an ongoing process of meaning formulation, one which only the reader can accomplish since it is not present within the text, nor can it ever be present there. Wolfgang Iser explains:

Between the "schematized views" there is a no-man's-land of indeterminacy, which results precisely from the determinacy of the sequence of each individual view. Gaps are bound to open up and offer a free play of interpretation for the specific way in which the various views can be connected with one another. These gaps give the reader a chance to build his own bridges, relating the different aspects of the object which have thus far been revealed to him. It is quite impossible for the text itself to fill in the gaps. In fact, the more a text tries to be precise (i.e., the more "schematized views" it offers), the greater will be the number of gaps between the views.²⁵

The reader, who usually begins with the first page of the text and works his way to the last, operates in a sequential manner, absorbing the text from page to page. As he goes along, he normally tries to formulate some kind of sense or meaning out of the printed text. The indeterminate nature of the text, as we have just seen, often forces

him to fill the gaps, make connections between the sometimes scattered schematized views, anticipate what is to come, or think back on what has already been read in order to pick up the thread of one or more schematized views. Often, story lines alternate, or circumstances change, so that some aspects recede into the background while others are momentarily foregrounded. All of these effects, which are to be found within the text itself, need the attention and co-operative skill of the reader in order to be realized. "Indeterminacy," says Iser, "regulates the gradual participation of the reader in the fulfilment of the text's intention"²⁶. Intention here should be taken in the sense of "availability"; that is, the text "intends" because it has a certain number of pages upon which are arranged, in a chosen order, a set number of entities which allow for interpretation and manipulation by the imagination of the reader. It "intends" by the very fact it exists, but it needs the mental co-operation of the reader to realize or bring to fruition its "intention".

Finally, some explanation is needed on the nature of the reader's "bringing to fruition" or "generation of meaning". The word "meaning" often suggests teleology, determined views, i.e., specific meaning. This will not be the point of view of this study. That is, we neither

imply nor wish to accept the notion that each text has one meaning, which is to be found by the reader during the dynamic reading process discussed in the previous pages. While it is true that the reader perceives the "meaning" of the text not in relation to a norm, an outside reality to which the world of the text does not belong, but in relation to all other elements of the text itself as they interact within his imagination, this is not to suggest that he is or should be in search of a single meaning. The gaps of the text can never all be filled, nor will they be filled in the same way by successive readers. Each takes a certain perspective, depending on experience, flexibility of imagination, or cultural, social, and literary background. As Iser says,

one text is potentially capable of several different realizations, and no reading can ever exhaust the full potential, for each individual reader will fill in the gaps in his own way, thereby excluding the various other possibilities; as he reads, he will make his own decision as to how the gap is to be filled. [...] By making his decision, he implicitly acknowledges the inexhaustibility of the text; at the same time, it is this very inexhaustibility that forces him to make his decision.²⁷

Indeed, the same reader may fill very different gaps and approach the text from a different perspective in the course of a second or third reading of it. "The potential

text," as Iser says, "is infinitely richer than any of its individual realizations"²⁸. This study will thus proceed on the assumption that the meaning of a text is not concealed within the text itself, but is generated by the reader during the act of reading. Moreover, we will assume that a multiplicity of readings is possible, as dictated by the multiple possibilities of the text. Once again, we will concur with and work according to the following observation by Wolfgang Iser:

Shouldn't the interpreter in fact renounce his sanctified role of conveying meanings, if he wants to open up the possibilities of a text? His description of the text is, after all, nothing more than an experience of a cultured reader - in other words, it is only one of the possible realizations of a text.²⁹

This study will therefore concentrate on the reader's dynamic interaction with the literary text during the process of reading, keeping in mind the elements of this interaction as we have tried to outline them in premise one and premise two.

II

Up to this point, we have been speaking of the literary text in general in order to clarify the basic methodology which this study will try to follow. However, we must now deal more specifically with the dramatic

literary text, in order to discuss the special problems which are inherent in treating the topic of the reading of drama. Our purpose will not be to make a direct comparison of the difference between the reading of narrative or poetry, and the reading of drama. Rather, we will try to clarify whether, why, and to what extent the reading of a dramatic text is a different process, and to argue for the legitimacy of that process in the long-standing debate of text vs. performance.

Roman Ingarden singles out the dramatic literary work in his study, classifying it in a category apart from other literary works. According to him,

the stage play is a borderline case of the literary work of art [...] to the extent that, besides language, another medium of representation exists within it - namely, the visual aspects, afforded and concretized by the players and by the "decor" in which represented things and persons, as well as their actions, are depicted.³⁰

He divides the play into main text (Haupttext) or dialogue spoken, and stage directions (Nebentext), and calls the latter "information given by the author for the production of the work"³¹. In so doing, he enters the much-discussed and problematic field of the dichotomy between text and performance, or between drama and theatre. His particular (phenomenological) approach leads him to stress performance above dramatic text, but he by no means rules out the

text entirely. Indeed, he in several places points out that the text is a basis for performance, although it can never truly stand on its own without the implication of performance. He says:

The particular structure of a dramatic work is such that every drama attains its full validity only as "theatre", and, in order to achieve vital communion with it, the reading also requires a particular mode of perception, one that is not required for other literary works. If this requirement is fully met, that is, if the drama is performed, it becomes theatre and thus goes beyond the realm of purely literary works or constitutes one of its borderline cases.³²

This seems to suggest that the dramatic text is merely a stepping-stone towards the ultimate goal of performance. It also implies, however, that performance is simply a more concrete kind of reading. At another point, too, Ingarden implies that the performance of a dramatic text is a "concretization" comparable to a "concretization" which is obtained when reading any other literary text:

From mere preparedness [Parathaltung] [sic] and schematization in the work itself, aspects [i.e., schematized views] attain concreteness in the concretization and are raised to the level of perceptual experience (in the case of a stage play) or imaginal experience (in a reading).³³

In this instance, Ingarden seems to be putting the emphasis back on the literary text, as the basis for the performance. The latter, instead of being the most important element

(or ultimate raison d'être of the drama), becomes simply a concretization of it, or a reading which has been given life on the stage. Furthermore, Ingarden adds subtler nuances still by elaborating on the problem of one text and its many performances under various directors over a period of years. The staging of a play by a director according to the director's understanding of it, says Ingarden,

shows the spectators this work in a form that prescribes a manifold of specifically conditioned concretizations. Both the "repetition" of the performance and its imitation by other directors produce concretizations which are all guided not only by the first performance, but also by that concretization of the work that was constituted in the director's reading (of the work). To be sure, in this case there is a shift in the interrelationships of the individual concretizations. One may say that it is the performance which serves as a model, that undergoes concretization, and not the play itself.⁵⁴

Thus, unless we are speaking of a premiere, we have not only a text and a performance of it, but a text and the history of its performances. The variations and combinations take on limitless proportions.

Before we situate the position this study will take in relation to Ingarden's thoughts on this subject, it would be of interest to discuss, as well, some of the remarks made by other recent critics on text vs. performance.

In general, there is an increasing awareness of theatricality among drama theorists, and an attempt towards fuller integration of the elements of the dramatic text with the more technical considerations of staging. Angermeyer's Zuschauer im Drama (1971), Bablet and Jacquot's Le Lieu théâtral dans la société moderne (1963), a colloquium collection, Champigny's Le Genre dramatique (1965), and Steiner's Die Bühnenanweisung (1969) are good examples of a literary criticism which is eager to recognize and to explore the theatricality of dramatic literature, a theatricality that ought not to be ignored. As well, Ghéon's L'Art du théâtre (1944), and Gouhier's L'Oeuvre théâtrale (1958) are somewhat earlier examples of the same tendency. The current developments in semi-otic research also include numerous studies that address themselves to the problem of theatricality and try to grapple with the theoretic dichotomy of text and performance³⁵. All of these critics try to take into account the fact that the dramatic text is written, and should be read, with performance in mind. Bablet's Esthétique générale du décor de théâtre de 1870 à 1914 deals with theatre through the dramatic literature of the period. For Champigny, "le texte de la pièce ne fournit qu'un schéma"³⁶ so that "une pièce de théâtre ne peut atteindre sa pleine mesure qu'à la représentation"³⁶. According to Steiner, literary critics should realize that "in weitaus den meisten Fällen

der Dramentext nichts Anderes darstellt als eine Partitur für das Theater"³⁷. For Ghéon and Gouhier, as well, performance is the most important element³⁸. And Kowzan goes a step further, arguing that "spectacle"³⁹ should be considered as an independent or autonomous entity and not as dependent on literature. His point is that, since dramatic literature usually uses "affabulation" which is derived from other sources, and is considered independent as a genre nonetheless, then "spectacle", whose "affabulation" is also derived, should have the same privilege. He says:

Dans le cas d'un ouvrage littéraire et d'un spectacle dont l'affabulation en est dérivée, il y a divergence partielle ou totale des signes et de leurs signifiants, pendant que leurs signifiés sont en grande partie les mêmes. [Thus,] ... le caractère AUTONOME de l'art du spectacle par rapport à la littérature et son caractère DERIVE par rapport au domaine littéraire ne sont contradictoires qu'en apparence.⁴⁰

Although Kowzan's attempt is interesting in its breadth and ambitious in its scope, however, we cannot accept his plea for the autonomy of the theatrical performance as such. Hannes Razum brings up a historical point in this connection, which we must interject here:

Es ist zweifellos richtig, dass das Theater anderen Ursprungs als die Literatur und daher selbstschöpferisch ist. Es hat in der Geschichte als Theater der Improvisation, der commedia dell'arte, seine höchste Blüte gehabt

und bringt noch heute im Pantomimentheater bewundernswerte Leistungen hervor. Hier war es und ist es der Herr, hier ist sein Königreich. Aber es hat sich schon früh in der Geschichte in ein Verhältnis mit der Literatur eingelassen und ist dabei, wie es bei Verhältnissen zu gehen pflegt, aus der Rolle des Herrn in die Rolle des Dieners geraten. Man kann es wegen dieses Schicksals nicht einmal bedauern, denn es ist das Verhältnis mit der Literatur aus durchaus eigennützigen Motiven eingegangen: Es waren nicht die weltbewegenden Gedanken der Dichter, nicht das dramatische Kunstwerk der Sprache, weder poetische noch philosophische oder politische Interessen, die es zu dieser Verbindung bewogen; es waren die immense Erweiterung seines mimischen Repertoires, die Fülle der Rollen, der neuen Kostüme und Masken, die es an sich zu ziehen gedachte. Sein eigener Fundus an Kostümen und Rollen war sehr beschränkt und ist es noch heute.⁴¹

Since the days of the *commedia dell'arte* at any rate (and quite often before that), theatre and dramatic literature have stood in close mutual relationship. For if the performance is based on the text (to a greater or lesser degree), the text is usually written with a view to performance in mind. That is, the dramatist writes with the technical staging possibilities and theatrical conventions of his day in mind. Babelot re-affirms the primacy of the dramatic text vis-à-vis theatre when he warns against overestimating "les pouvoirs du lieu théâtral,"⁴² that is, of stage architecture and of the

technical aspects of theatre production. Veltrusky also affirms this, citing an example of the failure of new theatrical (stage) structures to produce corresponding changes in dramatic texts:

Moreover, a negative proof that theatrical space is more dependent on dramatic structure than the other way around was given when a new theatre, which could have satisfied all the ambitions of Meyerhold, Tajrov, Vaxtangov, Piscator, Schlemmer, Honzl, E.F. Burian and all the others, was constructed in Paris in the hope that it would give rise to work comparable to theirs. It did not stimulate the development of a new structure, nor attract stage directors, and it had finally to be converted into a cinema.⁴³

Given the logical assumption that a dramatist writes with a certain theatrical convention in mind, we would agree with Veltrusky that "the arrangement of the entire theatrical space depends to some extent on the structure of the dramatic text,"⁴⁴ and that "the actor's creation can never fully escape the obligations imposed on him by the dramatic text"⁴⁵.

Even those critics whose insistence on performance outweighs their preference for the text, however, do not escape the necessity of the dramatic text. Steiner begins by insisting on performance, but later admits to the theatrical aspects of the text itself: "Der Text des Dramas [...] enthält in sich schon das Gesetz nicht nur

des geschriebenen Textes als solchen, sondern auch das seiner Theatralität"⁴⁶. And Angermeyer, although he does not make a clear distinction between drama and theatre in his approach (he speaks of "drama" and "spectator"), also makes clear that his study is based on the text: "Das Stück wird jeweils nur als Text und nicht als lebendige Aufführung genommen, so wie keine konkrete Zuschauererfahrung herangezogen werden soll und kann"⁴⁷.

Where, then, must our emphasis lie? It is clear that the dramatic text and its performance are to a great extent mutually dependent on one another. Regardless of what their particular bias might be, this fact is, in the final analysis, recognized by each of the critics we have so far mentioned. The text is the core, the more permanent element. The performance can not be considered an independent entity, as Kowzan tries to suggest, nor can it, for the purpose of this study at least, be regarded as the culminating point for which the dramatic text is merely a kind of musical score waiting for its symphony orchestra. Performance does, to be sure, involve the concretely visual and aural, an immediacy which cannot be rendered by the printed text. But the text always implies the visual and aural, and this is what legitimizes the reading of a dramatic text at all. The dramatic text must always

be read with performance in mind; this, as we shall explain shortly, is indeed forced upon the reader by the very make-up of the printed page of a dramatic text. And, if the result of reading the text cannot be directly compared with the result of attending a performance of the play, this is not to say that reading produces no viable impression. For, if a performance is a concretization, as Ingarden has argued, just as much as a reading of texts is a concretization, then one might legitimately opt for the reading of dramatic texts as producing as satisfactory a concretization (if a different one) as does a performance.

Thus, we would like to modify somewhat Ingarden's phenomenological notion of the dramatic literary work for the purposes of this study. We are not disputing Ingarden within his own particular perspective, but we would like use his theory only in as far as it might apply to the dramatic text. For, although he sets dramatic literature in a category of its own due to its potential (and, for him, crucial) ability to be staged, he does not exclude the value of reading dramatic texts. He points, just as we would like to do in this study, to the special reading consciousness necessary for dramatic texts:

The represented word is, in a manner of speaking, supposed to be seen. In other words, the particular structure of a dramatic work is such that every drama

attains its full validity only as "theatre", and, in order to achieve vital communion with it, the reading also requires a particular mode of perception, one that is not required for other literary works.⁴⁸

This special sort of reading is already hinted at when Ingarden discusses the presence of an "implied 'spectator'"⁴⁹ in dramatic literary texts. The text, he states, is already constructed in such a way as to show that the reader needs to take on the role or position of such a "spectator" in order to orient himself within it. It will be necessary to quote Ingarden at length in this instance, in order to make this very crucial point for our study. He says:

A special case of where and how the centre of orientation is located in the represented world is created by the state of affairs that is found in "drama" that is read. If, for example, we read in the stage directions of a drama: "To the left are two large windows, next to them is an old-fashioned, heavy desk, in front of it a stool...", we are given a centre of orientation, or at least the direction in which it is to be found. This centre of orientation is here shifted to a possible spectator, who, after all, is not really present in a dramatic work which is only read. It would also be a mistake to think that this possible spectator is one of a number of real spectators who would be present at a performance of the drama and that it need only be determined which of them is the one in question. Quite on the contrary. Like the invisible narrator before [in his discussion on the novel], here the invisible spectator belongs to the represented world, with the difference that he does not attain explicit repre-

sentation. The space in which he finds himself is represented space and is in no sense a segment of space from the auditorium. Still, the fact that a spectator attains even nonexplicit and indirect corepresentation is not without influence on the remainder of the represented world. For what exists and occurs in the represented world attains thereby the character of something presented, of something displayed for someone, regardless of whether this is explicitly indicated in the text or in the directions.⁵⁰

If, on the one hand, the dramatic text is geared to an "implied spectator", the reader of drama, on the other, needs equally to become the "implied spectator", to take up his "position", so that he can gain the right perspective on the text as drama. He will need to set up for himself, during reading, a kind of "theatre of the mind", a "stage of the imagination" with whose help only he will be able to fully co-operate with the dramatic text.

The reading of a dramatic text differs from the reading of other literary works of art. The reader of such a text must be familiar with and enter into a convention of reading that can not usually be found in novels or poems. For one thing, the very physical layout of the printed words on the page⁵¹ is different. There is usually a list of the dramatis personae at the outset, sometimes even with qualifying remarks as to ages, relationships, and so on. This is already a marked difference with the reading of a novel, where the

characters are presented in slower succession, and not simultaneously⁵². The reader thus already has one piece of advance knowledge which he must store and mentally refer back to during the course of the play, if he needs it for further orientation⁵³. Apart from the indication of act and (possibly, but not always) scene divisions, the rest of the dramatic text is laid out in three visual categories. These are: the names of the dramatis personae, the stage directions, and the words or direct dialogue of the dramatis personae. In the majority of cases, a different kind of type is used to print each of these components of the text. For instance, the names might be in capital letters, the stage directions in italics, and the direct dialogue in normal print. Often, the stage directions are also put in brackets⁵⁴, but not always. An effort is thus made at the outset to orient the reader, for each of these three divisions are indications of importance to him. The reader differentiates perceptually and intellectually between the three categories. The different print is always the triggering factor which signals to him perceptually (visually) that he is in another category of meaning. The names of the dramatis personae indicate who is speaking and in what order, and are thus a straightforward element. The other two categories are the most important. In the stage directions,

in particular, the operation of what we have called the "theatre of the mind" is strongest and most important. In the majority of 19th and 20th Century dramatic texts, there are at least some, and often a great deal of stage directions. In most instances, and certainly in the plays we will be dealing with in this thesis, there is a sentence or paragraph(s) of stage directions at the beginning of the play, and often at the beginning of every act. These give the decor, speak of the physical layout of the stage, and give the position of the dramatis personae. In order for the stage directions to have any meaning at all, the reader must at this point begin setting up his mental or imaginary "stage", upon which he will subsequently place and give movement to the dramatis personae, according to the information provided by the text. In other words, when the stage directions indicate that a certain character enters upstage left and walks downstage right to stand beside the sofa, the reader must be familiar with certain basic staging conventions in order to assimilate the meaning of the text at all. After all, the character does not walk upon the printed page from left to right or from "up" to "down" (whatever that may be for a printed page). His positioning, if it is to have any meaning at all for the reader, must be understood in terms of the basic

stage conventions⁵⁵. "Downstage" as a semantic unity is meaningless if the reader does not have the additional information that it refers to the part of the stage closest to the audience. Similarly, stage left and right usually refer to the actor's left and right when he is on stage facing the audience. The words on the page of a dramatic text (the stage directions) must be translated by the reader into a coherent pattern of movement within an imaginary stage, or stage of the mind, which he sets up for himself during reading, or the text risks becoming a series of unconnected speeches delivered in a void.

Although we will use the term "reader" rather than "spectator" throughout this study, it will be used in the sense of "implied spectator" as Ingarden describes this term; that is, in the sense of a reader who, because he is reading a dramatic text, must set up a theatre of the mind for himself and thus become a "spectator" in his own imagination during reading. Once this has occurred, the reader will be able to enter the convention of the dramatic text, and follow the "action" in his imagination. In fact, his imagination and memory will be needed throughout the reading. For, once he has absorbed the initial stage directions, he will need to remember them in order to proceed with his reading. This is especially true of plays which abound in decor and scenery, but is in

principle applicable for every drama. Unless the reader can continue to situate the movements of the dramatis personae within the decor throughout the play, he will lose the part of the dramatic text that in fact constitutes its dramatic quality. Of course, in reading the text, he is at liberty to leaf back to the initial page of crucial stage directions in order to refresh his memory and help himself to situate the characters at a later point in the text. But the very fact that he might find it necessary to do so is a testimony to the importance of the "theatre of the mind" or stage of the imagination. This is where the text and the performance differ radically, of course. Ingarden states that, in performance, the stage directions are totally eliminated and become, instead of "aspects... held in readiness"⁵⁶, as in the text, aspects that are "determined concretely"⁵⁶, i.e., actual visual and gestual physical aspects. It would seem, however, that in the stage play, too, the elements of the stage directions are "held in readiness", but have simply been transferred to a different type of medium (concrete or visual rather than linguistic). In any case, the difference in performance is that the visual and gestual elements (the decor and movement of the dramatis personae) are accessible to the spectator not just once (as in

reading), but simultaneously with the delivery of the speeches by the characters. That is, once the curtain goes up, the spectator can see the set throughout the rest of the act. Roland Barthes refers to this when he speaks of the polyphonic effect of a theatrical performance:

Qu'est-ce que le théâtre? Une espèce de machine cybernétique. Au repos, cette machine est cachée derrière un rideau. Mais dès qu'on la découvre, elle se met à envoyer à votre adresse un certain nombre de messages. Ces messages ont ceci de particulier, qu'ils sont simultanés et cependant de rythme différent; en tel point du spectacle vous recevez en même temps six ou sept informations (venues du décor, du costume, de l'éclairage, de la place des acteurs, de leurs gestes, de leur mimique, de leur parole), mais certaines de ces informations tiennent (c'est le cas du décor), pendant que d'autres tournent (la parole, les gestes); on a donc affaire à une véritable polyphonie informationnelle, et c'est cela, la théâtralité: une épaisseur de signes (je parle ici par rapport à la monodie littéraire, et en laissant de côté le problème du cinéma).⁵⁷

In a performance, the entire decor and spatial lay-out assaults the spectator's senses at once and is present throughout the act. In read drama, since reading is a linear process (i.e., one sentence after another), the effect is not polyphonic. Only the "stage of the imagination" can help the reader to gain some of the effects described by Barthes above, and to co-ordinate his

efforts to orient himself in the dramatic universe.

Once again, however, the use of different print helps the reader in this. Visually, the stage directions which are interspersed among the direct dialogue throughout the act remind him again and again of the set and decor, and shift his attention momentarily back to them and to his mental picture of the stage set. As well, the alternate change of print (between italics and normal print) provides slight pauses or gaps in the flow of the text for the reader. He is consciously forced to shift back and forth both visually (by the print), and conceptually (by the different sort of elements, i.e., direct speech and decor). In this way, he is constantly, though momentarily, "distanced" from total involvement in the text because of the mental work of shifting gears he is being asked to do. The slight pauses also allow him time for possible retrospection or anticipation. It is true that this process eventually becomes almost automatic with practice in reading the dramatic text, but the fact nevertheless remains that the text of drama does not present the same homogeneity of print and layout that the text of, say, the novel⁵⁸, does, and it therefore sets up its own reading convention as a result. Moreover, the text needs the coordinating efforts of the reader, and invites his parti-

cipation in a pre-ordained fashion by the very nature of its physical layout.

We hope to have answered to a certain extent the question of whether the dramatic literary work may legitimately be approached through reading or whether its best and only concretization occurs when a spectator watches a performance. At least, we have tried to outline the position this study will take on this point, and to situate this position within the main currents of contemporary criticism. We will work from the standpoint of the reader of the dramatic text, since his concretization of the text is very well able to compete with the spectator's concretization when he watches a performance. However, we recognize the mutual dependence of text and performance in the fact that the reader can only "compete" with the spectator if he reads with performance in mind. This makes the reading of a dramatic text very different from the reading of, say, a novel, since a "repertoire" of knowledge of convention is required that is not needed for non-dramatic literature. This "repertoire" is forced upon the reader at the outset by the specific layout of the printed page of a dramatic text. Unless the reader is at least to some extent familiar with the conventions when he starts reading, he will not be able to make sense

of the divisions on the printed page and will be excluded from communication with the dramatic text. Once he activates his mental co-operation with the performance aspect of the text, however, - by setting up the "theatre of the mind" we have already discussed - then the text as drama is "available" to him and what he gets out of it will depend on his skills of memory, co-ordination or grouping of various aspects, ability to fill gaps and to work with the indeterminacy of the text. In short, the same notions of indeterminacy, gaps, anticipation and retrospection, schematized views, and so on, as outlined by Ingarden and Iser, can be applied to the dramatic text, but only if the reader can keep the added dimension of performance in mind. This is not to say that he will keep one or more particular performances of the play in mind, or a history of its staging. Whether the process of his reading of the text is or is not similar to the history of its staging is not important. What is crucial is that his experience of the text, in the manner we have described, and depending on his own skill as reader, has just as much validity as a spectator's at a performance.

The old argument is that, before any performance can occur, someone (usually the director) has to read the text to decide how it will be staged. Thus, pending some

circumstantial variants (such as how well the lighting and sound effects man does his job that evening, for instance, or how the leading actress is feeling), what the spectator sees on stage is simply the realized or performed concretization which the director experienced when he read the play. It can also be pointed out that some people attain greater satisfaction from reading a play than from seeing it performed. This depends on the skill of the reader and the skill of the performance, as well as on individual taste and reaction. There can be different interpretations of dramatic texts (both in reading and performance), just as there can be different interpretations of any other literary text. One interpretation does not necessarily exclude the other, as long as they are all based on the various and legitimate possibilities of the text.

III

That the use of space is crucial in drama has already been made apparent in our discussion of the "theatre of the mind" which the reader of dramatic texts must set up for himself. If the reader is to have any notion of performance, he must have a notion of space. Indeed, we might be accused of tautology in this respect, since every drama obviously needs a locus if it is to be

performed, whether that locus is a stage built according to one of many possible conventions, or simply the steps of a cathedral or a forest clearing. Performance and space go hand in hand, but this is a simple assumption only on the surface, since, once this is agreed upon, a discussion of the use of space in any given performance can become quite complex. Moreover, the notion of space in the read dramatic text stands in a somewhat different category from the notion of space for an actual, physical performance. After all, the text consists of language, words printed on a page. Where, one might say, is the "space" of the dramatic text? Is it the empty space of the margins, or between the speeches? Is it the space taken up by each character's lines or by the stage directions? The answer, of course, is that it is none of these. Space in drama is conveyed by the meaning of the words, which the reader must then translate in his imagination into a notion of space as it might appear physically, in performance.

In the dramatic text, both the stage directions and the direct dialogue supply indications of space to the reader. In some instances, stage directions may be lengthy and frequent, as, for example, in the three plays by Zola, Hauptmann, and Chekhov which we shall be discussing.

When this is the case, it is the stage directions which are most important for supplying the reader with the volume of the space, the extent and location of the decor, and the movement of the characters within the decor and in relation to each other. The direct dialogue then may or may not supply additional spatial information pertaining to the actual stage setting and the movement of the dramatis personae. In other cases, however, there are few, if any, stage directions in the dramatic text, as in Greek drama, or the plays of Shakespeare, for instance. When this is so, it is the direct dialogue which provides the indication of spatiality, even if the setting is merely "an open space" or an undetermined location with no decor⁵⁹. Ultimately, the reader knows that space must be involved in performance and in "dramaticity", even if that space should happen to be mythological, fantastic, or abstract.

Let us remain for now with the "stage space", that is, the space described by the stage directions and dialogue and which would be visible to the spectator in an actual performance. Although, as in any other literary text, many details might be given about this space (eg., the number and type of objects and their appearance and position) ultimately not everything can be described and much must be left to the imagination of the reader, who must fill the

gaps according to his skill and according to the coordinates the text gives him. Even when a dramatic text includes sketches of the physical layout of the set, as is the case in Vor Sonnenaufgang, they are only line drawings of positions and must also be filled out by the reader, even though they are additional graphic aids. In performance, of course, the gaps are filled by the actual stage setting. In some instances, the performance may include extra spatial information which is not present in the text. For instance, a character may be indicated as having exited in the text, but not as having re-entered. Suddenly, however, the text may be indicating that the character is speaking again. In performance, this gap (i.e., lack of indication by the text that the character has re-entered) would obviously be filled for the spectator by the character's physical re-entrance at some point chosen at the director's discretion. But during the reading of the text, the reader becomes his own director, in retrospect. That is, as soon as the eye of the reader perceives the printed words of the character's dialogue, a series of things occur in his mind: 1) he remembers (or should) that this character was indicated as exiting at some past point in the text; 2) he further remembers that no stage direction has announced his re-entrance; 3) he fills this gap by intellectually accepting that

this character is back on stage, because he is now speaking, unless some other stage direction or dialogue portion has given him information to the contrary (say, for instance, if only the character's voice is supposed to be heard). In the physical performance, the spectator will already have seen the character enter before he speaks; in the text, the reader must imagine the character's previous re-entry in retrospect in order to accept the fact that he is now again speaking on stage. The linearity of the printed text will force him to make many such mental operations during reading, since the information cannot be conveyed to him as simultaneously as in a performance. This perhaps taxes his memory and imagination to a greater extent, but the necessary gaps are filled in both operations: in reading, by the imagination of the reader; in a performance, by the physical elements of the performance.

Although the verbal indications of space in drama usually concentrate on the "space represented", that is, on the stage set and the elements that would be visible in performance, the reader's notion of space in drama does not stop there. Ingarden refers to this effect when he compares the qualities of "real" or world space and the qualities of "represented" space, or space that is described in literary works. He says:

Let us consider that in a novel, for example, a situation is represented as taking place in a given room and that there is no indication, even by a single word, that there is anything outside this room. Surely one cannot say that outside the segment of space that is bounded by the walls of this room there is absolutely no space and hence complete nothingness. Yet it would also be false to say that there is space surrounding this room which is determined by corresponding units of meaning or positively represented by corresponding states of affairs. If the actually represented space (within the room) does not end at the walls of the room, it is only because it is the essence of space in general not to have any discontinuity. It is only through this impossibility of spatial discontinuity that the space outside the room is co-represented; in turn, the space within the room consequently becomes a segment of space. [...] Explicitly, truly represented space is as if pocked with gaps, which show up as, so to speak, spots of indeterminacy.⁶⁰

Although Ingarden refers to the novel here, his remarks may without difficulty be transferred to the dramatic text, especially to drama using a bourgeois living-room (or other interior) setting, as all three of the plays we will be dealing with do. Because of the property of space which Ingarden refers to, the reader will experience the necessity of going beyond the actual stage setting, to fill in the gaps and acquire some sort of notion of a continuation for the dramatic universe beyond that portion specifically described in the setting. The text, in most cases, will help him to do this. Usually, there is an

indication, for instance, of a door or other opening used for exits or entrances. This already provides a link with space outside that which would be visible on a stage. In addition, there may be windows, other doors, skylights, and so on, that would also help the reader to imagine spatial continuity. And the use of light and sound, which would have to be indicated verbally by the text, might also contribute to the same effect for the reader. Light (sunlight) streaming in an open window, or the sound of a car horn off-stage (to indicate a street) are good examples of this, and constitute only two of the many other variations of this kind of technique that might be used. Besides such physical indications, many verbal ones might be found in the direct dialogue of the dramatis personae, either referring to space immediately beyond the room represented, or space farther away, or even space that existed in the past. In each case, the same gaps apply, so that the reader automatically tries to fill them, doing so each time in relation to the space represented by the stage setting.

One might interject that, in an actual performance, there exists a physical off-stage space: the wings. But this does not prevent the use of sound and light to achieve an expansion of space, as discussed above, nor does it change the need of the spectator, who also tries to fill

the spatial gaps⁶¹. It only changes the means at his disposal for filling them. In reading, everything is imagined by the reader on the basis of the printed text; that is, both stage setting and "off-stage" space are conceptualized through the medium of language. In performance, a great deal of the space is presented to the spectator visually, so that the off-stage space which he must imagine on the basis of words spoken by the dramatis personae loses in vividness in comparison with the actual, visual stage elements. In the printed text, however, the two are on a more equal footing, since both are language, and the off-stage space is likely to gain in significance. For instance, the off-stage space of "Moscow" in The Three Sisters is likely to have a greater effect on the reader of the drama than on the spectator of a performance of the play. In the performance, it is merely a verbal component and pales in effect when spoken by the characters within the visual stage space which assaults the senses of the spectator. In reading, it is language as much as are the stage directions, and is therefore better able to compete for the analytical attention of the reader.

Space in drama is then rendered both by the stage directions and by the main text or dialogue. Especially for the historical period which this study will be dealing with, the stage directions form the main component of

spatial information. Within these, the decor is the main element, serving to organize the available space by its volume and location. Both Gouhier⁶² and Bablet make this point as well. Bablet's whole monograph on stage decor is based on the definition that "le décor est l'ensemble des éléments qui ont pour fin l'organisation de l'espace scénique"⁶³. He takes a very general view of decor, moreover, not restricting it to objects only:

Pour nous, la représentation implique le décor, même si apparemment il n'y a pas de décor au sens traditionnel du mot: le fond de tenture noire, l'espace neutre, le tréteau, et même le mur nu de la scène sont encore des décors, quand bien même ils laissent à chaque spectateur la possibilité et la liberté de se créer un décor purement imaginaire.⁶⁴

Whether cluttered or not, the space represented must be organized to function as orientation for the reader, even if only by means of a bare wall.

Along with the decor, both lighting and sound help in the organization of stage space for the reader. Lighting can break up the space given into any number of smaller sections, thereby focusing the attention of the reader on one or another part of the mental stage. It can create intimacy by illuminating only one or two persons, leaving the rest of the stage in darkness. Or it can create awareness of space beyond the setting by being projected from a window or a door. Of course, it can also create

mood and work as a psychological factor, but this is not one of its spatial functions. Sound, too, can delineate or specify space. It can characterize the space of the setting by, say, being the sound of a foghorn, thus indicating that a ship's deck is being represented. Or it can be heard off-stage and, like lighting, help to expand the reader's spatial awareness. In both instances, for the dramatic text, the use of sound and light for these purposes would have to be indicated by means of language, either in the stage directions or in the dialogue. This is perhaps an instance, especially as concerns lighting, where the dramatic text cannot achieve the vividness of a performance, nor its versatility in the ability to represent things simultaneously (as, say, several lights flashing on and off at the same time in different parts of the stage). Once again, however, the gap in simultaneity would be filled mentally by the reader in the slower linear process of reading.

Although the stage may be left empty at various moments in order to achieve specific effects⁶⁵, usually one or more dramatis personae are present. Their movements and positions within the decor and vis-à-vis one another are also a factor which affects stage space, modifying the proportions of empty space and objects represented, and shifting the attention of the reader from one area or

another of the space represented. Hannes Razum makes some very pertinent remarks on the various effects of the movement of dramatis personae within the stage space:

Entscheidend wichtig für das, was der Mensch, der da oben auf der Bühne erscheint, darstellen soll, ist es schon, von woher er kommt, von links oder rechts vorn, von links oder rechts hinten, von hinten Mitte oder gar aus dem Zuschauerraum. Sofort ist er mit besonderen Gewichten beladen, seine Bedeutung wird grösser oder geringer, je nachdem, wo er erscheint. Der Mittelauftritt von hinten, z.B., wirkt immer vorbereitet, pompös, repräsentativ, der Auftritt links vorn aus der Gasse beiläufig, unerwartet, von geringer Bedeutung. Aus der Mitte treten die Helden und Könige auf [...]; aus der Gasse die Diener und Intriganten [...]. Schon die Alten haben den Mittelauftritt dem Deus ex machina vorbehalten [...].⁶⁶

He notes further that an entrance from the auditorium disturbs the division there usually is between stage and auditorium and is a favourite way of breaking down the illusion of the stage for the modern drama. The downstage direct address to the audience is used for the same purpose⁶⁷. Although his comments cannot be taken as applicable for every play, they show the significance of the movements of the dramatis personae for an understanding of the use of space in drama.

We have tried to show to what extent the notion of space is a crucial one for drama, and how the reader of drama must at all times keep performance in mind in

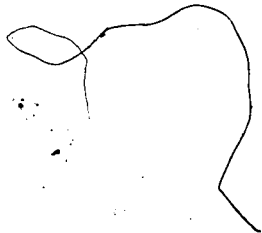
order to fully enter into co-operation with the dramatic text. Unless he does this, the printed page will risk losing its dramaticity, its impact as drama, as vs. narrative. Another element is necessary to the reader of drama: the knowledge of dramatic convention, or a sense of the history of staging. To a certain extent, this would correspond to what Iser calls "repertoire" for the novel⁶⁸. Although a full knowledge of every detail of staging history is not necessary for the successful reading of a particular play, still enough knowledge of convention is necessary for the reader to conceptualize the general type of stage the text might be performed on, and the physical possibilities which that type of stage possesses.

We have chosen to discuss space and the reader of drama in three plays which belong to a period of rather conventional and not particularly sophisticated use of stage space. Thérèse Raquin, Vor Sonnenaufgang, and The Three Sisters all use the bourgeois room setting which evolved within the tradition of the picture-frame stage. The last two plays make use of exterior settings as well, but these are also in the context of the same stage convention. However, within the historical period we have chosen to deal with, i.e., roughly 1873 to 1904, Zola, Hauptmann, and Chekhov stand out as playwrights whose

names are associated with innovation, (at times scandalous) boldness, but also respect. The **stature** of Zola as a playwright, while unimpressive, is important for the historical place he maintains as the most influential proponent of Naturalism. The ambition of his theories exceeded his actual literary achievements, even in the novels for which he is more highly respected. But Zola shows the beginnings of a change that was taking place within the drama, a change that develops through Hauptman and Chekhov towards some of the innovations leading to modern drama. From a highly conventional use of space in Thérèse Raquin, therefore, we will be able to observe a growing sophistication in the use of space in both Vor Sonnenaufgang and The Three Sisters. This sophistication begins a trend towards innovations in stage space in the 20th Century, innovations that generally free the stage for experiments which involve both the floor of the stage, and the volume of space above the floor. For the reader, this will mean growing efforts in co-operation with the text, as it increases in complexity and indeterminacy.

NOTES

- 1 J. Honzl, "Dynamics of the Sign in the Theatre".
In: L. Matejka and I.R. Titunik, eds., Semiotics of Art. Prague School Contributions, p. 81.
- 2 R. Wellek, "The Mode of Existence of a Literary Work of Art". In: R. Wellek and A. Warren, Theory of Literature, p. 147.
- 3 Ibid., p. 146. This is meant in the sense of psychological, subjective experience.
- 4 Ibid., p. 142.
- 5 Ibid.
- 6 R. Ingarden, The Literary Work of Art, especially Chapters 7, 10, and 13.
- 7 Ibid., p. 218.
- 8 Ingarden's term is "Unbestimmtheitsstellen".
- 9 Ibid., p. 339.

- 10 W. Iser, "The Reading Process: A Phenomenological Approach", p. 279.
- 11 Ibid., p. 280.
- 12 W. Iser, "Der Archetyp als Leerform. Erzählschablonen und Kommunikation in Joyces Ulysses", p. 407.
- 13 A. Nisin, La Littérature et le lecteur, p. 15.
- 14 Ibid., p. 16.
- 15 H. Weinrich, "Für eine Literaturgeschichte des Lesers". In: H. Weinrich, Literatur für Leser. Essays und Aufsätze zur Literaturwissenschaft, p. 23.
- 16 See W. Iser, "The Reading Process: A Phenomenological Approach", p. 287, and R. Ingarden, op. cit., p. 332.
- 17 H. Weinrich, op. cit., p. 28. The italics are this author's.
- 18 R. Wellek, op. cit., p. 146. Wellek uses the term "poem" to mean "literary work of art".
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- 19 R. Ingarden, op. cit., pp. 246-47. The italics are Ingarden's.
- 20 Ibid., p. 246.
- 21 Ibid., p. 249.
- 22 Ibid., p. 251.
- 23 W. Iser, "Indeterminacy and the Reader's Response". In: Aspects of Narrative. Selected Papers from the English Institute, pp. 8-10.
- 24 Ibid.; p. 11.
- 25 Ibid.
- 26 Ibid., p. 26.
- 27 W. Iser, "The Reading Process: A Phenomenological Approach", p. 285.
- 28 Ibid.

29 W. Iser, "Indeterminacy and the Reader's Response",
p. 4.

30 R. Ingarden, "The Functions of Language in the
Theatre". In: The Literary Work of Art, p. 377.

31 Ibid.

32 R. Ingarden, The Literary Work of Art, p. 233.

33 Ibid., p. 339.

34 Ibid., p. 349.

35 Of particular interest to this thesis are:
J. Honzl, "Dynamics of the Sign in the Theatre" and
J. Veltrusky, "Dramatic Text as a Component of Theatre",
both in: L. Matejka and I.R. Titunik, eds., Semiotics of
Art. Prague School Contributions, pp. 74-93, and pp. 94-117.
Both articles originally appeared in Slovo a slovenost
in 1940 and 1941 respectively. Also, M. Issacharoff's
"L'Espace et le regard dans Huis Clos", and T. Kowzan's
Littérature et spectacle are important semiotic studies
of the text and performance problem, despite the fact

the latter presents an approach that is somewhat problematic.

36 R. Champigny, Le Genre dramatique, p. 16.

37 J. Steiner, Die Bühnenanweisung, p. 17.

38 H. Ghéon, L'Art du théâtre, pp. 24-25; H. Gouhier, L'Oeuvre théâtrale, p. 15.

39 For Kowzan, this term includes not only theatrical performance, but a military parade, an animated showcase, a royal ritual, a mass. In: T. Kowzan, Littérature et spectacle, p. 26. We will, however, limit ourselves to theatrical performance in this study.

40 Ibid., p. 219.

41 H. Razum, "Die räumlichen Wirkungsgesetze der Regie", p. 235. Razum's initial statement on the origins of theatre is perhaps controversial and leaves room for discussion. But such a discussion would be beyond the scope of this thesis and we accept his assertion for its general validity.

42 D. Bablet, "La remise en question du lieu théâtral

au vingtième siècle". In: D. Bablet and J. Jacquot, Le Lieu théâtral dans la société moderne, p. 24.

43 J. Veltrusky, op. cit., p. 99.

44 Ibid., p. 98.

45 Ibid., p. 109.

46 J. Steiner, op. cit., p. 8.

47 H.C. Angermeyer, op. cit., p. 12.

48 R. Ingarden, op. cit., p. 233.

49 Ibid.

50 Ibid., p. 232.

51 For the purposes of this study, we will be referring to the normal and usual typographical layout of a dramatic text in the 19th and 20th Centuries. There can, no doubt, be exceptions, but they cannot be included in the scope of this thesis. In any case, the exceptions would still

command a certain convention of approach, one that would be their own in particular.

52 Here already, the dramatic text differs from the performance, where there is of course no list of dramatis personae (except perhaps in a programme which might be handed out to the spectators, but this is an extraneous factor).

53 Of course, the reader has the choice of simply leafing back to the beginning of the text. This is also something not available to the spectator at a performance.

54 In this case, they may also be in normal print.

55 For the purpose of this study, we will limit ourselves to the conventional European "picture-frame" stage ("Kastenbühne"). The theory of ~~our~~ thesis, however, could be applied, with modifications, to dramatic texts designed mainly for other types of stages as well.

56 R. Ingarden, The Literary Work of Art, p. 320.

57 R. Barthes, "Littérature et signification". In:

R. Barthes, Essais critiques, p. 258.

58 Many novels do use various types of print for specific effect, of course, but they are particular cases in point, and are able to produce their effects by the very fact that they transcend the conventional framework of the novel text layout.

59 An excellent article by Heinz Kindermann outlines in detail the varied importance of this kind of communication of stage space throughout the history of theatre. See: H. Kindermann, "Der gesprochene Raum", Maske und Kothurn 11(1965), 207-232. This study will not insist on space in direct dialogue in the way Kindermann describes it (i.e., as a replacement for the kind of function performed by stage directions), since, in the historical period we will be dealing with (late 19th and early 20th Centuries), the dramatic text is rich in stage directions and "spoken space" is less dominant.

60 R. Ingarden, op. cit., p. 223.

61 Gouhier also mentions this point: "Quand Hamlet quitte les remparts, il ne rentre pas dans la coulisse

avec l'acteur qui joue le rôle..."; he continues to inhabit his universe, as far as the reader is concerned. Gouhier, like Ingarden, stresses the reader's filling of both temporal and spatial gaps in the dramatic text. The reader "projette un immense espace autour de la petite zone découpée par le jeu". See: H. Gouhier, Le Théâtre et l'existence, p. 28.

- 62 H. Gouhier, L'Oeuvre théâtrale, p. 141.
- 63 D. Bablet, Esthétique générale du décor de théâtre de 1870 à 1914, p. x.
- 64 Ibid.
- 65 J. Hintze remarks that Hauptmann does this, both in Vor Sonnenaufgang and in Einsame Menschen in order to emphasize the independence of the milieu and its effect on the individual. In: Das Raumproblem im modernen deutschen Drama und Theater, p. 44. We would remark further that, in addition to this kind of interpretation, a momentarily empty stage can be said to perform the function of a pause or gap for the reader, a pause during which he may take stock of the action of the play to

that point, or anticipate what might follow. It is a point at which he is given the opportunity to reflect briefly and become more conscious of the ongoing dramatic action.

66 H. Razum, "Die räumlichen Wirkungsgesetze der Regie", p. 236. Razum deals with theatrical performance, but his comments are also vital for the reader, who must keep performance in mind.

67 Ibid., p. 238.

68 Iser also includes in the notion of "repertoire" the history of interpretation of the novel. For the drama, this would include not only drama criticism, but a history of the various productions a particular play has undergone. However, although this information would be of interest and cannot be dismissed, it is not crucial to a reading of the text with performance in mind, and will not be dealt with in this study.

THERESE RAQUIN

Thérèse Raquin is Zola's adaptation for the stage of an earlier novel of the same title, written in 1867. It is not the first play he wrote, nor was it the first play of his to be performed. He had written two previous dramas: La Laide in 1863-64, and Madeleine in 1865. Although he tried to have Madeleine performed in 1866, it did not reach the stage until 1889. However, an adaptation of one of his earlier novels, Les Mystères de Marseille, was performed in Marseille in 1867, under the same title. This play was never published, and the text is no longer extant.

Then, in 1873, Zola decided to try his hand at applying some of his theories of dramatic naturalism, which he had been expounding in a series of newspaper articles between 1868 and 1873. Thérèse Raquin was performed for the first time on July 11, 1873 at the Théâtre de la Renaissance in Paris. Since it was the end of the theatrical season, it received a great deal of critical attention which it might not otherwise have had; not all of it was hostile, some was even in the nature of praise, although none of it was without reservation. The play did not receive a long run (nine performances¹), but its moderate success (almost a succès de scandale, since every review was horrified by

some aspect of it) makes it Zola's most well-known play.

He went on to write an adaptation of Jonson's Volpone, which he entitled Les Héritiers Rabourdin, in 1874, a vaudeville, Le Bouton de Rose, in 1878, and an adaptation of his own La Curée, Renée in 1880. All three were staged without much success. He collaborated with William Busnach, then with Henry Céard in the 1880's on a few adaptations of his novels (notably Germinal, L'Assomoir, Nana) and his "nouvelles". After 1890, turning away from his earlier dramatic style, he also wrote some six lyrical plays, in collaboration with the musician Alfred Bruneau².

Although Thérèse Raquin is not brilliant or masterful drama, it is a good example of Zola's dramatic work and deserves attention. Braescu and Carter point out that the play has been revived a number of times in France³, and Braescu writes that "Plus encore qu'en France, Thérèse Raquin jouit d'un retentissant succès dans les pays scandinaves, en Allemagne, en Europe centrale, en Russie"⁴. This chapter will examine Thérèse Raquin in order to analyse how it uses space and in what ways this use of space influences the reader of the play and his perception and consciousness of the work.

* * *

In the 1875 Preface to Thérèse Raquin, Zola writes:

"j'ai enfermé le drame dans la même chambre, humide et noire, afin de ne rien lui ôter de son relief, ni de sa fatalité"⁵. The words "enfermé" and "noire" are of significance, for the play does take place in the same room in each of the four acts⁶. Moreover, although Act One begins while there is still enough daylight for Laurent to be painting Camille's portrait by, darkness soon comes, and it remains the backdrop for the three subsequent acts⁷. As the stage directions to Act One indicate, the setting represents a large room that is "haute, noire, délabrée, tendue d'un papier gris déteint, garnie de pauvres meubles dépareillés"⁸. The reader has the immediate impression of a large, high-ceilinged space, one that is dark and dingy.

However, despite being "grande" and "haute", the room in which the action takes place is none the less claustrophobic. The stage directions indicate that, as well as being a bedroom, the room serves "en même temps de salon et de salle à manger"⁹. In addition to containing a bed (in an alcove), it also holds a china cabinet, a cupboard, a round table, chairs, and two arm-chairs, and is "encombrée de cartons de marchandises"⁹. The total living space which the Raquin family occupies is little more than what is visible in the stage setting: "Nous n'avons qu'une chambre pour maman," complains Camille early in Act One, "outre cette pièce où nous mangeons et où nous couchons. Je ne parle pas de la cuisine, un trou

noir, grand comme un placard" (I, p. 128). Thus, their apartment is not only of mean proportions, but it is reduced in volume as well by the lack of light and the "blackness" that is used to describe its atmosphere.

This lack of light, as well as the claustrophobia, is emphasized further by a physical detail of the setting: upstage left, in addition to the bed, there is "une fenêtre donnant sur un mur nu" (I, p. 126). Any opening which the cluttered room might otherwise have had upon a free horizon or upon a view of houses or a street is thus radically cut off. The reader is made aware of this not only in the stage directions, however, but also by the position of the characters and by the dialogue at the beginning of Act One. When the play opens, the reader's attention is focused on Laurent, who is in the process of painting a portrait of Camille. He is standing at his easel which is positioned in front of the window, presumably to take advantage of the last bit of light of a summer evening. The window is ajar. In this way, the reader's attention is both on this particular section of the setting (upper left of the stage) and on the amount of light. The fact that one of the characters is painting a portrait when the play begins reinforces the reader's "visual" awareness. Also, the window (and the light coming from it) is brought further to the reader's attention by the ensuing

dialogue: "Est-ce que tu y vois encore clair?" (I, p. 128)

Camille asks Laurent. The latter continues:

LAURENT. Il est près de huit heures. Ces soirées d'été sont d'un long!... J'aurais voulu être représenté avec du soleil. Ça aurait été plus joli. A la place de ce fond gris que tu copies, tu aurais mis un paysage¹⁰.

(Ibid.)

Not only does he make reference to the light from the window, but also to its position and to the wall it faces: "Puis, le matin, tu aurais eu un jour beaucoup plus beau. Nous n'avons pas le soleil, mais il donne sur la muraille d'en face. Ça éclaire la chambre..." (Ibid.). Camille's references to the window and its light are not limited to the fact that Laurent is painting his portrait. He expresses his dislike for the cramped and dark apartment and takes the reader a step further by actually complaining of the view he gets:


LAURENT. [...] Tandis que, lorsque j'ouvre la croisée, ici, je n'aperçois que la grande muraille d'en face et le vitrage du passage, au-dessous de moi; la muraille est noire, le vitrage est tout sale de poussière et de toiles d'araignée...

(I, p. 129)

There is no mention of the sky, and the sun reaches the apartment only when it is refracted off the opposite wall, not directly. The window that is represented, instead of

opening onto a wider panorama, serves to reinforce the closeness of the room by showing a bare wall. This, instead of liberating, increases the frustration even further. The reader's sense of a space that is both cramped within and closed-off from without is increased.

The room represented is not only cluttered, dark, and virtually windowless, but it is also located above a boutique that stands in a damp and badly lit passage connecting two streets. The layers of space between the room's inhabitants and the outer world are thus multiple: to reach the street, they must descend the spiral staircase, cross the boutique, go into the Passage du Pont-Neuf, and emerge from there into the light of day. This whole process makes life in the room virtually a life at the end of a labyrinth. The entire first scene of Act One is devoted to pointing this out to the reader. The room is described in the stage directions first: "grande", "haute", "noire", and "encombrée" stand out as the initial indications of volume. This general space is then given further shape by the placement of the openings that provide exits and entrances: the door upstage centre, the door downstage left, and the spiral staircase upstage right. Finally, the placement of the furniture completes the co-ordination of the stage space, and determines the various positions of the



dramatis personae during the four acts. The most important furniture components are the round table in the middle of the stage, the fireplace to its right, and the sewing table to its left, as well as the alcove bed upstage left. Most of the action of the play revolves around these elements of the setting, especially the round table.

Once the stage directions have given these basic dimensions and positions, however, the opening scene goes on to add other spatial indications. Most of the small talk between Camille and Laurent in Act One, Scene One further increases the reader's information about the perimeters of the world he is being introduced to. As we have seen, the window is emphasized at the outset by the position of the characters, especially Laurent's, and by various allusions to it in the conversation that ensues. Camille also mentions the other two rooms of the apartment (Mme Raquin's and the kitchen), and refers both to the "Passage du Pont-Neuf" (I, p. 128) and to the shop below the apartment:

CAMILLE. [...] Elles ont, en bas, la boutique de mercerie qui les distrait. Seulement, moi, je ne m'amuse pas dans la boutique.

(I, p. 128)

Camille also does not fail to mention the small door, downstage left:

CAMILLE. [...] La nuit, il vient un courant d'air abominable, par cette petite porte qui donne sur l'escalier. (Il montre la petite porte, à gauche.)

(I, pp. 128-29)

Not only do his words give the reader information on where the door leads, but his gesture invites his "visual" awareness of its physical location in the setting¹¹. Thus, the text gives the co-ordinates of the space represented on stage (the room). This enables the reader, by means of the additional information about the other rooms, the doors, the boutique, and the passage, to contextualize the "visible" space within the additional, but purely imaginary one that forms both its immediate and its distant appendages. The room represented, moreover, is not an uncomplicated dwelling on a residential street, but a dark, damp hole reached only after a series of manoeuvres through passage, boutique, and staircase. It seems radically cut off from the city and presents a contrast to the Raquins' former dwelling in Vernon. Camille describes the present apartment both in terms of the kind of lodging the family might have had in Paris and in relation to what they had in Vernon:

CAMILLE. Eh! moi, je comptais habiter une rue où il passât beaucoup de monde. Je me serais mis à la fenêtre, j'aurais regardé les voitures. C'est très amusant...

Tandis que, lorsque j'ouvre la croisée, ici, je n'aperçois que la grande muraille d'en face et le vitrage du passage, au-dessous de moi; la muraille est noire, le vitrage est tout sale de poussière et de toiles d'araignée... J'aime encore mieux nos fenêtres de Vernon, d'où l'on voyait la Seine qui coulait toujours, ce qui n'était pourtant pas drôle.

(I, p. 129)

Act One, Scene One thus explains carefully, by means of stage directions and dialogue, the nature of the space which the dramatis personae occupy. This is a place radically cut off, even to the extent of not receiving any direct sunlight. The light it gets is either filtered through the panes of the Passage du Pont-Neuf (in the boutique) or refracted off the dark wall that faces the window. Indeed, Camille compares the apartment to a cellar: "C'est humide. Les jours de pluie, on dirait une cave" (I, p. 128). The dark (evening) setting of each act reinforces the atmosphere of a cellar, a subterranean dwelling-place.

At the same time, however, the reader is made aware that the room represents not only something dark and threatening, but also something safe and protective. Mario Maurin's excellent article on "Zola's labyrinths" discusses this favourite Zola obsession and is relevant here. Although Maurin deals only with the novels, his comments seem pertinent to this play as well. He points out that the labyrinth can

represent a locus of love as well as a locus of fear and death; he stresses the vital, erotic, inebriating as well as the threatening, devouring qualities of the labyrinth¹². Although Maurin's remarks are made from the point of view of character and author psychology, it is possible to apply them as well to the way in which the reader of Thérèse Raquin may come to view the space represented in the play. Thus, as well as being made aware that the room is dark and threatening in its "closed-off" aspect, he is also manipulated into realizing that the room is a refuge, a haven, a "nest" as Suzanne calls it, with all the erotic connotations which Maurin mentions.

To begin with, the reader hears several times throughout Act One that Laurent is given special treatment by the Raquins, especially Mme Raquin. He is a chum of Camille's from Vernon, thus a privileged guest and a welcome friend in an otherwise faceless big city. Mme Raquin welcomes his visits and enjoys spoiling him by indulging his appetite. Although he refuses to accept money for the portrait, Laurent readily accepts Camille's suggestion of a drink in celebration. And Mme Raquin concedes in Scene Four:

Mme RAQUIN. [...] Laurent n'est pas heureux. Il habite sous les toits, il mange très mal à sa crèmerie. Je suis satisfaite, quand je le vois bien dîner et bien se chauffer chez nous. Il se met à l'aise,

il fume, et ça me fait plaisir... Il est
seul au monde, le pauvre garçon.

(I, p. 133)

For Laurent, the Raquin apartment is a refuge, a convenient place where he can easily satisfy his creature comforts. Thérèse's mock-sardonic comment to her mother-in-law, "Dorlotez-le, cajolez-le..." (*Ibid.*) goes even further in suggesting that the sort of hospitality Laurent receives is akin to mothering, and thus associated with the comfortable enclosure of the womb.

Moreover, as the reader realizes in Act One, Scene Five, the Raquin apartment is more than a comfortable refuge for Laurent: it is the place of his clandestine meetings with Thérèse. The importance of the little door downstage left as an illustration of the relationship between Thérèse and Laurent is firmly established in this scene. The reader remembers it well because it has already been expressly pointed out by Camille in Scene One¹³. However, only at this point can he realize the irony of Camille's having alluded to the door: it serves now, as it has on many occasions in the past, to bring Thérèse together with her lover Laurent. The dialogue that tells the reader that the meetings between the two have been occurring regularly for some time, in the very room represented:

THERESE Toi, mon Laurent... Je sentais

que tu allais venir, mon cher amour. [...] Il y a huit jours que je ne t'ai vu. Je t'ai attendu tous les après-midi. J'espérais que tu t'échapperais de ton bureau...

(I, p. 134)

Since, up to this point in the play, Thérèse and Laurent have been indifferent, if not inimical to one another, there is certainly surprise at their secret meeting and their dialogue. The surprise is compounded, however, and made somewhat more complex, by the lovers' choice of place and their revelation of a habitual use of it. The Raquins' dark and dingy living-dining room cum bedroom now becomes a place of clandestine sensuality as well. To a certain extent, the sensuality is present from the very beginning of the play, because of the spatial arrangement of the setting. The "bedroom" aspect of the room represented is signalled to the reader by the opening stage directions. But the bed is not just another component of the furniture: it is placed "au second plan," (I, p. 126), in the deepest recess of the room, and thus made to be somewhat more mysterious. As well, it is emphasized further by its unusual positioning: it stands "en pan coupé [...], dans une alcôve" (Ibid.). In a study that is otherwise not very relevant to this discussion because of its predominantly Freudian approach, Jean Borie mentions Zola's repeated use of the alcove in his novels. "Le mot alcôve est sans doute

un de ceux qui reviennent le plus souvent sous la plume de Zola,"¹⁴ writes Borie. He goes on to emphasize the distinction which Zola makes between the concept of "chambre" and of "alcôve" as symbolic spaces:

La chambre [pour Zola] est essentiellement chaste, virginale, solitaire. L'alcôve introduit dans la chambre la femme et la sexualité. Là encore, les associations sont lumineuses: "langueur d'alcôve", "moiteur d'alcôve", "senteur d'alcôve", etc. Chaque fois que, dans la chambre, le lit prend une importance considérable, et avec lui le corps féminin et sa lubricité, la chaste retraite se transforme en alcôve¹⁵.

The space represented in Thérèse Raquin is therefore both sterile, stifling bourgeois living-room, and sensual, clandestine alcove. In terms of the labyrinth discussed earlier, the room may seem as the erotic end of Laurent's quest whenever he makes his secret visits to Thérèse. Act One, Scene Five establishes the use of the door downstage left (used only by Laurent throughout the play) as the mechanism that triggers for the reader the notions of clandestine eroticism that are initiated here. The fact that this scene is played in semi-darkness adds to the eroticism by diminishing the volume of the room and increasing the sense of intimacy. The stage directions indicate: "Pendant cette scène, la nuit se fait de plus en plus" (I, p. 134). Also, Thérèse neglects to light the

lamp which Mme Raquin leaves with her in the previous scene and it is not lit until Scene Six; in fact, it is still so dark when Camille returns in Scene Six that he is frightened and upset: the intimacy of darkness brings out in him not passion but terror. This is a device to create suspense for the reader, especially because Thérèse and Laurent have just been hinting at Camille's murder.

~~If the room can be said to constitute a comfortable~~ refuge for Laurent, the same is not true for Thérèse. Silent, brooding, almost totally immobile during the first four scenes, she changes abruptly in the fifth and shows an attitude to the space in which she lives that is totally different from both that of Laurent and that of Camille and Mme Raquin. Hints of this attitude are already apparent in the first four scenes. When the play opens she is stooped in a low chair beside Laurent and is daydreaming, her chin propped in her hand. Mentally, she is not present and she is integrated into the space that surrounds her only on the surface. The dialogue between Camille and Laurent in Scene Two (I, pp. 129-30) focuses attention on Thérèse and emphasizes her immobility¹⁶; when she finally moves (to descend to the boutique without a word), this, too, is brought to the reader's attention both by the stage directions and by the comments upon it on the part of Camille and Laurent. In

Scene Three, therefore, since the reader's curiosity has already been stirred by the mysterious qualities of this woman's movements, he pays her an increasing amount of attention. He notices her refusal to become part of the momentary grouping around Camille's finished portrait and her choice, instead, of a position at the window: "Elle va à la fenêtre, où elle s'oublie, le front contre la boiserie" (I, p. 132). Moreover, her choice is even more interesting to the reader in view of the fact that he already knows what the view from this window affords: a monotonous dark wall. Thérèse's choice of this "horizon" instead of participation in the portrait viewing, her act of turning her back on the room despite the dismal alternative at the window begins to show to what extent she yearns for escape.

This yearning is much more positively corroborated in Scene Five. The beginning of the scene now focuses the reader's entire attention on Thérèse: she is briefly alone on stage, so that her actions are emphasized. At first she remains as still as before. But, gradually, she awakens to her surroundings and walks downstage, to be noticed even further. Her gradual awareness of the space around her and her move downstage - a characteristic "spotlighting" action for the theatre - makes the reader aware of a change about

to occur, new information about to be imparted. His expectations are realized. Thérèse throws off her passivity, and changes to a much more active role when Laurent enters; "Elle lui prend les mains, elle l'amène sur le devant de la scène" (I, p. 134). Zola brings his secret lovers downstage, thereby indulging momentarily in a standard convention of the theatre, one which he actually deplored in later writings on the theatre¹⁷. But he himself had not hesitated to use the downstage area in a conventional way in Thérèse Raquin, although not blatantly¹⁸. Be that as it may, the initial move downstage by Thérèse shows her coming out of her lethargy, and her leading Laurent to the same spot signals to the reader their mutual involvement. What they are doing is picking an area of the stage where they can talk; Thérèse is leading Laurent "aside" for a chat, as it were. But the area they happen to pick is downstage, closest to the audience (in a performance), where what is in fact a turn in the events can be conveniently explained. The intimacy between Thérèse and Laurent comes as a complete surprise. Since it will be the most important factor in the plot for the duration of the play, it must be carefully explained and developed here. The reader is eager to learn all he can, in an almost voyeuristic manner, about this relationship, and

the text satisfies this eagerness by making the characters move "closer" in terms of the conventions of the stage that he is mentally following.

But the discussion of the characters' position on stage has led us away from the point we were pursuing about Thérèse. Act One, Scene Five confirms for the reader Thérèse's fundamental frustration within the confinement of the dark space she lives in. This is evident by what she says about her childhood life with Mme Raquin and Camille. Her time was spent "dans les tiédeurs de la chambre d'un malade" (I, p. 135), again in silent immobility. But, even then, there was violent frustration and a desire for the outdoors, for escape to open spaces:

THERESE. [...] Et je me sentais robuste, mes poings d'enfant se serraient parfois, j'aurais voulu tout casser... On m'a dit que ma mère était fille d'un chef de tribu en Afrique. Ça doit être vrai; j'ai rêvé trop souvent de m'en aller par les chemins, de me sauver et de courir les routes, pieds nus dans la poussière. J'aurais demandé l'aumône comme une bohémienne... Vois-tu, je préférerais l'abandon à leur hospitalité.

(I, p. 135)

Besides her sexual attraction for Laurent, she is also attracted to the possibility of escape from the confinements of her life which he seems to offer her. Moreover, she

sees her possible future life with him in terms of a release into the outdoors and the light of the sun: "Ce sera une joie sans fin," she tells him, "une longue promenade au soleil" (Ibid.).

Thus, while Laurent is looking for "une existence tranquille" (I, p. 136), and is satisfied with the comforts of the Raquin "nest", Thérèse dreams of the freedom of sunny, open space, and finds the Raquin apartment a virtual prison. She seems to leave it only rarely, since the boutique downstairs (equally dark) occupies her during the day. Although they both appear to desire a life together, Thérèse and Laurent are not conscious of the discrepancy between their wishes; a discrepancy which is made clear by the use of space. Laurent wants to escape to the "comforts" of the Raquin dwelling, dark and uninviting as it may be, while Thérèse has a passionate desire to escape out of the prison which the space represented on stage constitutes for her. Part of the tragedy of the play arises from the fact that instead of a comfortable nest, the Raquin home becomes a place of increasing nightmare and torture for Laurent, while Thérèse, instead of escaping into the sunshine, becomes more deeply entrenched in her silent prison.

Act One, Scene Five also helps to establish the

downstairs boutique as a spatial entity working to ensure the reader's collaboration in the play's progress. The existence of the boutique is first signalled by the stage directions¹⁹ (I, p. 126) and then by Camille (I, p. 128). Then, at the end of Scene One, the bell of the boutique door rings - a signal that will be used on many subsequent occasions to draw attention to this space off-stage, and to interrupt the conversation in progress. Here, it is Mme Raquin who goes down to the shop to attend to the customer. Later, the bell will signal the arrival of the Thursday evening guests (I, pp. 140, 142), and will add dramatis personae to the stage space, rather than taking them away. On other occasions still, the boutique is used as a handy means to leave Thérèse and Laurent conveniently alone on stage for a few moments (I, p. 149). As well, it facilitates the temporary exit of a character so that those on stage can discuss him or her (I, p. 131).

Finally, Act One, Scene Five is a turning point for the reader's spatial awareness. From this point on, he will be much more conscious of the kind of movements Thérèse and Laurent make when they are in the presence of the other characters. This will be especially true for the duration of Act One (where the murder is planned, but not yet committed), and in Act Two (where the murder has

been committed, but their marriage aim is not yet realized). Once the other characters come back (Mme Raquin, Camille, then Laurent), and the Thursday guests arrive, the action centres around the dining-room table: this is where the champagne and cakes are arranged, and this is also where the game of dominoes is to take place. Thérèse, however, again remains isolated. Before the guests even arrive, she seats herself at her work-table, downstage left, embroidering, and remains there for the duration of the Act. This table is positioned in such a way as to "spot-light" Thérèse once again. Moreover, because she has already stated her aversion to these Thursday evening social gatherings in Scene Five (I, p. 136), the reader's attention is directed towards her more than it might otherwise be, in order to spy out her attitude. Her silence and immobility here are superficially the same as her silence and immobility at the beginning of the play, but they now have a completely different meaning for the reader. Not only is Thérèse given more emphasis by her position downstage, but she is further "put on display" by remarks both in the stage directions and in the dialogue. When Mme Raquin shows Camille's portrait to the Thursday guests, the stage directions indicate that "Tous la suivent, sauf Thérèse, qui reste à sa table à ouvrage..." (I, p. 145).

At another point, Laurent, standing close to Thérèse says: "Tenez, madame [i.e., Thérèse] est moins crédule que vous" (I, p. 148). When Thérèse and Laurent are left briefly alone on stage and talk hastily, Thérèse resumes her position at the sewing table as soon as they hear the others coming (I, p. 149). Finally, when the others take their places around the dining-room table for dominoes, "Thérèse ne quitte pas sa table à ouvrage" (Ibid.), a fact emphasized by Camille's impatient "Est-ce que tu ne viens pas, Thérèse?" (I, p. 150).

If Thérèse is at her sewing table for the rest of the Act, the other characters, including the Thursday guests, gravitate to the dining-table. Once the bustle of arrival is over, attention focuses on the champagne and cakes on the table, and the main objective of the evening - the game of dominoes - is hurriedly prepared for. As well as the champagne and cakes, there is also a lamp on the table, so that the strong light adds to the emphasis on that part of the room. This is evident from the stage directions: Mme Raquin picks up the lamp momentarily to show the guests Camille's portrait: this done, "Mme Raquin remet la lampe sur la table" (I, p. 145). The dominance of the dining-table as the locus of action is emphasized further still by the stage directions when

the dramatis personae sit down for their dominoes game. Each position is carefully and precisely described and assigned:

Grivet s'assoit à gauche, sur le devant; derrière lui se place Laurent. Le fauteuil de Mme Raquin est à droite; Michaud se met derrière elle. Enfin, au fond, au milieu, Camille s'installe dans son fauteuil.

(I, p. 149)

The semi-circular arrangement, with Camille in the centre, is reminiscent of a scene from the Last Supper. Ironically enough, Michaud, upon seeing the festive bottle of champagne and the cakes displayed on the table, asks: "Quel saint fêtez-vous donc?" (I, p. 144). Without wishing to belabour this point, it must be noted that, although he is dull, weak, and pathetic, Camille does find himself in a kind of "sacrificial lamb" situation. Indeed, his "Judas", Laurent, the friend who has already betrayed him with his wife and is planning his death, is sitting on his right side.

The reader's heightened awareness of space after Scene Five also includes his watching for the course of action Laurent and Thérèse will take as a duo. He is aided in this by the stage directions. These indicate various movements across the stage on the part of Laurent, movements which communicate to the reader Thérèse and Laurent's continuing complicity. In this respect, Zola's

tactics are not very subtle, for he uses techniques that are at times blatant. He does not hesitate to "spotlight" Laurent downstage again, nor to remove the other characters to the boutique momentarily on the pretext they are fetching chairs, so that Thérèse and Laurent may be alone on stage. As Thérèse is immobile (i.e., sitting at her sewing table) for the rest of the Act, it is Laurent who changes position in a significant manner at several points, usually crucial ones, in the conversation. The first of these occurs before the other guests have arrived, when Camille and Laurent are discussing the outing to Saint-Ouen:

LAURENT. (sur le devant de la scène, fixant la toile dans le cadre.) Oui... Mais on pourrait compléter le programme.

CAMILLE. Comment?

LAURENT. (en jetant un regard à Thérèse.)
En ajoutant une promenade en canot.

(I, p. 141)

Laurent is in the process of framing Camille's portrait, but he is placed downstage to do this. That brings him closer to Thérèse, whose position is also downstage. The second "moment of complicity" occurs when Mme Raquin is showing off Camille's portrait to the Thursday guests. She takes the lamp from the table and carries it upstage to the rear wall where the portrait is hanging above the sideboard. The other characters all go with her, except

for Thérèse and Laurent:

Elle prend la lampe et va éclairer le portrait. [...] Tous la suivent, sauf Thérèse, qui reste à sa table à ouvrage, et Laurent qui s'appuie à la cheminée.

(I, pp. 144-45)

Because M^{me} Raquin takes the lamp upstage, the downstage area would presumably be badly lit for a moment. Although there is no indication of secret glances this time, the very spatial isolation of Thérèse and Laurent (i.e., in relation to the rest of the characters), emphasized by the use of light, again communicates a sense of conspiracy and suspense to the reader.

Two other such instances occur in this Act. Once again, as when Camille and Laurent were discussing the outing and boat-ride, the conversation at hand is an important accompaniment to Laurent's action on stage. In fact, the topic of conversation provides the reason for Laurent's move across to Thérèse: this time, it is not a boat-ride, but murder and its punishment that is being discussed:

CAMILLE. Est-ce que tu crois que l'on tue comme ça, sans qu'on le sache, toi, Laurent?

LAURENT. Moi? ... (Il traverse la scène, en se dirigeant lentement vers Thérèse.) Vous ne voyez pas que M. Michaud se moque de vous. Il veut vous effrayer, avec ses histoires. Comment pourrait-il

savoir ce qu'il dit n'être su par personne...
 Et, s'il y a des gens adroits, tant mieux
 pour eux, après tout!... (Près de Thérèse.)
 Tenez, madame est moins crédule que vous.

THERESE. Certes, ce qu'on ne sait pas
 n'existe pas.

(I, p. 148)

Of course, it is no practical stage business that takes Laurent towards Thérèse here, but rather his psychological state. That is, the reader sees that Laurent is both acting and being acted upon in this excerpt of conversation. By means of the words he speaks, he and Thérèse are communicating on a very different level from the rest of the characters on stage. On the one hand, he is pushing Thérèse to give him additional signs of the fact that she is in agreement with his plan to drown Camille. In this sense, he is coming closer towards Thérèse in an effort to convince her not to be afraid of Grivet and Michaud's stories. He is actively "bearing down" on her, as it were. On the other hand, however, he is also coming closer to her to seek protection, in order to convince himself, by means of her sign of approbation and support, that there is nothing to fear. Thérèse's very general answer is enough to communicate to him both her acquiescence and her reassurance.

The growing conspiracy between Thérèse and Laurent,

communicated thus to the reader by use of space, culminates in the brief duo scene which Zola engineers for them by means of the boutique²⁰. When all the other characters leave the stage momentarily, Laurent hastily gets a verbal commitment from Thérèse:

LAURENT. (prenant brusquement les mains de Thérèse, baissant la voix²¹.) Tu jures de m'obéir?

THERESE. (de même). Oui, je t'appartiens, fais de moi ce qu'il te plaira.

(I, p. 149)

The brief scene between Thérèse and Laurent is interrupted by the voice of Camille from the boutique. The husband of the trio breaks into the clandestine conversation between the illicit lovers. This assertion of Camille's presence, even though he is not actually on stage, will become a more and more frequent occurrence in the following acts, although in a different manner. Here, his interjections from off-stage add some irony to the scene, as well as a notion of the sinister nature of what Thérèse and Laurent are discussing.

Because of the newly-revealed relationship between Thérèse and Laurent, the reader perceives much of what occurs in Act One after Scene Five from a different perspective. As a result, the events of the Thursday evening dominoes game are perceived much more through the optic of these two characters than would otherwise have been the case,

and in particular through the point of view of Thérèse, whose isolation on stage demonstrates her non-participation in the socializing. The arrival of the first guest, Grivet, is punctuated by the bell of the boutique door. Michaud and Suzanne follow shortly thereafter. These three "outside" characters, instead of bringing some part of the life of the city into the dull apartment, instead of broadening the "horizon" of the Raquin dwelling, merely serve to reinforce its narrow confines still further. The text emphasizes that the actions and movements of the "outside" characters on this Thursday evening are exactly the same as their actions on all the other Thursday evenings they have visited. Beginning with the exaggerated punctuality of their arrivals, the reader is made aware of a kind of ritual being re-enacted. The ritual is more vaudevillian than dramatic, degenerating into a kind of ridiculous meticulousness. This is especially true of Grivet's arrival. When Mme Raquin takes his umbrella in order to deposit it beside the fireplace, her choice of the left side is vetoed by Grivet: "Pas dans ce coin, pas dans ce coin; vous savez, mes petites habitudes... Dans l'autre coin. Là, merci" (I, p. 143). Then, when she offers to take his rubbers as well, he motions her away and proceeds with his usual chosen routine:

GRIVET. Non, non, je les rangerai moi-même.
 (Il s'assoit sur une chaise qu'elle lui
avance.) Je fais mon petit ménage, hé, hé!
 J'aime que tout soit à sa place, vous
 comprenez... (Il pose ses caoutchoucs
à côté du parapluie.) De cette façon,
 je ne suis pas inquiet.

(I, p. 143)

This ridiculous little ballet is continued when Grivet then proceeds to the centre of the stage and, as the focus of attention, relates his movements in the outside world as well (Ibid.). The same song-and-dance is repeated when Michaud arrives with his niece. Grivet's earlier umbrella act becomes Michaud's placing of his cane beside the fireplace. A comic routine ensues which, while it is diverting, also shows the pettiness and monotony in the lives of the dramatis personae (I, p. 144).

The conversation which follows between the guests and the family is not totally devoid of references to life outside the room represented. Michaud speaks of the Luxembourg gardens, where he and his niece have been, then tells the story of "le drame de la rue Saint-André-des-Arts (I, p. 146), where the headless body of a woman cut in four pieces has been found in a suitcase. This story serves to bring the outside world and society and its laws into the room represented, and the discussion reveals Michaud's former career as a policeman. The use of the story is not particularly subtle in that it is an obvious attempt to

compare crime in general (and its punishment) with the crime that Laurent and Thérèse are contemplating. Even more direct are Grivet's remarks that "Que diable! ici, nous savons bien qu'il n'y a pas des assassins derrière notre dos. C'est la maison du bon Dieu..." (I, p. 147). Though there is heavy-handedness here, the grotesque description of the murder does create a certain amount of tension.

Act Two opens with the same set, time of day, and situation as at the end of Act One. Although we are told in the stage directions that a year has elapsed between the acts, it is almost as if Act Two were an immediate replay of Act One. "Même paix, même intimité" (II, p. 151), say the stage directions; the lamp is lit, as before, the game of dominoes is about to begin, and Mme Raquin and Suzanne are serving tea exactly as in Act One. The idea of ritual is the same, since the stage directions indicate that the characters repeat the motions executed in the previous act. Suzanne even repeats the same words when she turns to offer sugar to Grivet, and his reply is identical:

SUZANNE. Voulez-vous du sucre, monsieur Grivet?

GRIVET. Avec plaisir, mademoiselle. Vous êtes charmante. Deux morceaux, n'est-ce pas?...

(Ibid.)

More importantly, however, the positions of the characters on stage are identical to their positions at the end of Act One, and it is this fact which instantly informs the reader of the one change that has occurred. As before, Thérèse is "devant la table à ouvrage, [...] sa broderie sur les genoux". (II, p. 151). Everyone else is sitting around the table in a tableau identical to the one in the previous act; Grivet, Laurent, and Michaud are thus "à leur place, devant la table ronde" (Ibid.). The change is that Camille is dead, and this fact is communicated to the reader by a spatial detail: "Seul, le fauteuil de Camille est vide" (Ibid.), say the stage directions²². The deliberate tableau set up at the end of Act One, with Camille significantly at the focal point, is now used again and serves to convey in economical and effective visual fashion what has occurred between the acts. The reader has also been prepared for this immediate spatial orientation and interpretation by several previous allusions to the armchairs in Act One. The original description of the room represented stated that it contained "deux fauteuils, l'un bleu, l'autre vert" (I, p. 126). Camille himself later informs the reader about the significance of the two colours, thus drawing special attention to the armchairs, and codifying them. This occurs when he and Mme Raquin are examining the finished portrait and commenting on how well Laurent has

captured the "real" texture of the armchair's wood:

CAMILLE. Etonnant! du vrai bois!... C'est mon fauteuil, nous l'avons apporté de Vernon; il n'y a que moi qui m'en serve. (Montrant l'autre fauteuil.) Celui de maman est bleu.

(I, p. 132)

The colour of the armchairs would be much more important for the spectator at a performance than for the reader, since the opening stage directions of this Act do not refer to it; however, the fact that the chair in the middle is empty fills in the events between the acts for the reader. Furthermore, the spatial indications already give the reader all of the information about the plot which Act Two will contain, so that the ensuing conversation merely sketches in the details about Camille's death.

The Act develops, by means of the use of space (e.g., groupings, exits and entrances), a shift in focus in the previous character relationships. For instance, whereas in Act One Mme Raquin's role was more subdued, whereas she was shown in predominantly self-effacing actions (cleaning the supper table, bringing tea, arranging the cakes and champagne), in Act Two she becomes the centre of attention, is fussed over and cajoled. Because Camille's armchair is now empty, attention shifts to Mme Raquin, who is conveniently placed around the table, but closest to

the downstage area on the right side (Michaud is seated behind her). The fact that she is in mourning and that she sits in the other armchair (whereas the others presumably have plain chairs) also places slightly more focus on her. But what definitely draws the reader's attention to Mme Raquin is her bursting into sobs and Suzanne's immediate rush to her side (II, p. 152). Laurent and Michaud get up, Suzanne kisses Mme Raquin and sits down at her knee (Ibid.), so that the dominoes tableau is momentarily broken up and a new one is formed, one with Mme Raquin at its focus. Thérèse and Laurent still constitute an entity apart from the other characters. For the reader, this has the effect of lending a double meaning to everything which is said and done. In addition, it helps establish for him a new role for the "outside" characters. Instead of being primarily observed by Thérèse from her sewing-table vantage point on Thursday evenings, these characters themselves now become watchers. Their natural solicitude for the Raquin household due to Camille's death turns into a stifling observation process, a reversal which is accomplished in Act Two.

In addition to the grouping in the first scene, Mme Raquin is focused upon in several other instances during the Act. When her initial outburst is over, she blends into the dominoes grouping at the table once again, and even

leaves the stage space for the boutique for a short time. But Scene Four and Scene Five again give her a central position; in the former she is being persuaded by Michaud to marry Thérèse to Laurent, in the latter she is persuading Thérèse. Finally, a new relationship between her and Thérèse and Laurent is seen to develop. Instead of the comfortable domestic "nest" it had been in Act One, the apartment has become as dismal for Mme Raquin as for Thérèse. She even expresses her fear of being alone and dying alone in it:

Mme RAQUIN. Ce sera le dernier coup...
 Je n'ai plus qu'elle [i.e., Thérèse],
 je comptais sur elle pour me fermer les
 yeux. Si elle s'en allait, je resterais
 seule, au fond de cette boutique, je
 mourrais dans un coin... Ah! tenez!
 je suis bien malheureuse. Je ne sais
 quel vent de malheur est entré chez nous.
 (Elle pleure.)

(II, p. 161)

As a result of her need to be surrounded by her "children", she reaches out to them. This same need for a comfortable family nest is evident when Mme Raquin at first protests against Michaud's suggestion that Thérèse should remarry. Her objection is linked to her desire to maintain the spatial integrity, the closed-in nature of her home:

Mme RAQUIN. Et cet étranger que nous
 introduirions dans notre intérieur!
 Toute ma vieillesse en serait troublée.
 Nous pourrions faire un mauvais choix,
 déranger le peu de paix qui nous reste...

(II, pp. 162-63)

There is much irony in what she is saying: instead of being afraid of an outsider, she should really fear the insider, Laurent. But, of course, Laurent is the very person whom she accepts at once. In her arguments to persuade Thérèse to marry Laurent, she again speaks in spatial terms: "cela mettrait autour de moi quelque chose de doux et de gai qui m'aiderait à attendre paisiblement la mort" (II, p. 166). And, in fact, when the marriage is finally agreed upon at the end of the Act, Mme Raquin is literally surrounded by her "children", who come to her side. The Act ends on a tableau which emphasizes the play's increasing focus on these three people. The reader's attention is completely on this trio, in a lingering "close-up" that is ironic:

LAURENT. (qui vient de remonter, s'approchant de Mme Raquin). Je viens de causer de votre bonheur avec M. Michaud. Vos enfants désirent vous rendre heureuse... chère mère...

Mme RAQUIN. (émue). Oui, appelez-moi votre mère, mon bon Laurent.

LAURENT. Thérèse, voulez-vous que nous fassions à notre mère une existence douce et paisible?

THERESE. Je le veux. Nous avons une tâche à remplir.

Mme RAQUIN. O mes enfants!... (Prenant les mains de Thérèse et de Laurent, et les gardant dans les siennes.) Epousez-la, Laurent; faites qu'elle ne soit plus si triste, et mon fils vous remerciera... Vous me donnez bien de la joie. Je demanderai au Ciel qu'il ne vous en punisse pas.

Only the reader is aware of Thérèse and Laurent's blatant hypocrisy and of the pathetic joy of the rest of the characters, whose lives are supposed to resume their dull normalcy and smug comfort as a result of this convenient union.

Thérèse and Laurent, too, are somewhat fooled (or want to fool themselves) about the newly-arranged marriage. It seems to be the culmination of what they had wanted in Act One, Scene Five: Camille is out of the way, and they are about to be united legitimately, at the very insistence of those whom they have duped. But, as the text shows in Act Two, the situation is not quite as they would wish it. Instead of feeling secret happiness, both Thérèse and Laurent display more anxiety than ever. In the case of Laurent, a ploy in the use of off-stage space serves to demonstrate this. Again, the text is not very subtle about it. In fact, it is contradictory as to Laurent's position on stage and fails to make the necessary connection. The situation is this: after Mme Raquin's tearful outburst in Scene One, the game of dominoes is resumed and the stage directions indicate that "Grivet, Laurent et Michaud se rasseoient à leurs places" (II, p. 155). Several pages later, although the game is seemingly still in progress (at least, between Grivet and Michaud), Mme Raquin pushes back her armchair and announces suddenly: "Laurent, puisque vous

êtes debout, auriez-vous l'obligeance d'aller me chercher la corbeille où je mets ma laine? Elle doit être sur la commode de ma chambre... Prenez une lumière" (II, p. 158).

The transition is sudden and not at all prepared for, so that the whole object of Mme Raquin's request is in order that the play may show Laurent's neurotic reaction upon his return from her unlit room. He comes back without Mme Raquin's sewing-basket, and his rather melodramatic gestures upon re-entering the room are meant to show the reader his state of imagined persecution, caused by the trauma of the murder:

Laurent rentre vivement, l'oeil hagard, comme s'il était poursuivi; il s'appuie un instant contre l'armoire. [...] Il descend la scène d'un pas mal assuré.

(II, p. 158)

As on other occasions previously, Laurent is made to come downstage, in a "spotlighting" action; in addition, he moves towards stage left near the end of this scene (II, p. 159), closer towards Thérèse, both for more reassuring "protection" from her nearness and in order to prepare for their intimate aside scene shortly thereafter. The brief aside conversation which is made possible between them by Mme Raquin's (again rather artificial) exit and by Michaud and Grivet's rapt attention on the dominoes game shows the reader their new attitude towards one another. This is done by means of

Laurent's mention of the little door downstage left. The door he had previously used in Act One, Scene Five (and on previous occasions) to visit Thérèse as her lover now seems shut to him. He suggests: "Ce serait si facile. Je rentrerais par la petite porte. Nous sommes libres, maintenant. Nous n'aurions pas peur, ensemble, dans ta chambre" (II, p. 160). Thérèse's refusal is a surprise to the reader, and an indication that the room represented has long ceased to be a place of clandestine eroticism for the two characters. The reader is able to compare Thérèse's former boldness with the anxiety and reluctance she now displays. The murder of Camille, instead of facilitating their meetings, has terminated them altogether and now makes of the room represented a place of terror and anxiety as well as a place of monotonous confinement for Thérèse. Instead of escaping, she seems even more bound to this space. Laurent's brief allusion to the little door is a concise way of indicating the new, strained relationship between him and Thérèse. The importance of communicating this to the reader is paramount, moreover, for with the murder already committed, the strain in the lovers' relationship becomes the new source of suspense. At the end of Act Two, it is not at all certain to what extent Thérèse and Laurent will be able to maintain their "front", and avoid discovery. Their continuing

complicity is apparent in this aside scene. But the fact that Thérèse and Laurent, on the one hand, and Grivet and Michaud, on the other, are physically juxtaposed on stage posits the continuing possibility of discovery for the two by the outside forces²³ which Grivet and Michaud represent.

Act Two, then, contains some interesting use of space, but is not overly original in this regard. Especially irking are the rather heavy-handedly executed exits and entrances²⁴. Nowhere are we prepared for Mme Raquin's need for the sewing-basket that she sends Laurent to fetch in Scene One; this is merely a device to show Laurent's state of anxiety. It also affords an excuse to have Mme Raquin exit to the boutique at the end of Scene One, so that Thérèse and Laurent may have their aside without her in Scene Two. The boutique, indeed, is used far too often to get characters off the stage at convenient times in the Act: Suzanne, Mme Raquin, Thérèse, all go down there (then return) at several points. The need to engineer tête-à-tête scenes is so great, moreover, that even Mme Raquin's room is used (Grivet and Laurent are sent there when Michaud wants to be alone with Mme Raquin). All this is orchestrated with, at times, a lack of consequence or logic: Suzanne, who has gone down to the boutique (II, p. 159) and remained there for some time, is said, in the final scene, to be "arrivant, suivie de Grivet, et continuant une conversation

commencée" (II, p. 167). The fact, that, up to this point, Grivet has been in Mme Raquin's room, and Suzanne downstairs in the boutique (which, as far as the reader is led to believe, do not communicate) hardly seems to matter. Some willing suspension of disbelief is called for in the reader's perception of the use of stage space at this point.

If, as we have seen, Mme Raquin's role is brought out, or made the centre of attention more in this Act, so, it would be important to note, is Suzanne's. This is partly due to the fact that she has considerably more dialogue than in Act One, but also due to the way she is positioned on stage and to the content of what she says. Throughout the play, Suzanne is linked especially to Thérèse, is a kind of foil for her, and this is indicated to the reader by the fact that she seats herself near Thérèse most of the time that she is on stage. When she makes her first appearance, the stage directions say that "Suzanne se débar- rasse de son châle et de son chapeau et va causer bas avec Thérèse, toujours assise devant la table à ouvrage" (I, p. 144). In Act Two, Thérèse is once again downstage left, at her sewing table, and Suzanne sits beside her whenever she is not serving tea or is not off-stage in the boutique. At one of these moments, Suzanne confides to Thérèse her story of "le prince bleu". When she begins, all the characters

are on stage, but Suzanne's story is told only to Thérèse, because of the division in stage space: while Thérèse and Suzanne are downstage left, Mme Raquin, Laurent, Michaud and Grivet are seated around the table and intent on their game of dominoes, which has resumed. Suzanne says: "C'est toute une histoire!... Je vais vous la conter a l'oreille; mon oncle n'a pas besoin de savoir" (II, p. 155). This conspiracy between the two also divides the stage space for the reader and allows him to differentiate between the two sets of separate conversations. Portions of what those grouped around the table are saying interrupt the dialogue between Suzanne and Thérèse. Also, Suzanne keeps an eye on the dominoes players, to make sure her uncle is not listening to her story. This juxtaposition of the two areas is all the more interesting because of the content of what Suzanne says. "Le prince bleu" is a young man whom she sees every day when she goes to the Luxembourg gardens with her uncle. He is "bleu" because of his blue suit. Already, just by the description of the Luxembourg gardens, the reader is aware of an expansion of space beyond the dark room represented. The description of a park outing contrasts markedly with the shut-in drabness of the stage space. Moreover, the story is of young, innocent lovers, and these the reader immediately contrasts with Thérèse and Laurent.

The second half of Suzanne's story is even more pertinent. She describes how, being bored one evening, she goes out onto her balcony and looks out over Paris with her uncle's telescope. Coincidentally, her "prince bleu" is doing the same thing and she recognizes him through the telescope. Suzanne gives a vivid description of what she sees:

SUZANNE. [...] Je voyais des cheminées, oh! des cheminées, des champs, des océans de cheminées! Quand je tournais un peu la lunette, toutes les cheminées marchaient, se précipitaient les unes sur les autres, défilaient au pas de course, comme des soldats. La lunette en était toute pleine.

(II, p. 157)

She calls her experience "un voyage épouvantable sur la mer des cheminées" (Ibid.). Because she is recounting this to Thérèse, whose longing for open spaces and freedom the reader remembers from Act One, Suzanne's story has the effect of emphasizing Thérèse's confinement in the space she lives in. Unlike Suzanne, Thérèse has no balcony, and the view from her only window is a dark wall. Suzanne, however, can not only see "tout un bout de Paris" (II, p. 156), but can, with the aid of the telescope, even increase the distance available to her view ("On voit à plus de deux lieues..."). Her description takes the reader momentarily away on a roof-top tour of Paris which then increases his

awareness of the prison-like aspects of the room represented. This is even more true because Suzanne's quasi-monologue (interrupted only by short questions from Thérèse) alternates with snatches of conversation from those playing dominoes. This device prevents the reader from getting very involved in Suzanne's story because he is forced to shift his attention from one group of characters to the other, from one area of the stage to the other. In addition, the interjected comments of the dominoes players serve to bring the reader constantly back to the space represented, to the banality of the dominoes game, which he then contrasts with the relative freedom of the expanse of Paris rooftops Suzanne describes.

The role of the "prince bleu" story in Act Two, and indeed for the play as a whole, is both trite and interesting. On one level, it is merely the story of a young girl in the process of falling in love. On another level, however, it constitutes an important expansion of stage space. Suzanne's imaginative way of describing what she sees through her telescope contrasts with the drab pettiness of the conversations of the others, especially Grivet and Michaud. The youthful sparkle of her descriptions shows a type of vista (and freedom) that is unavailable to Thérèse:

SUZANNE. [...] Quand je regardais avec mes yeux, je ne distinguais que du gris, avec les tâches bleues des toits d'ardoises... J'ai même failli le perdre. La lunette a bougé, il m'a fallu refaire un voyage épouvantable sur la mer des cheminées...

(II, p. 157)

None of the critics who have dealt with this play, however, have chosen to comment on this function of the "prince bleu" story. The character of Suzanne has traditionally been regarded as providing relief from some of the "horrors" of the play by her innocence and her "charming" story. But the critical commentary never goes much beyond this assessment. If we begin with the numerous newspaper reviews of the first production of Thérèse Raquin, we notice that Suzanne is usually mentioned by all²⁵. Henry Trianon writes: "[Suzanne] jette un peu de charme et de lumière sur cette sombre eau-forte. Elle a dit à merveille son joli récit du prince bleu"²⁶. Similarly, Charles de La Mouzelle says in Le Pays: "Elle [Suzanne] a été le trop rare rayon de soleil glissant à travers les ombres de cette sinistre pièce." These two critics are the only ones whose comments contain any remote suggestion of the spatial role of Suzanne's story: their mention of "lumière" and "rayon de soleil" rightly hints at the horizons which Suzanne opens up, but the comments remain merely polite, romantic generalizations. The other critics, however, are even

more perfunctory. They either call Suzanne an episodic²⁷ character, or they gush over her with terms like "pinson vif et joyeux"²⁸, "gracieuse et naturelle"²⁹, "le sourire de la pièce"³⁰, and "ingénue"³¹. Finally, some of the comments are even negative: "Son ingénue," writes Louis Doré of Zola's Suzanne, "imaginée pour jeter dans la pièce un peu de fraîcheur, ne fait que gêner le drame et sans y ajouter aucun intérêt"³². Francisque Sarcey's judgement in Le Temps is almost identical:

Mlle Blanche Dunoyer [the actress who played Suzanne] est le sourire de cette pièce si sombre. Elle conte fort joliment une histoire, insupportable d'ailleurs, de prince bleu. Elle rend presque intéressantes les niaiseries que l'écrivain lui met dans la bouche.

Thus, although some of the critics sense the light/darkness dichotomy which Suzanne's role accentuates in the play, none develop it, and all seem to damn the role with faint praise or to relegate it to minor importance with charming compliments.

In fact, Zola himself indicates in the preface to Thérèse Raquin, written subsequent to the first production, that his own view of Suzanne's role does not differ radically from that of the critics. In assessing the performance of the actress who played Suzanne in the first production he writes:

Mlle Blanche Dunoyer a été l'espiègle
sourire de ce drame noir, la chanson de
la seizième année alternant avec les
sanglots déchirants de Thérèse, et c'est
d'une façon exquise qu'elle a conté
l'histoire de son prince bleu.³³

The words "sourire" and "alternant" suggest to some extent the idea of light and the idea of a foil for Thérèse which this analysis has tried to develop, but Zola's words are only hints, and he does not talk about the character in terms of space at all.

Modern critics have tended to discuss the function of Suzanne's story even less. Only Henri Mitterand and Ion Braescu mention Suzanne, the former in connection with the changes which Zola made in adapting his earlier novel to the stage:

Suzanne, femme d'Olivier dans le roman, est devenue dans le drame une jeune fille, la nièce de Michaud: toute l'histoire du "prince bleu", contée pendant deux dialogues de Suzanne et de Thérèse, a été ajoutée pour compenser la noirceur du thème et détendre les nerfs des spectateurs.³⁴

Braescu merely calls Suzanne a "jeune ingénue en quête d'un prince charmant"³⁵. And Mitterand, although he praises the novel's descriptive passages because they extend its spatial perspectives³⁶, fails to point out that, in the drama, Suzanne's "prince bleu" story performs the same function for the reader.

If Act Two spotlights Mme Raquin and Suzanne to a certain extent, Act Three belongs to Thérèse and Laurent. The stage directions at the beginning alert the reader at once to the fact that this Act will depict the wedding night. The fireplace and the lamp are both lit, and the room is "parée, toute blanche" (III, p. 169). The reader's attention is drawn at once to the alcove bed, for it now has white curtains and a "couvre-pieds garni de dentelles" (Ibid.). A series of manoeuvres delays the entrance of Laurent and arouses anticipation. There is also ever-present apprehension on the part of the reader as to how well Thérèse and Laurent will continue to avoid discovery. For this reason, the text does not fail to assert the presence of Grivet, Michaud, and Suzanne, who clutter up the first half of the Act by various banal, time-consuming actions. The grotesque and ridiculous intervention of Michaud and Grivet at the beginning of the Act is not only an infringement of the space of the newlyweds' bedroom, but also a gesture that can be interpreted as mildly voyeuristic. Because they are newlyweds, Thérèse and Laurent are "on display", as it were, vulnerable to the inspective gaze of the outsiders, and, by implication, vulnerable to possible discovery. Thus, although the scene with Michaud and Grivet at the beginning of the Act provides

Some comic relief, to be sure, it also stresses the vulnerability of Thérèse and Laurent, trapped as they now are in their wedding chamber. The prank, which Michaud and Grivet wish to perpetrate also puts further emphasis on the bed, since the two remain close to it, speaking in low voices upstage, in an effort to complete their "mission". Thérèse stands out in this scene, by the fact that she is the bride, but also by her silence and by her position on stage. When she comes in, "elle va s'asseoir à gauche, d'un air las" (III, p. 169). Her indifference contrasts with the ridiculous enthusiasm of Grivet and Michaud, and their juxtaposition on stage allows the reader to feel the tension of the situation. Thérèse is reluctant to have Suzanne and Mme Raquin leave, and she allows herself to be undressed and fussed over by the two women. When they finally start to go, she tries to hold them back: "Seule, seule... Attendez... Il me semble que j'ai encore quelque chose à vous dire" (III, p. 174). This attitude cannot be explained by any false sense of modesty on Thérèse's part, but, rather, by something Mme Raquin has already said about her in Act Two: she has become fearful, and does not come up to her bedroom at night (the room represented) without a light (II, p. 161). If this room had been merely a dull, stifling place for her - and occasionally

a place of sensuality during Laurent's visits - it has now become frightening as well as a prison.

The prison aspect of the room is emphasized in this Act by several allusions to space outside it. How little the murder of Camille has freed Thérèse is witnessed by her continued longing for open spaces:

THERESE. [...] J'aurais voulu ne pas me marier, l'hiver, dans cette chambre. A Vernon, en mai, les acacias sont en fleur, les nuits sont tièdes.

(III, p. 174)

Moreover, Mme Raquin, who knows Thérèse's love of nature, has attempted to please her by bouquets of roses all over the room:

Mme RAQUIN. Je sais que tu aimes le printemps: j'ai voulu en mettre un petit coin dans ta chambre, la nuit de tes noces. Tu pourras y faire le rêve de Suzanne, croire que tu visites les jardins du paradis... Tu souris, vois-tu. Sois heureuse, au milieu de tes roses. Au revoir, ma fille. (Elle l'embrasse.)

(III, p. 175)

Mme Raquin's pathetic gesture only serves to strengthen the impression of drabness which the room makes.

Thérèse says to Laurent when he joins her: "Ce sera une joie sans fin, une longue promenade au soleil" (III, p. 180). Her wishes for spring and the freedom of the outside emphasize both her confinement in this miserable room and the changed relationship between her and Laurent.

Their conversation turns constantly to places beyond the room represented. They speak of the day's events (the outing at the restaurant) and the weather, which inevitably leads to more comments about Vernon:

LAURENT. Les coups de gelée, en mars, sont très mauvais pour les arbres fruitiers. A Vernon, tu dois te souvenir... (Il s'arrête. Tous deux rêvent un instant.)

THERESE. (à voix basse). A Vernon, c'était l'enfance...

(III, p. 176)

Even mentally, they are unable to escape. When Laurent mentions eating in a restaurant in the country, he inadvertently talks of the murder incident, and the mental wandering of the two is abruptly cut off:

LAURENT. On mange d'excellentes choses, à la campagne... Tu te rappelles, les guinguettes, au bord de l'eau... (Il se lève.)

THERESE. (se levant brusquement, d'une voix rude). Tais-toi! Pourquoi lâches-tu les souvenirs? Je les écoute malgré moi battre dans ta tête et dans la mienne, et la cruelle histoire se déroule... Non, ne disons plus rien, ne pensons plus.

(III, p. 177)

They are thus brought back to their present situation and back to the room in which they find themselves. Yet they attempt to "escape" once more, by recounting the day's events, at the city hall, and at the church. At the church,

however, Thérèse had glimpsed a funeral in progress in a neighbouring chapel to theirs, and, once again, the events of the murder (the morgue) come back to them, and they are trapped in the room they are in. This room no longer affords them even a small amount of joy in intimacy. When Laurent comes in, Thérèse is sitting by the fireplace. He hovers around her momentarily in an effort to approach her, but soon moves to the other end of the room. They carry on their conversation thus from opposite ends of the room for most of this scene, so that the spatial separation signals their emotional separation. Even when they bump into each other by accident, they are filled with anxiety: "Elle est arrivée près de Laurent et se heurte à son épaule. Ils tressaillent tous les deux" (III, p. 178). Both are conscious of this, of course, and Laurent even comments upon it, thus emphasizing it further for the reader:

LAURENT. (se relevant). Pourquoi trembles-tu? J'ai fermé la porte. et je suis ton mari... Jadis, quand je venais, tu ne tremblais pas, tu riais, tu parlais haut, au risque de nous faire surprendre. Maintenant, tu parles à voix basse, comme si quelqu'un nous écoutait derrière ces murs... Va, nous pouvons élever la voix, et rire, et nous aimer. C'est notre nuit de noces, personne ne viendra.

(III, p. 176)

This speech takes the reader back to Act One, Scene Five. As if this comparison were not enough, however, Laurent

makes an attempt to go even further: he tries to re-create their former passionate meetings exactly. This is done by the use of the little door. Laurent leaves the stage temporarily, and comes back by that door in order to surprise Thérèse and in order to try to bring back their former passion. Since their mutual attempt at escapism (by talk of spaces beyond the confines of the room) has failed, Laurent makes a different attempt: This time, as the reader is aware, it is an effort to re-conquer the space of the room, to regain for themselves the aura of secret sensuality and escape which it had for them before the murder of Camille³⁷. But this, too, fails as Thérèse, "se dégageant brusquement des bras de Laurent", refuses to play "cette comédie du passé" (III, p. 180). The room has now conquered them, instead of their being able to use it for their own purposes, as they had planned. Despite all their attempts to escape verbally or mentally or to remould the room to their needs, it remains their prison.

Recent critics have written extensively on Zola's constant use of closed, claustrophobic space in his novels. Antoinette Jagmetti's study of the use of space in La Bête Humaine also mentions an analogous use in the earlier Thérèse Raquin. Unfortunately, she deals with the novel, not the play, but her comments are still pertinent to

this discussion:

Le passage du Pont-Neuf et la boutique de Thérèse exprimaient cruellement toute la mesquinerie et le désespoir persistant de la vie. [...]

Les différents milieux du roman portent tous cette même caractéristique. Leurs limites sont étroites, rigides, obstruantes; elles empêchent d'avoir une vue large et ouverte, elles étouffent tout mouvement, elles compriment l'homme.³⁸

Her assessment is important in showing Zola's continued use of space in this manner in his later work. It is valid for Thérèse Raquin as drama also, because the reader is made aware of how the space is confining and oppressive. Indeed, it becomes continually more so as the play progresses, despite the fact that the actual setting remains the same.

Other critics have dealt with Zola's use of space as well. Braescu, who writes about Zola's plays, says of Thérèse Raquin: "Une qualité maîtresse de la pièce est qu'elle suggère, tout aussi bien que dans le roman, l'atmosphère mesquine et dépourvue de tout horizon de la petite bourgeoisie"³⁹. Rodolphe Walter and, more recently, Lilian Furst, although they deal with the novel, also comment briefly on the closed-in nature of the space represented in Thérèse Raquin. Walter calls the Raquin apartment "l'étouffoir du passage du Pont-Neuf"⁴⁰, and Furst writes: "The whole Passage Pont-Neuf, from its elongated, narrow shape to its darkness and decay, seems

to hint at the grave"⁴¹. In an earlier study dealing in part with Thérèse Raquin (the novel), John Lapp also alludes to the Passage Pont-Neuf as "a kind of nether world, shutting out or denaturing life"⁴², and points out that Thérèse "has illusions of burial"⁴³ during the stifling Thursday evening dominoes sessions.

The play, it is true, does not show either the Passage du Pont-Neuf or the boutique directly. The sole represented space given is the living-dining-bedroom visible throughout the four acts. The Passage is briefly referred to in Act One, while the boutique, although used frequently to manipulate the exits and entrances of the characters, is never described in any detail in the dialogue. However, the space represented is closed-in nonetheless, and, although it is above the boutique, in terms of the organization of the building's space, it seems strangely subterranean. Act Three continues to emphasize this. Although the room is adequately lit, it is three o'clock in the morning. The flowers, as we have tried to show, increase the shrinkage of space by their reminder of open spaces, nature, and spring. The "paradis" (III, p. 175) which Mme Raquin thinks to have prepared for Thérèse turns out to be more of an "enfer", as the Act develops. Suzanne gives the reader a premonition of this

by actually comparing the room to a cave: "On dirait que vous la laissez avec une bande de loups, cette pauvre Thérèse, au fond d'une caverne" (III, p. 175). And, although she goes on to describe the "sweetness" of the cave - "La caverne sent bon. Il y a des roses partout. C'est doux et gentil comme dans un nid" (Ibid.) - she nevertheless adds, upon looking around the room before she leaves: "Oh! c'est terrible, une chambre comme ça, pleine de roses" (Ibid.). The reader senses the irony of her "doux et gentil", knowing the room is no longer a comfortable bourgeois nest for Thérèse and Laurent, nor, as he finds out shortly, a place of sensual and secret meeting.

The sense of a lack of freedom is increased by the use made of the other characters in this Act. For nearly half the Act, the space represented, which should rightly already be dominated by Thérèse and Laurent as newlyweds, is invaded by Michaud, Grivet, Suzanne, and Mme Raquin. Act Three opens with Suzanne's actually trying to prevent the entrance of Michaud and Grivet from the door upstage. But they invade nonetheless, as ridiculous and meddling well-wishers. Suzanne, too, plays a mildly voyeuristic role here. She has already been observing Thérèse during the day: "Je guettais Thérèse; elle n'avait pas envie de rire, Thérèse, je vous assure..." (III, p. 171). Then,

while she is on stage, she busies herself around her constantly, taking off her hat, unpinning her dress, leading her to the fireplace for warmth, combing her hair (III, pp. 171-73). As in the previous acts, Suzanne stays very close to Thérèse, judging her looks, observing her reactions: "je me suis promis de voir comment vous vous y prendriez pour votre toilette de nuit, afin de ne pas avoir l'air gauche, quand viendra mon tour..." (III, p. 173). Mme Raquin, meanwhile, acts as an assistant, advising, carrying out Thérèse's wedding dress, and bringing in her house robe. Both are naturally solicitous to the new bride. Their actions serve to delay the scene between Thérèse and Laurent, and thus to give it added importance when it occurs.

This solicitousness culminates in the crisis at the end of the Act. Mme Raquin, on the pretext of being worried at the noise she has heard, enters by the door upstage, just in time to hear Laurent say he drowned Camille. The ensuing stage business is highly melodramatic:

Mme RAQUIN. (s'avancant en trébuchant).
 Dieu juste! Ils ont tué mon enfant!...
 (Thérèse, éperdue, pousse un cri de
terreur. Laurent, épouvanté, jette le
portrait sur le lit, il recule devant
Mme Raquin qui balbutie:) Assassin,
assassin!... (Elle est prise de spasmes,
chancelle jusqu'au lit, veut se retenir
à un des rideaux qu'elle arrache, et
reste un instant adossée au mur, hale-
tante et terrible. Laurent, poursuivi
par ses regards, passe à droite et se

réfugie auprès de Thérèse.)

(III, p. 182)

These movements on the part of the characters, although exaggerated, are significant. Mme Raquin, up until then the kind mother-in-law on the wedding night, now becomes the wronged mother of Camille, and it is she who mutilates the wedding bed by tearing off one of the white curtains in her frenzy. Laurent throws Camille's portrait, the one he painted in Act One, upon the bed in terror, as he retreats from Mme Raquin. This action somehow gives Camille possession of an area of the stage (the alcove bed) which had previously signalled the passionate secret meetings between Thérèse and Laurent. But Camille has now "come between them" in a much more forceful way than when he was alive, and Laurent's gesture with the portrait shows this to the reader.

The end of Act Three repeats the tableau of Thérèse, Laurent, and Mme Raquin as a trio, as had been the case at the end of Act Two. This is, however, a very different tableau. The harmony is broken completely: Mme Raquin, now paralyzed, confronts the two murderers with her gaze, while they stand away from her, huddled together for protection. The final emphasis is on Mme Raquin:

Mme RAQUIN. [...] (Elle reste roide et

muette, les yeux ardemment fixés sur Thérèse et Laurent qui frissonnent.)

THERESE. Elle se meurt.

LAURENT. Non, ses yeux vivent, ses yeux nous menacent... Ah! que ses lèvres et ses membres soient de pierre!

(III, p. 183)

A new dichotomy is set up here: a mute battle between the paralyzed Mme Raquin and Camille's murderers. The question now remains as to whether the knowledge Mme Raquin has gained here will become apparent to the Thursday guests.

Act Four begins quietly. Thérèse and Suzanne, seated once more at the sewing-table, are in dialogue for some time before any one else joins them. The setting, in this Act, although the room remains the same, is markedly different from the previous three. Both the "festivity" of Act Three, and the ordered bourgeois atmosphere of Acts One and Two are gone. There are no more special adornments, and the room is in a state of neglect that was not noticeable previously:

La chambre a repris son humidité noire. Rideaux sales. Ménage abandonné, poussière, torchons oubliés sur les sièges, vaisselle traînant sur les meubles. Un matelas roulé est jeté derrière un rideau du lit.

(IV, p. 184)

The disorder adds to the clutter of the room and contributes

to its closeness. It immediately tells the reader that the deteriorating personal relationships in the Raquin household have not improved, but certainly worsened. Once again, the reader's attention is led to the alcove bed, by means of the rolled-up mattress, a sign of further conjugal unrest. Indeed, Laurent verbally remarks on this particular detail of the setting and brings attention to it again:

LAURENT. (montrant le matelas laissé au pied du lit). Pourquoi n'as-tu pas caché ce matelas dans le petit cabinet? Les imbéciles n'ont pas besoin de savoir que nous faisons deux lits. (Il se lève.)

THERESE. Tu n'avais qu'à le cacher ce matin. Je fais ce qui me plaît.

(IV, pp. 188-89)

The mattress is not only a sign of their quarrels, but also of their fear of being watched and being discovered.

This fear is greatly increased by the closed-in nature of their lives, by the suffocating qualities of the room and its past associations. The opening scene between Thérèse and Suzanne further contributes to this because Suzanne, once again, talks of open spaces, of the city beyond the apartment, of flowers and balconies. She now continues (and finishes) her story of "le prince bleu". This takes the reader back to her balcony overlooking Paris, then through the streets of the city, as

she tells how, by means of a map, she tried to find where her "prince" lives. Finally, her story leads to the flower market. For this portion of her account, the stage directions indicate that Suzanne gets up and, walking behind Thérèse, moves downstage. This technique uses space to emphasize what the dramatis persona is saying:

SUZANNE. (se levant et venant à droite, en passant derrière Thérèse). [...] (Sur le devant de la scène) Savez-vous qui je vois au milieu du marché?... Le prince bleu, chargé de fleurs, avec des pots dans ses poches, des pots sous ses bras, des pots dans ses mains. Il a eu l'air très bête, avec ses pots, lorsqu'il m'a aperçue... Puis, il m'a suivie; il ne savait comment se débarrasser de ses pots, il m'a dit que tous ces pots-là étaient pour ma terrasse.

(IV, p. 185)

The move downstage by Suzanne not only draws the reader's attention further on her, but also helps to contrast her even more with Thérèse. For Thérèse's reaction is important here: she laughs gaily with Suzanne at the beginning of the scene (IV, p. 184), but her face clouds up when she remembers that Laurent is coming home soon for dinner:

SUZANNE. [...] Vous ne riez pas? C'est drôle, pourtant... Est-ce que vous êtes malade?

THERESE. Non... Mon mari va rentrer; je songeais...

(IV, p. 185)

Similarly, she is caught up in Suzanne's description of the flower market and the "prince bleu" laden with flowers: "Oui, ton histoire est un beau conte... Tu es donc toujours dans le ciel, toujours dans les fleurs, toujours dans le rire" (Ibid.). Her overwhelming longing for the freedom of open spaces shows in her next sentence: "Ah! chère fille, avec ton bel oiseau bleu, si tu savais...". She calls the "prince bleu" an "oiseau bleu", so that the reader is aware of how great a discrepancy there is between her surroundings and her wish for escape. She herself emphasizes this contrast by having to turn at once from Suzanne's flower speech to her drab surroundings: "Regardant la pendule.) Cinq heures, il est bien cinq heures, n'est-ce pas? Il faut que je mette la table" (IV, p. 185). Suzanne's story makes it more than ever evident to what extent Thérèse is now trapped in her prison-like environment. The speech about the flowers, especially, made with the "humidité noire" of the Raquin apartment as background, forces the reader to understand the drabness of the space represented much more graphically. From this point on, the play focuses exclusively on the room represented. Even the "outside" characters (Suzanne, Michaud, Grivet) play a diminished role and leave before half of the Act is over. The last half belongs solely to the trio of Thérèse, Laurent, and Mme Raquin.

Indeed, the Act focuses increasingly on Mme Raquin. When Suzanne has finished her story, she and Thérèse set the table for dinner. This housewifely stage business reminds the reader of the beginning of Act One, when Mme Raquin had been clearing the dinner table, while Laurent was finishing Camille's portrait. Now it is no longer Mme Raquin but Thérèse who must perform this kind of task; in addition, the calm bourgeois peace of Act One has been replaced by tension and anxiety for all of the members of the (somewhat altered) Raquin household. The comforts of the bourgeois "nest" have been replaced by the disorder and the terrors of the cave. Suzanne and Thérèse talk about Mme Raquin while they go about their business. This, besides informing the reader of Mme Raquin's condition, also prepares him for the role she will play when she appears on stage. To a certain extent, he is oriented as to what to "look" for:

SUZANNE. [...] Quand elle est là, roide dans son fauteuil, la tête droite et blanche, les mains pâles sur les genoux, je crois voir une de ces statues de terreur et de deuil, qui sont assises au pied des tombeaux, dans les églises; et j'ai le coeur tout épouvanté, je ne sais pourquoi... Elle ne peut lever les mains, n'est-ce pas?

THERESE. Les mains sont mortes comme les jambes.

* * *

THERESE. [...] Elle entend, elle comprend tout. L'intelligence est restée lucide, les yeux vivent.

SUZANNE. Oui, il m'a semblé que ses yeux avaient grandi. Ils sont énormes, maintenant; ils sont devenus noirs et terribles, dans ce visage mort...

(IV, p. 186)

This emphasis on Mme Raquin's rigidity will draw visual attention to her once she appears on stage. The description of her eyes, which would perhaps be less "visually" noticeable to the reader, prepares him for a perspective on the following scenes which will be largely one filtered through Mme Raquin's hawk-like observation of Therese and Laurent. In addition, Suzanne formulates a metaphor which adds to the subterranean enclosure qualities of the space represented:

SUZANNE. [...] Je ne suis pas peureuse, et, la nuit, j'ai des frissons, en pensant à cette pauvre dame. Vous savez, ces histoires de gens enterrés vivants? Je m'imagine qu'on l'a enterrée toute vive, et qu'elle est là au fond d'une fosse, avec un gros tas de terre sur la poitrine, qui l'empêche de crier...

(IV, p. 186)

The reader, remembering Mme Raquin's plans for a secure old age, surrounded by her two "children" in the comforts of her ordered home, in Act Two, cannot help but compare her present situation to her former plans. For her, too, the nest has become a cave, and, if she seems buried alive,

so, also, do Thérèse and Laurent⁴⁴.

At the end of this scene, the two women, having finished setting the table, cease to discuss Mme Raquin. They now proceed downstage, so that Suzanne can reveal to Thérèse one more off-stage occurrence. It seems that Laurent no longer works where he and Camille used to, but paints in a small studio of his own. However, his physical escape from the Raquin apartment during the day is revealed as ineffective by Suzanne, for, even in the studio, he is haunted by the face of Camille. The portrait of Act One, the same portrait which Laurent flung down on the bed in terror in Act Three, now disturbs his ability to paint in his studio: instead of the work he has planned, he is painting a continual series of heads of children, women, old men, all resembling Camille. The object of this part of the scene is to communicate this (for Suzanne) bizarre fact to Thérèse, whose terror and anxiety increase as a result. This information emphasizes the fact that Laurent, despite his apparent physical mobility, cannot escape psychologically the confines of the Raquin apartment any more than the two women (Thérèse and Mme Raquin) can.

Finally, in Scene Two, the boutique is used a last time as a means of providing a plausible exit for one of the characters. The bell rings from "downstairs",

and Suzanne goes to the boutique, thus leaving Thérèse and Laurent conveniently alone on stage. Their dialogue shows that they are not only nervous about Mme Raquin, but also apprehensive about the three outside characters. Thérèse tells Laurent:

THERESE. Est-ce que tu vas amener ma tante pour le dîner? ... Tu ferais bien d'attendre que les Michaud fussent partis; je tremble toujours, quand elle est là, devant eux... Depuis quelque temps surtout, je lis dans ses yeux une pensée implacable. Tu verras qu'elle trouvera quelque moyen de bavarder.

(IV, p. 189)

Michaud, Suzanne, then Grivet all appear in the next scene. Laurent brings in Mme Raquin and, seated in her armchair, she becomes the centre of attention. Rigid, with her white hair and black dress, she attracts the reader's "visual" attention by her changed appearance. During the next two scenes, the play progresses on several levels. Thérèse and Laurent, while playing one role vis-à-vis the "outside" characters, know they are performing quite a different one for the furious gaze of Mme Raquin. Thus, while the attention is centred on the little comedy Mme Raquin stages both for the guests and for Thérèse and Laurent, the reader's attention still remains in part on the two murderers.

The stage is, once again, used in a similar manner to the other acts. Mme Raquin is seated in her armchair

which Laurent has rolled to a place at the right of the round table in the middle of the stage (IV, p. 189). Thérèse sits stage left, as before, this time busy preparing the salad leaves. The other characters surround Mme Raquin. During Grivet's grotesque attempt to understand what Mme Raquin is trying to communicate, Laurent goes over to Thérèse, takes the salad from her, and takes it to the buffet. She approaches the table but, cowed by Mme Raquin's gaze, (IV, p. 191), returns stage left. This portion of the scene ends when the guests get up to leave. As Michaud and Grivet are about to go down the staircase, Suzanne notices Mme Raquin's movement and the three surround her armchair once more. This time, Thérèse and Laurent are both stage left: "Ils restent à gauche, côte à côte, terrifiés" (IV, p. 192). Their physical position on stage is reinforced by the direction of Mme Raquin's gaze: "Un silence, pendant lequel Mme Raquin continue son jeu de scène, en fixant sur Thérèse et Laurent des regards terribles"⁴⁵ (Ibid.). But the three guests are not conscious either of the terror of Laurent and Thérèse, or of the purpose of Mme Raquin's furious looks. They are intent on interpreting her attempt to write a message with her finger. The whole scene is rather obviously staged, with Thérèse and Laurent cowering stage left, and the three guests surrounding Mme Raquin

stage right. It verges on melodrama when Mme Raquin decides not to complete the message, this being shown by her movements:

Mme Raquin regarde longuement Thérèse et Laurent; puis elle tourne la tête avec lenteur. [...] Elle reste un instant immobile, jouissant de l'effroi des deux meurtriers; puis elle laisse glisser sa main.

(IV, p. 193)

The scene is done for suspense. Even at this point, the reader is not sure why Mme Raquin decides to withhold what she knows; this will not be apparent until the end of the Act. However, for the reader, this scene has the added function of showing how the presence of the guests increases the claustrophobia which Thérèse and Laurent feel. For not only are they under the pressure of Mme Raquin's watchful stare in this scene, but, as well, under the scrutiny of the three "outside" characters. Grivet and Michaud's busybody solicitousness for Mme Raquin is especially onerous to Thérèse and Laurent due to their respective functions in the outside world. Indeed, one of the first things Michaud talks about to Mme Raquin in this scene is a crime he helped to solve in Vernon: "Vous devez vous rappeler, cette femme et cet homme qui avaient assassiné un roulier, et que je suis allé arrêter moi-même dans leur taudis" (IV, p. 190). And Grivet adds: "M. Michaud a un flair pour découvrir les coquins..." (Ibid.). The effect of these words, coupled

with the solicitousness of these characters for Mme Raquin obviously upsets Laurent, for he later interprets Grivet's role as "terrible et sinistre" (IV, p. 195). Moreover, Mme Raquin's attempt to write a message pushes Laurent very close to revealing his guilt himself to the other characters. Once again, the gesture (a sort of aside, since the main attention in this scene is focused on Mme Raquin and those around her) is rather melodramatic, and the words spoken are uncharacteristic ones for Laurent:

LAURENT. (bas). Main vengeresse, main déjà morte qui sort du cercueil, et dont chaque doigt devient une bouche... Elle n'achèvera pas, je la clouerais là, avant qu'elle achève! (Il fait le geste de prendre un couteau dans sa poche.)

(IV, p. 193)

Thérèse stops him, but his words echo Suzanne's earlier speech about Mme Raquin and the grave, and reinforce the gloom of the atmosphere and the oppressiveness of the closed-in room.

One further effect is achieved by the way the characters are positioned on stage in this scene. Since only the reader is aware of what the groups on both sides of the stage are speaking (the characters around Mme Raquin do not react to what Thérèse and Laurent are saying), he is also aware of the disparity between the truth and the interpretations of Suzanne, Grivet, and Michaud. Their

naive and ridiculous interpretation of what Mme Raquin is allegedly trying to say thus provides some quasi-comic relief.

Finally, part of Grivet's parting remark to Thérèse and Laurent is also somewhat ironic at this point. He says: "Savez-vous qu'on les appelle les tourtereaux dans le quartier?" (IV, p. 194), and adds on leaving to Thérèse and Laurent: "Au revoir, tourtereaux... Vous êtes deux tourtereaux" (Ibid.). The irony is that the comfortable bourgeois "nest" has now been transformed into a cave of terror, a disorderly, slovenly place full of anxiety and hatred. For Thérèse and, especially, for Laurent, it is a remark which elicits feelings of oppression, of being watched. The latter feels that even the outside world is somehow closing in on them, for when the three have left he remarks to Thérèse:

LAURENT. Il a boutonné sa redingote, et il a mis une main dans sa poche, en s'en allant. A l'administration, il boutonnait ainsi sa redingote, lorsqu'il voulait se donner de l'importance... Et de quel air il a dit: "Au revoir, tourtereaux..." Il est terrible et sinistre, cet imbécile.

(IV, p. 195)

The feeling of being watched, however, does not diminish with the exit of the three "outside" characters. The second half of the Act focuses on the family trio:

Thérèse and Laurent are left alone with Mme Raquin. The rest of the action is played out under her constant gaze:

Pendant cette scène, le visage de Mme Raquin reflète les sentiments qui l'agitent: la colère, l'horreur, la joie cruelle, la vengeance implacable. Elle suit de ses yeux ardents les meurtriers, elle est de tous leurs emportements et de tous leurs sanglots. 46

(IV, p. 195)

Thérèse and Laurent are conscious of the presence and meaningful gaze of Mme Raquin, and play this whole scene almost entirely to her, in a kind of sadistic ritual. One could almost say that they take pleasure in "confessing" in front of her:

LAURENT. [...] (Montrant Mme Raquin.)
 Tout à l'heure, tu me disais de me taire devant elle. Ne me force pas à te rappeler les faits, à raconter une fois de plus toute la vérité en sa présence.

THERESE. Eh! qu'elle entende, qu'elle souffre! Est-ce que je ne souffre pas, moi!... La vérité est que tu as tué Cailla.

(IV, p. 197)

Although they are all seated around the table at first, the meal does not last long, and, interrupting it with recriminations and accusations, both Thérèse and Laurent soon leave the table. One of the more effective stage manoeuvres in this scene is the use of the staircase and

boutique when Laurent threatens to go to the police. The outside world, the street, now represents the law of society for the two. But, although he goes down the stairs (the reader can follow his movements because Thérèse describes them verbally, IV, p. 199) he does not get further than the boutique and returns, lacking the courage. The movements which follow are even more obvious, and rather too melodramatic and exaggerated: Laurent paces the floor, "comme pris d'hallucination" (IV, p. 200); he threatens Thérèse by throwing her to her knees beside the sewing-table (*Ibid.*); finally, each attempts to kill the other, Thérèse with a knife and Laurent with poison (IV, p. 201). As Antoinette Jagmetti has pointed out, Zola's frequent use of closed, claustrophobic spaces carries with it considerable tension. She writes:

Toutes les descriptions du milieu étroit sont pareillement remplies d'une force passionnelle latente qui ne peut être retenue qu'avec peine. C'est ce mouvement intérieur se heurtant contre les limites extérieures trop proches, ce contraste entre des passions trop grandes et un monde trop étroit, qui fait la puissance et l'intensité du monde de Zola. Toutes les scènes sont construites d'après ce principe d'antagonisme.⁴⁷

The characters' movements in this scene may be staged in a rather unsophisticated fashion, but they nevertheless

serve to show this latent passion, and the strength with which it threatens to erupt⁴⁸.

At this point, Mme Raquin begins to take a more active role on stage. So far, she has been in the middle of the action, watching everything that has occurred. Although they are absorbed in what they are doing, Thérèse and Laurent are aware of her presence and perform for and to her. The reader, too, is influenced by Mme Raquin's central presence and "watches" the action, to a great extent, through her, from her perspective. But, of course, there is a difference, as pointed out, somewhat obliquely, by Leo Braudy:

It is she [Mme Raquin], sitting immovably between the two murderers, unable to do anything to punish them, forced to watch their arguments and violence, who becomes the novel's image of [...] the voyeuristic reader, who has decided that he can enter this world of horror with neither obligation or responsibility.⁴⁹

Braudy's assessment of the reader as "voyeuristic" in this scene is both interesting and astute. Although the reader is aware of watching Thérèse and Laurent through the perspective of Mme Raquin, he in fact has much more detachment than she; as character in the drama, she must play her role in it, and participates in the action on stage. The reader, however, does not; he is able to observe both "sides": Mme Raquin as well as Thérèse and Laurent. But

the "sides", the arrangement into players and observer on stage, prevents the reader from working up too much involvement with either, and thus enables him to retain more of his "objectivity" than might otherwise have been possible. Mme Raquin's gradual re-possession of her faculties at the end of the Act, her ability to rise and speak are less of a surprise for the reader than might be expected, therefore. Her role as avenger, made increasingly apparent throughout the Act, culminates in her final speech. However, the reader is to some extent prepared for this development by the earlier events, i.e., when Mme Raquin suddenly decides not to complete the message she is writing with her finger. That scene is explained here (IV, p. 203): Mme Raquin will not hand Thérèse and Laurent over to the law, but wishes to watch them suffer. This prospect is the final "crunch" for the two. The inescapable prison, the claustrophobic narrowing of their world now becomes literally intolerable. Mme Raquin's silent, passive gaze had just been bearable, but the prospect of her active, pitiless observation of their suffering is finally too much, and they are unable to withstand the pressure. In effect, the tables are turned, and Thérèse and Laurent have taken on Mme Raquin's paralyzed role. Instead of freedom, they have achieved immobility and helplessness. Their reaction to this

ultimate pressure is suicide - the most final of escapes.

Space is an active force in Thérèse Raquin, and its organization (both on and off stage) is important. Virtually all of Act One, Scene One is concerned with providing the reader with enough information about the space represented, and about its immediate off-stage appendages, so that he can then follow the rest of the action easily and perceive its meaning. As we have tried to show, the movement of the characters within the space represented, their positions, their presence and absence, often gives the reader information which is not given either in the dialogue or in the stage directions. At times, the use of space also creates suspense, or conveys ironic levels of meaning. Finally, it shows the reader, in this play, to what extent the dramatis personae are acted upon by the space in which they exist, and not necessarily because this is a so-called naturalistic play.

To attempt any analysis of Thérèse Raquin is to take a risk. Even the most generous of critics could not call the play complex, or particularly rewarding, as drama. One is continually faced with moments in the text which betray its undeniable fraternity with the melodrama. It has not been the purpose of this analysis either to deny the weakness of Thérèse Raquin, or to try to show in it

more strength than it possesses. Rather, we have endeavored to explain in what way this text, despite all its drawbacks, also puts into operation some of the spatial elements necessary for drama, and how these elicit a response from the reader.

NOTES

1 Both L.A. Carter, Zola and the Theatre, p. 37, and Ion Braescu, "Emile Zola, auteur dramatique", p. 21, report this. Zola himself said so in his preface to the Théâtre (Paris: Charpentier, 1894), p. v.

2 I am indebted here to Henri Mitterand's very useful Introduction to Volume 15 of Zola's Oeuvres complètes (Paris: Cercle du Livre Précieux), which contains his "Théâtre et Poèmes".

3 Braescu, op. cit., p. 21; Carter, op. cit., p. 41. The former states it was revived in 1888, 1899, 1906, 1910; the latter gives the following dates: 1905, 1910, 1912-13, 1916, 1920, 1920, 1928, 1929, 1932.

4 Braescu, loc. cit.

5 Emile Zola, Preface to Thérèse Raquin. In: Oeuvres complètes (Paris: Cercle du Livre Précieux), Vol. 15, p. 123.

6 Auguste Vitu, in a review of Thérèse Raquin of July 14th, 1873 in Le Figaro, points out that a scene depicting the Seine and the murder at Saint-Ouen was deleted at the last moment from the first production of the play: "En relisant le

programme, j'y trouve l'indication d'un rôle de cabaretière qui n'existe pas dans la pièce. Information prise, j'apprends qu'on a supprimé un acte où l'on voyait Saint-Ouen, la guinguette, la rivière et le meurtre." The printed version of the play omits this scene also.

7 Although the ~~stage directions~~ for Act Four indicate it is only five o'clock, they nevertheless point out that "la chambre a repris son humidité noire" (p. 184).

8 E. Zola, Thérèse Raquin, p. 126. Among the many reviews of the premiere of Thérèse Raquin in 1873, four make special mention of the one-room setting and its repetition for the duration of the play. Louis Doré of L'Avenir national (July 14, 1873) says that this is "économique, mais aussi ne contribue pas peu à rendre odieuse cette histoire". Auguste Vitu (Le Figaro, July 14, 1873) simply mentions the "seul et unique décor", setting for the petty bourgeois Raquin family; the anonymous critic of L'Indépendance belge (July 15, 1873) also merely mentions the single setting, as does Théodore de Banville in Le National (July 15, 1873). However, none of these critics develops this insight beyond expressing a certain sense of tension and fatality arising for the characters because of the isolated one-room setting.

9 Ibid. Camille also mentions this at the beginning of Act One: "cette pièce, où nous mangeons et où nous couchons" (p. 128). All further references to Thérèse Raquin will be to the same edition and will be given in brackets after each quotation.

10 The use of the word "paysage" creates a contrast between the extremely closed-in nature of and the lack of light in the room that is represented by the stage setting. Later descriptions of the countryside at Vernon will also remind the reader of this word.

11 The relevance of this particular door becomes apparent later in Act One and will be discussed further. At this point in the play, however, it is important to state that the reader is made to take particular notice of it by means of Camille's words and gesture.

12 Mario Maurin, "Zola's labyrinths", Yale French Studies 42 (1969), 89 - 90. Maurin, along with Girard, Jagmetti, Bourneuf, Dezalay, Borie, Lapp, and Furst, who will be mentioned during the course of this chapter, belong to a more recent type of literary (thematic) Zola criticism which has endeavoured to throw new light on Zola's works

by applying to them psychoanalysis and phenomenology (though not in their strictest sense). Naomi Schor's "Zola and la nouvelle critique", Esprit Créateur 11 (1971) contains a concise but thorough analysis of the trend away from traditional biographical and genetic Zola studies towards thematic literary criticism. In this article, she reiterates her previous statement in the Introduction to the special Yale French Studies issue on Zola (1969) that voyeurism and enclosure are two of the main themes with which this new critical trend is preoccupied. Almost all of these studies refer specifically to the novels, and not to the plays. Our study, although it can often gain support from the remarks of these critics, deals only with the specific problems of space as perceived by the reader of drama.

13 Because of Camille's earlier allusion, Laurent's entrance from this door in this scene is self-explanatory. The reader already knows that the door leads to a staircase and, presumably, to the Passage below.

14 Jean Borie, Zola et les mythes ou de la nausée au salut, (Paris, 1971), p. 193.

15 Ibid.

16 Marvin Carlson, in an article that deals with French drama's evolution of the use of stage space, discusses a few of the details of Thérèse's movements in this Act. He bases his observations on the Promptbook for the original 1873 production of the play, which is still extant in the Association des Régisseurs collection in Paris and writes: "At the same time, this concern for realistic detail does not prevent Thérèse Raquin from developing several patterns of striking symbolic importance. A good example of this in the first act is the gradual isolation of Thérèse in her chair down right as the rest of the action moves to other parts of the stage. Thérèse's movements, too, a very few long, deliberate crosses, contrast subtly but distinctly with the bustling to and fro of Mme Raquin". In: "French Stage Composition from Hugo to Zola", Educational Theatre Journal, XXIII (1971), 376.

17 E. Zola, "Le Naturalisme au théâtre". In: Oeuvres complètes, (Paris: Cercle du Livre Précieux), Vol. 11, pp. 334, 360, 411.

18 Henri Mitterand also points out the discrepancy

between Zola's theory and his practice: "Au reste, le mouvement des entrées et des sorties de personnages, en diverses scènes du drame, montre que Zola n'a pas craint de recourir à ce qu'il appelait lui-même les 'petites habiletés des faiseurs' au dépens de ses principes affirmés de vérité et de logique". In: "Thérèse Raquin au théâtre", Revue des sciences humaines 26 (1961), 503.

19 This, while clear to the reader, is information that would not be available to the spectator at a performance. Although the top of the stairs leading down to the boutique is visible, the spectator is not told where it leads until later in the play.

20 Mme Raquin and Suzanne are already off-stage, in the kitchen making tea. Camille, Michaud, and Grivet descend to the boutique.

21 The lowering of voices has the effect of drawing the reader (as "spectator") into the conspiracy, the intimacy of the scene. Of course, it is also a way of arousing suspense, as the others may return at any moment.

22 To be sure, the stage directions also state that Thérèse and Mme Raquin are in mourning. However, at first

only the empty armchair, previously occupied by Camille, definitely tells the reader who is being mourned.

²³ Michaud is, after all, a retired police commissioner, and Grivet a law-abiding bureaucrat. Michaud has already related the gruesome story of the woman cut in four pieces (I, pp. 146-47), and discussed crime detection, thus adding to the suspense which his figure creates when juxtaposed thus with the two murderers. These two (and Suzanne), by their banal curiosity and solicitude in the next two acts, will increasingly be bearing down on the criminals as a force of possible discovery.

²⁴ L.-P. Laforêt, in a review of the 1873 production of this play (La Liberté of July 14, 1873) also briefly mentions this point.

²⁵ Reviews were consulted in the following newspapers at the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris; the name of the critic, if given, is included in brackets: L'Assemblée nationale, July 13, 1873 (Henry Trianon); L'Avenir national, July 14, 1873 (Louis Doré); Le Bien public, July 14, 1873 (Henri de Lapommeraye); Le Constitutionnel, July 14, 1873 (Hippolyte Hostein); Le XIXe Siècle, July 15, 1873 (Charles de La Rounat);

L'Événement, July 18, 1873 (Henri Chabrillat); Le Figaro, July 14, 1873 (Auguste Vitu); La France, July 14, 1873 (Lucien Biart); Le Gaulois, July 13, 1873 (François Oswald); La Gazette de France, July 12, 1873 (Adolphe Racot); L'Indépendance belge, July 15, 1873; La Liberté, July 14, 1873 (L.-P. Laforêt); Le Moniteur universel, July 14, 1873 (Paul de Saint-Victor); Le National, July 14 and 15, 1873 (Théodore de Banville); L'Opinion nationale, July 14 and 21, 1873 (Paul Foucher); L'Ordre, July 21, 1873 (Leguevel de La Combe); Paris-Journal, July 14, 1873 (Xavier Aubryet); La Patrie, July 14, 1873 (Edouard Fournier); Le Pays, July 20, 1873 [July 20th feuilleton printed in July 22nd edition] (Charles de La Mouzelle); Le Petit Journal, July 14, 1873 (Emile Abraham); La Presse, July 14, 1873 (B. Jouvin); La Renaissance littéraire et artistique, July 20, 1873 (Camille Pelletan); La République française, July 20, 1873; Le Siècle, July 14, 1873 (E.-D. de Bieville); Le Soleil, July 15, 1873 (Jules Guillemot); Le Temps, July 14, 1873 (Francisque Sarcey). I should like to acknowledge help from Prof. Henri Mitterand's article "Thérèse Raquin au théâtre", which contains a list of these newspapers.

26

L'Assemblée nationale, July 13, 1873.

27

Louis Doré in L'Avenir national; Auguste Vitu in

Le Figaro, Camille Pelletan in La Renaissance littéraire et artistique. While it is perhaps unfair to include the comments of these contemporary critics, their reactions are worthy of mention since they show a historical consistency in the lack of commentary on Suzanne's role.

28 Hippolyte Hostein in Le Constitutionnel.

29 Lucien Biart in La France.

30 Paul Foucher in L'Opinion nationale.

31 Xavier Aubryet in Paris-Journal and E.-D de Bienville in Le Siècle.

32 In: L'Avenir national.

33 E. Zola, "Preface" to Thérèse Raquin, Oeuvres complètes, Vol. 15, p. 125.

34 H. Mitterand, "Notice" which appears following the text of Thérèse Raquin, Oeuvres complètes, Vol. 15, p. 207. This and Prof. Mitterand's very similar earlier article "Thérèse Raquin au théâtre" are the best contemporary commentaries on this play, but still remain quite general

in the domain of theatrical aesthetics, while giving valuable information on the genesis and early reception of the play. Although Carter, Braescu, and Carlson are the only other contemporary critics who comment significantly on Thérèse Raquin as drama, they do not develop Suzanne's contribution to the spatial aspects. The others (Dezalay, Lapp, Furst, and Walter), who have written about Thérèse Raquin as novel, do not have the same character to contend with, as Suzanne is one of the changes Zola made in the drama version.

35 Ion Braescu, "Emile Zola, auteur dramatique", Beiträge zur romanischen Philologie III (1964), 20.

36 He writes: "Les pages descriptives des chapitres-tableaux (la description du passage du Pont-Neuf, celle du train-train de la vie quotidienne chez les Raquin, celle de la partie de campagne à Saint-Ouen) donnaient d'autre part à l'action son extension, contrôlée, dans l'espace".

Loc. cit., p. 206.

37 The stage directions state: "Ils répètent exactement les mêmes jeux de scène qu'au commencement de la scène v de l'acte premier" (III, p. 180). The impact of these directions

will be greater on the reader of the play. The similarity with Act One would have to be understood visually by a spectator at a performance, since no stage directions are available to him.

38 Antoinette Jagmetti, La Bête Humaine d'Emile Zola. Etude de stylistique critique, (Genève, 1955), p. 24.

39 Ion Braescu, op. cit., p. 20. Although Braescu puts a sociological emphasis on his comment, our main interest lies in the "dépourvue de tout horizon" portion of what he says. This is literally true in this play.

40 Rodolphe Walter, "Zola à Bennecourt en 1867: Quelques aperçus nouveaux sur Thérèse Raquin", Cahiers naturalistes 11 (1965), 126.

41 L. Furst, "Zola's Thérèse Raquin: A Re-Evaluation", Mosaic V (1972), 195.

42 J. Lapp, "The Novel as Drama. Thérèse Raquin". In: Zola Before the Rougon-Marquart, (Toronto, 1964), p. 90.

43 Ibid., p. 107.

44 Auguste Dezalay makes a similar comment about many of the settings of the Rougon-Macquart novels, saying that the characters live "dans l'atmosphère lourde, étouffante et viciée d'un souterrain sans issue". In: "Le thème du souterrain chez Zola", Europe 46 (1968), 110. Except for mention of the Passage Pont-Neuf as an additional form of "souterrain", however, the article is otherwise not directly pertinent to this study.

45 This stage direction has more impact on the reader of the text than it could have on the spectator at a performance. Other means would have to be used to convey the same thing, during a performance.

46 The same comments as in the foregoing note are valid for this stage direction.

47 Antoinette Jagmetti, op. cit., p. 25.

48 There are obvious sexual connotations to Jagmetti's suggestions about narrow spaces, but they are not inappropriate for the interpretation of this play, whose action is, after all, set in motion by a "crime passionnel".

49 Leo Braudy, "Zola on film: the ambiguities of naturalism", Yale French Studies 42 (1969), 69-70.

VOR SONNENAUFGANG

Before beginning a detailed analysis of Vor Sonnenaufgang, it is necessary to mention briefly the reasons behind a minimal use of secondary source material throughout the chapter. Although all of Hauptmann's writings, Vor Sonnenaufgang included, have been the subject of voluminous responses in the form of monographs, biographies, and articles¹, very few of the commentaries on the early drama, or on this play in particular, have addressed themselves to precisely the aspect of space and the reader with which this thesis is concerned. The critics and commentators have dealt mainly with biography (Behl and Voigt², Daiber³), thematic questions (Behl⁴, Guthke⁵, Garten⁶), national and international influence, both on and by Hauptmann (Rauhut, Moore, Dick)⁷, reminiscences (C.F.W. Behl⁸), or the broader question of Naturalism (Cowen, Osborne)⁹.

The particular topic of space has, of course, already been discussed in the critical literature. Nina Zabłudowski's Das Raumproblem in Gerhart Hauptmanns Jugenddramen (Berlin, 1934) and, more recently, Joachim Hintze's Das Raumproblem im modernen deutschen Drama und Theater (Marburg, 1969) are both good examples. Both


are successful in presenting interesting viewpoints on the use of space in Hauptmann's early dramas. However, both deal with space not from a reader's point of view, but from the point of view of historical and sociological factors, Hauptmann's own sense of theatricality, and the division "Haupttext/Nebentext" which Hintze articulates more clearly, but which Zabłudowski uses as well. Both agree that the division drama/theatre is an important one, especially in a discussion on space, but neither pursues this argument in the same direction as the present thesis would like to do.

The articles or portions of monographs which deal directly with Vor Sonnenaufgang concern themselves either with the historic premiere performance by the Freie Bühne (Brahm, Daiber)¹⁰, or with topics stemming from the aspect of Naturalism (Cowen, Hintze)¹¹, or plot (Sinden¹²; Guthke¹³, Osborne¹⁴). Any comments on space by these critics are limited to brief allusions to the "realistic" setting and so-called Naturalist stage concept and are therefore not directly relevant to this chapter, although their legitimacy is not being questioned here. Thus, despite the fact that the volume of criticism both on Hauptmann's dramatic output in general and on Vor Sonnenaufgang in particular is considerable, little of it will be incorporated directly

into the argument of this chapter. There have been, however, portions of critics' insights (especially those who dealt with space) which have here and there acted as a catalyst to the argument presented. Those portions will be incorporated into this chapter at the appropriate junctures.

As regards space, the reader of Vor Sonnenaufgang is provided with a unique tool which is not usually a standard part of a printed dramatic text. The Centenar-Ausgabe, to which reference will be made throughout this chapter, reproduces two sketches of stage layout which were included by Hauptmann in the original edition of the play in 1889¹⁵. The sketches are for Act One and Act Two and are entitled "Zimmer" and "Gutshof" respectively. Since these are the only two settings used in alternate acts throughout the play, the reader has immediate visual information at his disposal at the very outset, before even the list of dramatis personae is given, or Act One begins. As we shall try to demonstrate, the two sketches are an important and integral part of the text of Vor Sonnenaufgang, and those editions which omit them are in fact editing out a crucial component of the text¹⁶.

Before reading a line of dialogue or even knowing the names and numbers of the dramatis personae, the reader



receives from the text a great deal of information contained in the stage layout sketches. Besides finding out that Act One is to take place in what seems to be a combination living-dining room, and Act Two outdoors in a farm-house courtyard, the reader is also initiated into a consciousness for placement of objects, dimension, perspective, and arrangement of scenic details. The stage sketches make him more directly aware that what he is about to read is a dramatic, not a purely narrative text, and they underline the necessity for a different kind of reading, one which takes into account the potentiality of the text for theatrical realization. The most crucial point of orientation for the reader of the sketches is a word which appears at the bottom of each of the rectangles. "Zuschauer" transforms the rectangle called "Erster Akt" and the partial rectangle called "Zweiter Akt" from mere lines on a page to signals which the reader, with the addition of some imagination, can transform into almost three-dimensional proportions. Once the position of a fictive "Zuschauer" is established, the information contained in the rectangles can be ordered in relation to this "Zuschauer". In fact, the reader himself must put himself in the role, or assume the position of the "Zuschauer" in order to absorb and classify the information both of the sketches and of the subsequent text. If he does not keep this position in mind throughout the

reading of the play, he will in fact lose control of the text's most important aspect: its dramaticity.

One of the few critics to make mention of the set sketches is Nina Zabłudowski. However, she writes of them from so many points of view (the author's, the spectator's, the reader's) that a rather mixed commentary results, from which her own clear stance never quite emerges. She refers to the sketches as an example of "eine klare optische Vorstellung des Dichters"¹⁷, even though she says that it was a common practice by authors of the day¹⁸. She then points out that the sketches (but also the text) give information that would be readily available, at once, to the eye of a spectator at a performance. This would seem to be similar to Barthes' point about the polyphonic effect of theatrical signs¹⁹, but Zabłudowski does not develop the notion. She makes a point that is more relevant to this study in saying that information on the existence and placement of objects on stage in Act One is given gradually throughout the act and must be assembled by the reader in order for him to have a clear picture of the set. However, even though she has mentioned the sketches, she fails to make the connection between them and the stage directions of Act One, and her point is lost in the subsequent (and usual) reference to the Naturalistic determinism of the milieu which the stage space represents. Zabłudowski

writes:

Genau Einzelangaben [in Vor Sonnenaufgang] verraten eine klare optische Vorstellung des Dichters. Auch eine Bühnenskizze ist beigelegt. Allerdings bedeutet eine solche Beigabe einer Zeichnung keine Besonderheit Hauptmanns, sondern ist vielmehr zu jener Zeit allgemein üblich. [...] Doch erwähnt er Vieles erst in dem Augenblick, in dem es Verwendung findet. So sehen wir zerstreut Angaben über Dinge, die gleichbleibend zum ersten Szenenbild gehören und vom Auge des Zuschauers also schon ganz zu Anfang aufgenommen werden können. Erst die Sammlung dieser Bühnenbemerkungen ergeben für den Leser einen vollkommenen Eindruck des vom Autor gedachten eigentümlichen Raumes. [...] Das Gesetz dieses Raumes beherrscht die Handlungsträger. Nur mit Gewalt können sie ihm entgehen. Zum Schluss hat das Unnatürliche der Vereinigung von Luxus und ursprünglicher bäuerischer Armut [...] sein Opfer gefordert.²⁰

Some rather astute points are quickly passed over because of a confusion in methodological standpoint.

Vor Sonnenaufgang, then, goes further than most dramatic texts in that it provides its reader with a graphic system of orientation. This system is primarily a component of the spatial qualities of the play, since it shows, in a very simplified way, how the space available on a physical stage would have to be apportioned²¹. Not only does the reader find out what the objects are to be, but where (to the left or right) they would be placed, how far away (upstage or downstage) from the fictive

"Zuschauer" they might be, and how they affect the volume of the entire space, in relation to the other objects in it (e.g., Kahl's garden, in Act Two, is just a narrow strip to the right and does not take up half of the stage, etc.). The sketches even go so far as to add some pictorial reference in the form of an extension of the stage directions by including the following sentence in the Act Two set: "Die Punkte markieren einen Lattenzaun, gut gehalten, grün mit weissen Spitzen". The information concerning the colour and state of repair of the fence serves to help the reader in his task of adding, in his imagination, a three-dimensionality to the sketches which the printed page lacks. Nor are the sketches all-inclusive, of course. They are simply a nominal point of reference for the reader, providing him with an initial and all-important consciousness of the organization of the spatial element and of his own position within that organization.

The two sketches, moreover, are not simply an extraneous appendage to the text of Vor Sonnenaufgang; they cannot be considered merely as quaint or "interesting" additions or illustrations. On the contrary, they lock firmly into the text because they provide information which is not contained in the verbal part of it, and the verbal part subsequently adds information not initially given by the sketches; both are necessary to one another.

This is apparent in the first lines of stage directions for Act One: "Das Zimmer ist niedrig; der Fussboden mit guten Teppichen belegt"²². Unless he has seen the sketches, reference to "das Zimmer" is meaningless, or, at the most, so general as to be of no use in orienting the reader. The rest of the opening stage directions are also not more useful without the sketch of Act One: they make reference to a painting "an der Wand hinter dem Esstisch" and to Miele's entrance through the middle door, followed by Loth. There is no mention of where objects (such as the dining table) are located in the room, nor is reference made to all the objects which the sketch shows. Thus, were he to rely solely on the opening stage directions, the reader would be seriously disoriented as to the space represented, and almost unable to situate properly the position of objects and the movement of characters as the Act unfolded. Used in conjunction with the sketch for Act One, however, the beginning stage directions both make sense and add further information to that already obtained. The reader now has a definite sense of the proportion of the room ("niedrig"), of the sort of volume represented by the flat linear sketch he has seen. By acting as a point of departure, the sketch allows for a reduction in the amount of subsequent stage directions at the opening of Acts One and Two.

It is here also, during the opening stage directions, that the reader is initiated into another device used by the text to stimulate his consciousness of the spatial element in the play. The use of italics for the stage directions, and normal print for the dialogue of the dramatis personae is a constant clue to the reader that he is to switch gears. Because the sentences in italics very often contain information that is relevant to the placement of objects, to the movement of characters, or to their exits and entrances, the reader learns to associate the stage directions with the spatial element. The visual difference between the two types of print eventually conditions him into producing an integrated "performance" in his mind, so that he knows what is dialogue and what is not, but is able to switch from one to the other in a way that makes him aware of both elements. Because most (though not all) plays consist of far more dialogue than stage directions, the reader might eventually regard the stage directions as periodic disturbances to an otherwise smooth reading of dialogue. As a textual tactic, this is precisely what they are and how they achieve their ends. By breaking the snatches of dialogue at appointed moments, they grab the reader away from ensconement in dialogue exchange, and remind him again of the spatial element²³.

In this way, they act almost like the "gaps" of Ingarden and Iser because they constitute a pause on the part of the reader, however short that pause may be. They cut the momentum which the reader has achieved during the reading of, say, long portions of dialogue, and they make demands on his ability to synthesize, to integrate the spatial and other elements of the drama.

If we follow the reader's linear progress through Act One, we will be able to describe how this shifting of gears operates, and to what extent the text thus forces the reader to be constantly aware of space. Following the two paragraphs of stage directions, Miele begins the dialogue with a short speech that admits Loth. This is immediately interrupted again by a further paragraph of stage directions concerning Frau Krause's entrance. The sketch is necessary to the reader once more, because an element not previously mentioned in the text is introduced: the door to the conservatory. The reader will remember that it is situated stage left²⁴. He now also knows that it is a glass door, a fact not given by the sketch and important for his notion of the volume of the space represented, a glass door being a less confining one than a regular door, and providing a vista to space adjoining the room represented. Text and sketch thus complement and reinforce one another simply by the use of the words

"die Glastür zum Wintergarten".

Following a brief exchange between Frau Krause, Loth and Miele, another short stage direction intervenes. This time, the door to Hoffmann's study, stage right, opens and Hoffmann sticks his head out. The reader knows it is Hoffmann's study because the sketch says so, and also gives its position on stage. The text makes use of this former knowledge by referring to it as "die Tür rechts"²⁵, not "eine Tür rechts", thus reminding the reader that he already knows which door is meant. Within the first page of the play, the text has succeeded in familiarizing the reader with the entire volume of the space represented, by arranging for characters' entrances from all areas of the room: upstage (the middle door), stage left (the glass door), and stage right (the door to Hoffmann's room). The to-do which follows the entrance of Hoffmann and which occurs as he greets Loth completes the familiarization: Loth and Hoffmann eventually sit down around the table located downstage. Before this happens, however, Hoffmann delivers a rather exaggerated welcome speech. His exaggeration and confusion are accentuated by the fact that his greeting is punctuated by stage directions that do not interrupt just between whole sentences, but that chop up what is in fact a one-sentence speech. The stage directions

describe Hoffmann's actions as he tries to help Loth make himself at home by taking his effects, then as he deposits his hat and walking stick on a chair by the door (which door is this time not indicated, but left to the imagination), and finally as he comes back to where Loth is standing and sits down with him. By chopping up Hoffmann's speech with stage directions, the text makes an attempt at the sort of simultaneity that would be available to a spectator at a performance; that is, Hoffmann would be moving about while delivering his speech. This cannot be achieved completely in the printed text, but the technique does demand further exercise of a consciousness for space on the part of the reader. As well, it uses that consciousness to make him aware of Hoffmann's nervousness and agitation.

It is at this point too that the text makes initial use of a further technique associated with space. Just before Loth and Hoffmann sit down, the stage directions indicate that "Frau Krause hat ein sehr erstauntes Gesicht gemacht und sich dann zurückgezogen" (I, p. 16). The use of the past tense indicates that Frau Krause's action has occurred sometime before the actual moment at which the reader acquires the information in the stage directions. In a performance of the play, Frau Krause's exit would attain what Ingarden calls "concretization" by the fact that, at some point before Hoffmann's "Also du, höre!

mach's wie damals" (I, p. 16) to Loth, the spectator would have seen her physically leaving the stage. In the printed text, however, the reader must perform this action for himself, retroactively. As soon as he has read the stage directions, a very rapid mental action will occur on his part: for one thing, he will remember Frau Krause's presence on stage, that she came in from the conservatory; then he will go back over the general ground that has been covered by the text since her entrance, and mentally imagine her exit at some appropriate point. Exactly what point the reader chooses is not of crucial importance. What is important is that the text has achieved its purpose: it has conveyed the necessary information, and it has forced the reader to perform the essentially theatrical (and spatial) operation for himself by mentally going back over the text. Even though the entire process is very rapid, and becomes more so as the reader acquires skill, still there is a slight pause achieved at this point, not just by the switch in print, but also by the necessity of the retroactive operation. Because of the pause (during which the reader goes back to fill a gap in the text), several other things are achieved: the reader has time to reconsider the character of Frau Krause, as well as what she said, in the light of what is now happening on stage; he is also distanced momentarily from the conversation

between Hoffmann and Loth, and this (albeit brief) distancing enhances his capacity to judge the two characters, as well as the content of their conversation. Much has been achieved by the text in one brief sentence of stage directions.

So far in the text, various parts of the room have been referred to, as characters entered, exited, or moved about. Now, as Loth and Hoffmann remain alone on stage, they are indicated as sitting around the small table downstage. There, they engage in a fairly lengthy dialogue. There is a short interruption as they are about to do this: Helene, as the stage directions indicate, "kommt lesend aus dem Wintergarten" (I, p. 16), then quickly goes back into the conservatory when she sees Loth. This new character is thus both introduced, and kept imminently present, because the reader knows she is still in the space adjoining the room represented, throughout the dialogue between the two men. Loth and Hoffmann then remain seated downstage, with almost no interruption, and engage in talk for the next five or six pages of the text. Two factors are at work upon the reader here: the almost total absence of stage directions during the dialogue, and the practically immobile position of the characters downstage. If the reader maintains his

imaginary stage and his "Zuschauer" position, he will appreciate all the more the intimate, close-up nature of this scene. The downstage position of Loth and Hoffmann brings the whole scene closer to the reader (as spectator) and forces him to focus on (and remain with) that part of the stage for the duration of the conversation. As their talk lengthens, he becomes less and less aware of the rest of the surrounding space because there are no stage directions referring to it. The few words in italics that do appear add to the intimacy of the scene by indicating the mood or emotional reaction of the dialogue participants. If the Act began by a wide-angle vision of the stage for the reader, the text now forces him to narrow his field of attention by making him concentrate on two practically immobile characters in a small area of space. The transition is made smoothly and naturally by the text. For the next few pages most of the stage space lies dormant to the attention of the reader, as his "vision" is narrowed by the techniques just described.

This is not to say, however, that the element of space is not present at all during the conversation between Loth and Hoffmann. If the stage space fades from the consciousness of the reader briefly, another kind of space is brought to his attention during the dialogue.

In the Introduction to this thesis, I have already discussed Ingarden's comparison of the qualities of "real" or world space and the qualities of "represented" space, or space described in literary works. The latter, says Ingarden, "is as if pocked with gaps, which show up as, so to speak, spots of indeterminacy"²⁶. The literary work can only represent segments of space; however, because "it is the essence of space in general not to have any discontinuity"²⁷, the space outside of or not included in that which is represented by the literary work is "corepresented"²⁸. The reader, in trying to fill the gaps that necessarily exist as concerns space, is helped by the text and takes his clues from it. In Vor Sonnenaufgang, he already has information in the set sketches. He does not necessarily identify as yet, however, that the "Zimmer" of Act One is part of the "Gutshof" of Act Two; this information is conveyed later, in the conversation between Loth and Hoffmann which we are now examining. But even before this conversation, the reader has an idea of space directly adjoining the stage set represented, i.e., the living-dining room. Although the diagram does not show it, the very fact that it indicates three doors suggests to the reader already that the room does not exist in a

vacuum. This is confirmed at the opening of Act One, when Miele and Loth enter by the middle door upstage. The reader's natural assumption is that there is a hall or other space belonging to the house, beyond the middle door. This occurs again when Frau Krause (and later Helene) enter by the door to the conservatory, stage left, and once more when Hoffmann does the same by the door to his study, stage right. The sketch also indicates a window, stage right, slightly downstage from the door to Hoffmann's room, but this has not been alluded to up until this point in the text and has not yet been fully exploited as a tool for expanding spatial awareness.

If we return to the conversation between Loth and Hoffmann, we can see how, once the centre of orientation is established (i.e., the reader as spectator vis-a-vis the represented space), the text goes on to give indications which can contribute to the reader's filling of the spatial gaps existing beyond. The centre of orientation does not shift; the additional information merely contributes to widen the reader's focus. In this case, it is the dialogue which helps to do this: the two characters speak of places and objects beyond the confines of the room in which they find themselves. This "dialogue space" is expository in this instance, but it also performs the expanding function I have just outlined. Loth speaks of

Berlin, of a mutual friend who shot himself "an einer sehr schönen Stelle der Havelseeufer" (I, p. 17), then of the "Leipziger Geschichte" (I, p. 18) he was involved in, and of being banned from the university (I, p. 19). He and Hoffmann then mention the former's trip to America in an effort to found a new social order (I, p. 19), and finally, they discuss the more immediate surroundings. The reader can now associate the set drawings of the two acts more closely, since he finds out that Hoffmann is at his in-laws' farm (I, p. 21). He also knows that the farmers in the surrounding area have found coal because Loth makes reference to Hoffmann's control of the product of the surrounding mines (I, p. 23). Finally, he finds out that there is a railroad in the area, as well as a pub (I, pp. 21, 22), and that a competent doctor exists in the village (I, p. 21). The gaps are still many, of course, but the reader has been able to sketch in a few of the more important points of orientation and has done so by close attention to the content of the dialogue.

It is in the functioning of "dialogue space" that the dramatic text can differ extensively from a performance. In both, the places spoken about in the dialogue serve to fill in spatial gaps for the reader or spectator. But in the text, both the stage directions (the usual way repre-

sented space is communicated) and the dialogue are printed language and thus constitute the same medium. In the performance, the centre of orientation (the space represented) is physically present at all times, visually available to the spectator, assaulting his senses and never receding into the background in the way that the stage directions do when they are not longer being read by the reader. Simply by being available to the spectator for a longer period of time (i.e., throughout one or several acts), the represented space out-competes the spoken word or "dialogue space", which assaults the spectator's ear for seconds at a time, and is gone. The only exception during performance could be achieved by means of light; that is, if the stage space were blacked out completely for the duration of a specific dialogue (or monologue), and attention focused on the language by having a spotlight only on the speaking character(s). This would achieve almost (but not totally) the same effect as the text has when a reader is seeing only dialogue on the printed page. Because of this difference, the "dialogue space" of a printed dramatic text is better able to compete for the analytical attention of the reader and, from an aesthetic point of view, is a stronger element than during a performance.

The conversation between Loth and Hoffmann continues for several pages with only one interruption. This occurs when Hoffmann offers his visitor a glass of cognac. The flow of the dialogue is momentarily cut while Hoffmann goes through the motions of politeness. The intimacy is also interrupted by the fact that Hoffmann gets up, moves to the buffet upstage, and returns with the bottle and glasses. Because the buffet is mentioned for the first time in the text at this point, the reader again needs the initial set sketch, as no information is available here on the exact position of the buffet on stage. It is, however, indicated in the sketch for Act One as being upstage, just to the left of the middle door. Its position is important to the reader because it helps him to visualize the extent of the move Hoffmann must make in order to fetch the cognac and glasses. He does not just reach beside him somewhere, but must get up and walk the length of the stage, from downstage to upstage, to reach the buffet. The reader's focus on the downstage duo is thus considerably disturbed. He is obliged to broaden his viewpoint on the scene once more, to include the whole stage. This breaks his concentration on the dialogue that Loth and Hoffmann had been conducting and distances him momentarily, thus allowing for a pause during which he can assess what has just

been said and preparing him to judge what will be said subsequently. The spatial element is used not only to give the reader this pause (and thus allow him time to judge the situation), but also to characterize the two men. Hoffmann's manner in getting the cognac, indeed the fact of his getting it at all, and Loth's refusal of it convey information that advances the plot.

After this break, the intimacy is resumed, and the dialogue continues for several more pages, until Hoffmann signals its end by standing up once more (I, p. 23). Gradually, the whole stage is brought into play, as movement resumes and additional characters appear. Once again, the reader's optic widens to include a bigger area, indeed the whole stage. This begins when Hoffmann rises, then rings for Eduard: "Er drückt auf den Knopf einer elektrischen Leitung, deren Draht in Form einer grünen Schnur auf das Sofa herunterhängt; man hört das Läuten einer elektrischen Klingel" (I, p. 23). This time, it is the text of the play that is giving the reader additional spatial information that was not included in the sketch. And if the position of the bell is important, its sound is even more so, for it leads the attention of the reader not just to the whole space represented, but to space in the rest of the house. He is both informed and perhaps somewhat intrigued to

know more about the remaining house space.

At this juncture, the text also demonstrates to what extent it relies on the reader's by now full cooperation with the spatial dimensions of the set. Eduard's answer to Hoffmann's summons is indicated by a short stage direction only: "Eduard tritt ein, Diener in Livrée" (I, p. 23). The text assumes that the reader will know Eduard is entering by the middle door upstage, not one of the others. The same assumption is present when Loth and Eduard leave shortly thereafter: "Eduard öffnet die Tür und lässt Loth vorangehen. Beide ab" (I, p. 23). The middle door, occupying as it does a central position upstage, is by now firmly established in the reader's mind as the chief communication between the room and the rest of the house, as well as the outside, and thus nothing is needed to qualify "die Tür" in the stage direction just quoted.

There is another pause between Loth's exit and the next sequence of dialogue between Hoffmann and Helene. This is effected by the use of momentary silence, and by leaving the stage empty except for the presence of Hoffmann. The reader's entire attention is focused on him momentarily, both on his actions and on the legitimacy of his presence in the space represented. The pause gives the reader time

to make the transition between one set of occurrences and the next, and prepares for the ensuing scene by announcing the entrance of Helene. As she comes in through the door to the conservatory (where she has been throughout the scene between Loth and Hoffmann), Hoffmann is standing at the opposite end of the stage, at the door to his study, which he was about to enter. This spatial confrontation is then reflected in the conversation between the two characters, which, while not unfriendly, is not particularly harmonious. This dialogue differs from the previous one because the reader is kept aware of the entire space of the room at all times. Attention is focused on the middle door by the appearance of the postman with a package (I, p. 24); then Hoffmann paces the room (I, p. 25), again leading the reader to consider the entire volume of space represented. As well, space beyond the stage set is once more alluded to in the dialogue: the package delivered comes from Berlin, and mention is made of Hoffmann's wife and her walks in the surrounding countryside. The reference to Hoffmann's wife emphasizes her continuing absence from the room represented and this both fills spatial gaps (the reader imagines her in other parts of the house) and adds to the development of the plot.

As the Act progresses, the reader is made increasingly aware by the text of space beyond the stage

set. This culminates in an escape from the confines of the room to the "Gutshof" itself in the set of Act Two. Once Hoffmann has left, Miele comes in briefly, and then Helene is left alone on stage for several moments before Eduard appears. The stage directions call attention to another element of the decor which the reader will remember from the set sketch: the mirror. The text does not indicate its position in the room, since this has already been done by the sketch. This brief pause now gives the reader the opportunity to dwell on the character of Helene, whose hurried rush from the stage earlier on prevented this. Now, as Helene fusses over her appearance in the mirror, the text (and the reader) shift gears, in anticipation of the meal scene that is being prepared. The unexpected appearance of Loth moments later marks the beginning of another dialogue, the third in this Act.

Loth's entrance is preceded by a knock at the middle door, and an extremely nervous reaction on the part of Helene before he enters. The knock once again forces the reader to imagine the space of the hall beyond the room, and it serves to heighten the importance of Loth's entrance and of the subsequent conversation with Helene. It makes his entrance more formal, more "grand", because it creates in the reader a far greater anticipation of

what is to come. But if this is the third long dialogue of this Act, it is a dialogue that has an absent third participant. Almost as soon as Loth enters, Hoffmann's voice is heard "durch die geschlossene Zimmertür" (I, p. 25), that is, the door to his study, which he entered a few minutes before. Hoffmann makes the introductions in a jocular, casual tone, all the while remaining in his room. He does not come out until after Loth and Helene have had a moderately lengthy conversation alone, but the effect has been achieved. From this point on, the reader is well aware of Hoffmann's continuing presence in the other room, and it is almost as if a trio, not just a duo were present on stage. Moreover, Hoffmann's study is given added importance, is almost drawn in physically into the space represented by means of this use of his voice off-stage. Hoffmann's study as a place of work stands for all the (somewhat shady) business machinations of its owner, and its spatial importance here helps to accentuate this aspect of the plot.

The conversation between Loth and Helene contributes considerably to the reader's awareness of space beyond the room. This is especially true of the Krause farm and the immediately surrounding countryside. One of the most directly vivid ways occurs when Helene looks

out the window, stage right: "Sie ist vor das Fenster getreten und weist mit der Hand hinaus" (I, p. 27). Her position by the window, her action of pointing, and her description of what she sees out there ("Bergleute") bridge the gap for the reader and help him to imagine spatial continuity. Most of the conversation centres on the farmers, the mines, and the surrounding area:

LOTH. Hm! Bergleute.

HELENE. Welche gehen zur Grube; welche kommen von der Grube; das hört nicht auf. - Wenigstens ich sehe immer Bergleute. Denken Sie, dass ich allein auf die Strasse mag? Höchstens auf die Felder, durch das Hintertor. Es ist ein zu rohes Pack!

(I, p. 27)

Although Loth mentions Berlin and Breslau, and Helene her boarding school in Herrnhut (I, pp. 26, 27), far more time is devoted to a discussion of the immediate countryside, the farmers and the coal mines, and the reader is aware that this is both expository, and a preparation for the outdoor setting of Act Two.

One important stage direction interrupts the flow of the conversation between Loth and Helene. The reader is told that "Miele und Eduard, ab- und zugehend, decken den Tisch rechts im Hintergrunde" (I, p. 26). He is to keep in mind both Hoffmann's imminent entrance, therefore,

and the actions of the two servants around the dining table. As a backdrop to the dialogue, the bustling of the servants as they set a sumptuous table creates irony for the reader: while Loth and Helene speak of the miserable miners whose look is always "gehässig" and "finster" (I, pp. 27, 28), servants are preparing a rich meal for their enjoyment. This stage direction is not only retroactive, but also continues to be in effect until Hoffmann re-enters. Its inclusion is not a mere indication of pragmatic stage business, but an integral part of the plot, and as such, important for the reader to keep in mind.

The entrance of Hoffmann begins a shift of the actions of the dramatis personae towards the focal point of the dinner table, upstage right. As other characters join Loth, Helene, and Hoffmann, an eventual tableau is formed: the dinner scene. The text has already prepared the reader for this because Hoffmann previously asked Helene to have a good table set; now Hoffmann stands by the dining table and surveys the results and, with him, so does the reader. The stage directions contribute to this overview of the set table by a brief description: "[Hoffmann] tritt an den fertig gedeckten, mit Delikatessen überladenen Abendtisch" (I, p. 28). The entrance of Kahl, prepared for by "schwere Schritte draussen im

Hausflur" (I, p. 29), creates a slight pause and diverts the reader's attention momentarily away from the prepared table (a narrower focus) towards the middle door and eventually to the entire stage again (a wide angle of vision). A relatively lengthy description of Kahl in the stage directions holds the reader up momentarily and allows him to pause in order to integrate this new character into the action of the play. In addition, there is a second pause, as Kahl "erblickt Loth, wird sehr verlegen und macht stillstehend eine ziemlich klägliche Figur" (I, p. 29).

This tableau shifts a little when Hoffmann goes to Kahl to shake hands with him, then as Kahl himself "geht mit schweren Schritten quer durch das ganze Zimmer auf Helene zu und gibt ihr die Hand" (I, p. 29). But then there is another pause, a "Verlegenheitsstille" (*Ibid.*), and the group again becomes a tableau for a moment. The series of pauses at slight intervals chops up the motions of the dramatis personae, and allows the reader time to evaluate them in their actions as a group.

It is Hoffmann who quickly disperses the tableau by inviting everyone to be seated. The reader's attention goes to the dinner table once more. But a final short scene must be played out before the seating can take place. Frau Krause is missing and Miele is dis-

patched to fetch her. She does so by shouting for her in the hallway beyond the middle door. Miele's shouting both takes the reader beyond the stage space and serves to prepare for the entrance of Frau Krause in what can only be described as an ironic and humorous "ländlich, sittlich" (I, p. 29) manner (to quote Hoffmann). Frau Krause makes her grand entrance, appropriately enough, through a door situated upstage centre (the middle door) "furchtbar aufgedonnert", wearing "Seide und kostbarer Schmuck" (I, p. 29), and awaited by all. The appearance of this character, especially announced as it is here, forces the reader to compare it with her other, more spontaneous entrance at the beginning of the Act. The comparison is not favourable to Frau Krause. A short pause which ensues after Loth has been formally presented to her reinforces the reader's ability to grasp the irony of her manner of entrance and the way in which this was prepared for by the spatial element working in conjunction with the dialogue. Moreover, Frau Krause's entrance is doubly emphasized by stage directions given shortly after she has appeared. The reader learns that "Frau Spiller ist kurz nach Frau Krause ebenfalls eingetreten" (I, p. 30). This causes him to re-enact briefly in his imagination the entrance of Frau Krause, this time adding Frau Spiller in her wake. A

"retinue" in the form of Frau Spiller has accompanied the grand entrance, and the combination of the two is both comic and ironic.

The inclusion of a considerable amount of stage directions during this scene helps to convey the awkwardness of the situation by creating several pauses in the action. This occurs again when Helene suggests to her stepmother that the group sit down to eat, and is sharply reprimanded (I, p. 30). Finally, as they are about to be seated, Frau Krause remembers that prayers must be said and the seating occurs only after this has been done by Frau Spiller. Even then, dialogue is not given at once, but further stage directions delay it. This has a double effect on the reader: he is aware of continuing tension ("die peinliche Situation"), and he has the time to be aware of a tableau, to focus his attention on the group now seated at the table upstage right: "Alle setzen sich mit Geräusch. Mit dem Zulangen und Zureichen, welches einige Zeit in Anspruch nimmt, kommt man über die peinliche Situation hinweg" (I, p. 30).

Almost the entire remainder of Act One takes place around the dining table. With few exceptions, the stage directions merely indicate the emotions and manners of the dramatis personae (e.g., "platzt heraus", or "ohne

Takt"), or identify the person to whom a speech is addressed. Although there are words in italics here and there on every page for the remainder of the Act, there are almost no lengthy stage directions until the very end. This allows the reader to give full attention to the table talk, to the various characteristics of the dramatis personae, and to their interaction with one another. The spatial grouping serves to emphasize what occurs within that grouping.

One significant event breaks the unity of those assembled at the dinner-table for a few moments: Helene, extremely upset by Frau Krause's announcement that Kahl is her fiance, leaves the table in tearful anger. The angry momentum of the situation is carried through by uninterrupted dialogue. The reader only knows that Helene stands up. After most of the bickering about this point is over, he also learns that Helene is still standing, away from the table, and only now sits down: "[Hoffmann] gibt Helenen, die in Erregung abseits getreten ist, einen Wink, auf den hin sich das Mädchen, die Tränen gewaltsam zurückhaltend, wieder auf seinen Platz begibt" (I, p. 36). The stage directions mark a pause at the end of the little scene between the two women, and inform the reader in retroactive fashion of the position of the characters. Helene's move away from the table for a few moments creates a break in the grouping of the dramatis personae around it. More than the harsh words spoken, the

physical distancing of Helene serves as a device to give the reader momentary detachment from the unity of the group; in this way, he is more susceptible²⁹ to a judgemental view of the situation.

After this incident, the amount of stage directions increases steadily until the end of the Act. These refer mainly to the increasingly emotional reaction of some of the dramatis personae to a discussion on alcoholism fostered by Loth. This discussion brings out a spatial reference which the reader might remember from the beginning of the Act. There, Loth related to Hoffmann a conversation he had heard about him in a local pub. Here, the reference to a pub reappears when Loth describes a drunk he has seen there:

LOTH. [...] Zum Beispiel hier in dem Wirtshaus, wo ich abstieg, bevor ich zu dir kam, da sass ein Kerl so: Er stützt beide Ellenbogen auf den Tisch, nimmt den Kopf in die Hände und stiert auf die Tischplatte.

[...]

Es wundert mich, dass du dieses - Original, könnte man beinahe sagen, noch nicht kennst. Das Wirtshaus ist ja gleich hier nebenan das. Mir wurde gesagt, es sei ein hiesiger steinreicher Bauer, der seine Tage und Jahre buchstäblich in diesem selben Gastzimmer mit Schnapstrinken zubrächte. Das reine Tier ist er natürlich. Diese furchtbar öden, versoffenen Augen, mit denen er mich anstierte.

This reference to the nearby pub is given importance by the nervous reactions of those around the table to Loth's words. The connection between the house and the pub is finally blurted out by Kahl, who cannot contain his laughter:

KAHL. unter dem Lachen hervorstammelnd.
 Woahrhaftig! das ist ja... das is ja
 woahrhaftig der... der Alte gewesen.

(I, p. 37)

Although the reader is not yet sure whose "Alte" it is, the relation between the space represented and the pub nearby is firmly established both by this statement, and by the embarrassment of the other characters, even Hoffmann and Frau Krause. Helene, for whom Kahl's words are too much, now leaves the table. The stage directions, coupled with her attempt to express her contempt for Kahl, give emphasis to Helene's exit here and show its determination:

HELENE. ist entsetzt und empört aufgesprungen. Zerknüllt die Serviette und schleudert sie auf den Tisch. Bricht aus. Sie sind... - macht die Bewegung des Ausspeiens - pfui! Sie geht schnell ab.

(Ibid.).

Helene's exit precipitates that of several other dramatis personae, and the group around the table disperses. Kahl, then Frau Krause, leave quickly and

angrily. Frau Spiller, by commenting on her mistress' exit, again assumes the ironic role of "regal" attendant. Her exit is somewhat slower because she goes through the motion of a short prayer before leaving the table, and this gives the reader a slight pause to absorb what has just occurred. The Act draws to a close as Miele and Eduard clean up after the meal, and Loth and Hoffmann take the reader's attention away from that part of the setting by walking downstage (I, p. 38). In a civilized manner, the two men demonstrate their detachment from the events that have taken place by retiring to the comfort and idyllic protection of the garden arbour to take their coffee. This is an important spatial technique, as it helps to wind down the flow of events that have just taken place, and gives the reader time to re-assess what has occurred. At this point, the empty stage serves to release emotion and helps the reader to take stock - it is a good summing-up device³⁰.

Since the Act is not completely over, however, the empty stage also helps to stimulate the reader's attention in anticipation of who is to reappear next, and what is to occur. It is Helene who comes back through the door upstage. She picks up the pace of the events, a pace that had quieted down when the stage was empty,

by quickly moving from the door at the right to the door at the left. Her dominance of the stage at the end of the Act singles her out, and her nervous actions create a suspense that carries the momentum of the play into the following act.

Act Two demands more of the reader in terms of participation in the spatial element than did Act One. The reader must work considerably harder in order to remain alert to the use of space. That the text seeks to enlist and maintain his active participation in this regard is evident, at least in part, by the presence of lengthy stage directions at frequent intervals. Even the long paragraph of stage directions which opens the Act, however, is not sufficiently complete to orient the reader well enough within the details of the stage space. He soon realizes that the set sketch for Act Two is indispensable: without it, he is not informed as to the location of the "Wirtshaus", the "Torweg", and the "Gang vom Wirtshaus" referred to in the opening stage directions (II, p. 39). It is probably unlikely that any reader would remember the sketch for Act Two in sufficient detail at this point; a memory-refreshing glance back would be crucial to his continuing orientation within the events of Act Two. The position of the buildings, paths, and garden, and

their relation to one another is too complex for the reader to piece together just from what he is given in the text of the Act. What is there is insufficient; instead, the text relies on the sketch which, used in conjunction with it, situates the reader properly as to the apportionment of stage space.

In the matter of space, Act Two seems a logical progression from Act One. From a room inside the Krause house, the set changes to show the house as it is situated in the farm courtyard, with the nearby pub, and the fields also visible. The transition is also logical when we consider the conversation at the end of Act One. What breaks up the meal is Loth's reference to the pub nearby and to the drunken old man he has seen there. Act Two shows that pub and, as we shall discuss shortly, shows the old man as well. The emphasis on the pub is produced spatially: the reader's attention is drawn to that part of the stage (upstage right) by the fact that the windows show a light, while the rest of the stage is in semi-darkness due to the early morning hour. Although the "grau-fahler Morgenschein" seen stage centre ("durch den Torweg") increases in intensity as the Act progresses, to show the dawning of the day³¹, at the beginning of the Act the reader's attention is mainly on the pub. Before the action begins, however,

the reader is encouraged to absorb the totality of the stage space by means of a tableau created for the few moments during which a "feierliche Morgenstille" reigns. Visually, only Beibst's silhouette is apparent, in the centre part of the stage, under the gateway. But the reader's attention is drawn to that part of the stage at the beginning because of the noise Beibst makes as he is whetting his scythe. This provides the reader, again by means of his imagination, with a panoramic view of Beibst, the gateway, and the "Felder" which are indicated beyond the gateway in the sketch of the set. If the sketch is drawn from a bird's eye view, the reader must make the adjustment to what would be a spectator's view, one which would include a perspective under and beyond the gateway.

The initial pause is not long, and the relative quiet is broken by sudden noise from the pub. The reader's full attention is now at stage right as he perceives not only "das Geschrei aus dem Wirtshaus abziehender Gäste", but also the noise of the pub door being banged closed. After this, the figure of Bauer Krause stumbling along the path from the pub keeps the reader's attention in that area of space. Krause slowly makes his way from the pub towards the left of the stage, first falling against the garden fence (another element indicated only

in the sketch), then catching hold of a plow-handle in the middle of the courtyard. The reader, as he follows Krause's drunken progress, makes a visual sweep of the stage from right to left. As Helene storms out of the house to help her father, a more permanent connection between pub and house is made for the reader by the text. Finally, Beibst joins Helene in an effort to bring Krause inside. As they enter, the house seems to react physically to the intrusion of the drunken man: "Im Hause hört man Lärm, Türeenschlagen. In einem Fenster wird Licht..." (II, p. 40). This reaction inside the house is accentuated even more by the fact that the stage remains empty for a moment - the reader's full attention has now shifted to stage left.

Although Beibst emerges from the house shortly thereafter, there is continuing silence while the scene of Kahl's hasty escape is enacted. He comes out of the house, gives Beibst bribe money, and quickly makes his escape over the fence stage right. To this point, there has been very little dialogue, and a great many stage directions. The reader's attention remains firmly on the space of the set, as he integrates the characters' movements within it, and establishes the complex positions of the physical components (buildings, etc.). After the exit of Kahl, another pause is occasioned by the stage directions, as Beibst resumes his position under the

gateway and continues with his former work. The end of the scene is marked by a momentary tableau. Loth's entrance (from the house stage left) disturbs the tableau and begins the next scene. A short conversation between Loth and Beibst ensues, upon which Loth decides to go for a walk. Before this is indicated, the stage directions describe in more detail what is visible in the area of the stage labelled as "Felder" in the set sketch. Gradually, the text is filling in spatial details which would be visually available at once in a performance. Considerably more information is added here, and the reader's sense of the space beyond the gateway is strengthened:

Durch den Torweg erblickt man weitgedehnte Kleefelder und Wiesenflächen; zwischendurch schlängelt sich ein Bach, dessen Lauf durch Erlen und Weiden verraten wird. Am Horizont, ein einzelner Bergkegel. Allerorten haben die Lerchen eingesetzt und ihr ununterbrochenes Getriller schallt bald näher, bald ferner her bis in den Gutshof herein.

(II, p. 42)

In a production, the growing light of the "erwachender Morgen" in that part of the stage would probably illuminate (at least some of) the details given in these stage directions, depending on how the director has chosen to represent them. In the dramatic text, the reader is less limited. The stage sketch, for one thing, unlike the sketch for Act One, shows no solid line upstage, but leaves

the fourth part, the "Felder" area, open, to indicate expanse of space. The physical stage cannot do this because it must end somewhere, even if it is by a painted backdrop. For the reader, the only limitation is his imagination, which, although he must keep performance in mind, has somewhat more leeway than the actual stage. In texts which, like Vor Sonnenaufgang, choose to include lengthy stage directions and descriptions of the set, the reader's imagination is more extensively stimulated than in dramas where this is not the case³². Moreover, half a page later, a speech by Beibst contains further reference to the "Felder" area. This is really spatial information of the sort that I have chosen to call "dialogue space", and whose physical inclusion in an actual performance would be unlikely (though perhaps not impossible). In this instance, however, because both the italics and the normal print come together so soon and contain information of complementary value, the reader would be prone to allow the one to flow into the other, despite the fact that he is keeping performance in mind. Beibst says to Loth:

Wissa Se: wenn Se und Se wulln da
 nausgiehn auf a Barch zu, wissa Se, do
 haaln Se sich links, wissa Se, zängst
 nunder links, rechts gibt's Risse. Mei
 Suhn meente, 's kãm dodervoone, meent'
 a, weil se zu schlecht verzimmern täten,
 meent' a, de Barchmoanne, 's soatzt zu
 wing Luhn, meent' a, und do gieht's ock
 asu: woas hust de, woas koanst de, ei a

Gruba, verstiehn Se. - Sahn Se! - doo! -
immer links, rechts gibt's Lecher.

(II, p. 43)

This speech adds details (both spatial and sociological) to the descriptive stage directions quoted previously. Because both are printed language, the reader differentiates less between the information in each than if he were seeing a performance of the play. In the latter, the stage directions would be in another medium (physically concretized), and Beibst's speech, as language, would not be competing for the reader's attention in the same manner. This is not to say that either situation (reading or performance) is "better". Both are legitimate, but very different.

Act Two, as I have mentioned, supplies the reader with a great many stage directions. These manipulate him almost constantly into an awareness of all parts of the stage, and, as just discussed, of the expanse of space beyond the set as well. In addition to being aware of the many displacements of the main characters, the reader is forced to give his attention to the actions of the servants as they go about their morning's business. Their actions are not merely in the background, as was the case with Eduard and Miele in Act One, but they create short diversions of their own in various parts

of the stage. An example of this is the appearance of Guste from the barn, and her use of the wall, stage centre, to wash out her stockings (II, p. 43). Later, Guste and Liese push their wheelbarrows under the gateway towards the fields, and are followed by Beibst (II, p. 44). This abundance of activity keeps the reader aware of all angles of the stage space throughout most of the Act.

With one exception, there are no long dialogues during which the direct spatial element diminishes in importance. That exception occurs when Loth and Helene engage in a long conversation near the end of the Act. Helene's entrance is prepared for by another moment during which the stage is empty and the reader is able to pause (II, p. 45). Then she comes out of the house, crosses the stage and ends up in the little orchard, stage right, where Loth finds her moments later as he enters by the pub road, also stage right. Their conversation takes place as Loth is leaning on the fence and Helene is in the orchard. It keeps the reader oriented to stage right, but it also lasts for several pages, with almost no stage directions, so that his uninterrupted attention is on the dialogue. Only at one point does the text allude to the immediate stage space: Loth gazes at the orchard, saying to Helene, "Es ist prächtig hier. Sehen Sie, wie die Sonne über der

Bergkuppe herauskommt, - Viel Apfel gibt es in ihrem Garten: eine schöne Ernte" (II, p. 46). The text, in this Act, does not allow the reader to lose sight of the fields and the space beyond. Even Helene's releasing of the doves as she begins her conversation with Loth is a spatial action: they take flight and remind the reader of space far beyond the represented. Indeed, at the end of their conversation, both characters, separately, exit through the orchard towards the fields, upstage, thus emphasizing open spaces for the reader once again.

A short episode between Frau Krause and the servant Marie ends the Act. This time, having been made aware of open spaces at several intervals, the reader is brought back to the center of the stage. Frau Krause goes from the house to the barn, from where she angrily fetches Marie in order to fire her. The entrance of Helene through the gateway at this point seems to gather the action back into a smaller space, towards the house. This is emphasized further by the presence of Frau Spiller in the door of the house (II, p. 51). Indeed the Act ends with Helene's exit into the house, thereby preparing for the onset of Act Three.

The second act of Vor Sonnenaufgang continually exercises the reader's capability to follow the signals of the text as regards space. The long stage directions

do not make his contribution easier because they often require him to switch quickly, in his imagination, from one part to another of the space represented. Without the set sketch, the reader would have inadequate information, from the text, to perform the necessary mental operations for following the progress of the play. Stage directions and sketch reinforce and are complementary to one another. "Dialogue space" is at a minimum in this Act because the emphasis is on the outdoor setting and on the complex arrangement of objects and angles of perspective which it presents to the reader. In this Act especially, without orientation in the spatial co-ordinates and without some co-operation with the text in order to understand the dynamics of the given spatial elements, the reader would lose almost all of the meaning of the text as drama.

Act Three brings the reader back to a familiar setting: that of Act One. Upon reading that "Der Schauplatz ist der des ersten Vorgangs" (III, p. 53), he has several choices: a) to continue reading, relying for orientation of his by now only partial recall of the spatial arrangement for Act One; b) to take a moment to leaf back to the beginning of the play and, using both set sketch and opening stage directions, briefly refresh his memory in preparation for Act Three. To a certain extent, the

italicized text invites the reader to neglect leafing back. The next sentence contains enough partial directions to entice him to continue reading: "Dr. Schimmelpfennig sitzt[...]an dem Tisch links im Vordergrund" (III, p. 53). Furthermore, following a reasonably lengthy description of the doctor, the text sweeps the reader's attention to "der Tisch rechts im Hintergrunde" which is "zum Frühstück hergerichtet" (Ibid.). The volume of the space as it was used in Act One is thus brought to memory almost without the reader's having become very conscious of the manipulation.

It is probable that, given these memory-jogging indications, the reader could proceed with Act Three and experience relatively little difficulty as regards spatial orientation. However, - and this does not imply that the comparison is a strictly necessary one - were we to compare his informational vantage point here with the vantage point of a spectator at a performance of the play at this juncture, we would have to allow that the reader is at a disadvantage as concerns spatial information. That is, the spectator at a performance would have the stage and all its components at his immediate visual disposal; the reader does not. Unless he is exceptionally gifted with total recall, his only alternative towards obtaining a more complete

perspective once again is to leaf back to the beginning of the play and to the set sketch for Act One. This choice available to him serves to make more balanced his informational situation vis-à-vis the situation of the spectator at the same juncture in a given performance of this play³³. Nor does leafing back constitute a rupture of continuity for the reader. On the contrary, it is a pause or break which enables him to continue with a renewed awareness of the events of the play. This is a distancing factor that is not available to the spectator at a performance, except perhaps in the initial few seconds during which he re-acquaints his gaze with the available visual elements and mentally registers their similarity with those of Act One.

With one or two exceptions, this Act is almost devoid of long stage directions. The duo on stage at the beginning of the Act (Hoffmann and Dr. Schimmelpfennig) sets the pattern for a series of duo appearances. The dialogue between each set of two is interrupted visually for the reader in the printed text only here and there by perfunctory italics which merely indicate tone of voice, slight bodily movement, or rate of speech. These do not serve to shift his optical perspective to any significant extent.

On the contrary, most of the Act maintains the

attention of the reader on the content of the dialogue by presenting a series of close-ups of vision which free him from adjustments to frequent relocation and movement of characters on stage. The downstage position of Dr. Schimmelpfennig ("an dem Tisch links im Vordergrund") begins this pattern. Although Hoffmann is described as moving around during this conversation ("Hoffmann [...] geht umher", III, p. 53), he does approach the doctor when the latter hands him the prescription (Ibid.) and, as the two eventually exit together (III, p. 54) their relative proximity throughout the conversation can be assumed. In any case, the focus, both visually and in terms of intellectual perception of the play, is on Schimmelpfennig, a new character whose appearance for the first time this late in the play cannot help but intrigue the reader. The text has already encouraged his sense of intrigue by the lengthy physical and psychological description of this character in the opening stage directions of the Act.

The fact that Schimmelpfennig is present at all creates further awareness of space for the reader: he is forced to remember the presence of Hoffmann's wife in another part of the house. The suspense which is associated with her pregnancy is heightened by the use of space. The use of the middle door in this Act is a

good illustration. But for two exceptions, this is the door used throughout the Act for all exits and entrances. Because the Act opens on Dr. Schimmelpfennig and on a conversation concerning Hoffmann's pregnant wife, this constant use of the middle door reinforces the reader's thoughts concerning her presence beyond the space represented.

The exit of Schimmelpfennig and Hoffmann leaves the stage empty for a few moments. The reader, however, only perceives this retroactively, since the italicized text seems, by now, to be assuming more and more cooperation on his part. That is, the text is much less precise as to who does what from what direction. Thus, "Beide ab durch die Mitteltür" (III, p. 54) is followed by "Helene [...] kommt herein und lässt sich auf das Sofa links vorn hinfallen" (III, p. 55). It is up to the reader to realize that Helene must be coming in from the middle door, as her last appearance on stage was in Act Two, at the end of which she is seen running into the house. He must also retroactively insert a slight pause after the exit of Hoffmann and Schimmelpfennig, since their exit and Helene's entrance cannot occur simultaneously at the middle door. The reader knows this (again, retroactively) because when Hoffmann enters a few seconds later, he gives no sign of

having seen the entrance of the crying girl: "Nach einigen Augenblicken tritt Hoffmann, Zeitungsblätter in den Händen haltend, abermals ein" (III, p. 55). Again, the text assumes the reader's cooperation, as the exact door of Hoffmann's entrance is not named³⁴. The brief stage directions have necessitated several mental operations on the part of the reader, all of which are important to his continuing involvement with the progression of the text.

The next few pages contain the dialogue between Helene and Hoffmann, one which is paralleled in Act Four by a contrasting dialogue between Helene and Loth. These are both central to the action of the play and are both significantly situated downstage, in a close-up, focus position meant to emphasize the content of what is being said between the characters. The flow of the dialogue is interrupted visually for the reader only at rare intervals by italicized stage directions. However, these, too, reinforce the intimacy of the scene by describing the exact movements, feelings and tones of voice of the characters. Nor is this intimacy disturbed in terms of spatial focus by the increasing turbulence of feeling that develops between the two characters, even when Helene is shown to stand up suddenly and Hoffmann to do the same. The reader is encouraged to focus narrowly on the two characters by the almost total

absence of stage directions³⁵.

This changes after the entrance of Loth. The reader is merely told that "Loth tritt ein" (III, p. 59), but not by which door. Again the middle one is assumed, as this is the only one leading to the rest of the house. Very shortly after Loth's entrance, the text widens the reader's optical focus, and the whole stage again comes into play: "Helene verhandelt mit Eduard, der eben eingetreten ist. Er geht ab und serviert kurz darauf Tee und Kaffee" (III, p. 59). From downstage left, the action shifts to upstage right, as Hoffmann, Loth and Helene sit down to breakfast.

For a brief interval, the text focuses on the conversation between Loth and Hoffmann at the dining table, to the exclusion of Helene. Once again a sort of duo conversation occurs, although the reader is aware that Helene is present. However, her presence is only marked at brief intervals either by short stage directions or by a snatch of conversation and this creates a series of narrowing and widening of the optic for the reader, as he continues through the next few pages. The text achieves this merely by curtailing most stage directions, giving the replies of Loth and Hoffmann only and interrupting this on two or three occasions by stage directions about or dialogue from

Helene. Thus the reader learns that "Er [Hoffmann] hat bereits mehrmals und jetzt wiederum mit einem kurzen und prüfenden Blick Helenen gestreift, die mit naiver Andacht an Loths Lippen hängt, und fährt nun fort" (III, p. 61).

This again necessitates a retrospective action on the part of the reader, one in which he includes Helene as a silent member of the conversation that has just taken place.

It is Hoffmann who signals the end of the conversation at the dinner table: "[er] springt auf, in halb ernster, halb komischer Entrüstung" (III, p. 64). Helene is also shown as leaving the stage - but the "ab" used to indicate this does not, once again, tell the reader by which exit. This ambiguity leaves the reader free to imagine any one of two, or even three possibilities. One of the most logical would be the middle door to the rest of the house. The door to the conservatory could be a likelihood as well. The least attractive of the three choices would be the door to Hoffmann's study, as she would have no particular reason to go there. Whichever possibility the reader chooses - and he is forced to choose by the text's use of the word "ab" - he will be called upon to remember his choice a few pages later.

The text now goes on to the next of the series of duo conversations: this time, between Loth and Hoffmann.

Again, the focus is downstage left, as Hoffmann "nimmt eine Zigarre aus der Kiste und lässt sich dann auf das Sofa links vorn nieder" (III, p. 64) and Loth is "am Tisch; blättert stehend in einem Prachtwerk" (Ibid.). This time, there are numerous interruptions by stage directions, mostly during Hoffmann's speeches, showing his growing agitation, and allowing for the distancing of the reader. Also, the reader is once again left to his own resources on several occasions by the text, as regards space. This occurs most notably when Hoffmann gets up from the sofa at a point midway during the conversation: "Er ist inzwischen ans Telefon getreten, weckt und spricht teils ins Telefon, teils zu Loth" (III, p. 66). The position of the telephone in the room is left entirely up to the imagination of the reader, as neither the sketch for Act One nor previous stage directions indicate its position. On the other hand, the reader may recall when he reads a few lines later: "Nachdem er darauf den Knopf der Hausklingel gedrückt, zu Loth" (III, p. 67) that the "Hausklingel" was indicated in Act One as being situated near the sofa downstage left³⁶. Once again, however, the likelihood of this is rather slim and he is left to either leaf back or to reconstruct the approximate position only of the bell in his imagination. The text is both allowing for more mental cooperation and input from

the reader as regards space, and indicating the importance of that space and its use. The more frequent rate of stage directions during the latter half of Loth and Hoffmann's conversation carries the reader's attention to multiple parts of the stage (even to Hoffmann's study, when Eduard is sent there briefly) and chops up the body of the speeches, conveying to the reader the growing nervousness, agitation and anger of the speakers.

This Act provides little reference to outside space (i.e., beyond the Krause property). One exception is the reference to buying a villa made by Hoffmann to Schimmelpfennig at the outset. The other and more important one is the reference by Loth to the "Gasthaus nebenan" (III, p. 65), a reminder to the reader of Helene's alcoholic father and of the setting of Act Two, which he is about to see again in the following act. It is also a reminder of the underlying theme of heredity which recurs throughout the play, and could thus be called a kind of spatial leitmotif.

The pause that ensues after Hoffmann's hasty exit both serves to give the reader time to sum up in his mind the previous conversation and prepares the way for his clearer focus on the dialogue that ends the Act. In a way, the pause "announces" the conversation between Loth

and Helene, one that is crucial to the plot of the play. This pause is achieved by the use of space: except for Loth, the stage is empty; his brief silent actions constitute a definite and deliberate cut between the two conversations.

Helene's appearance "auf der Schwelle des Wintergartens" (III, p. 68) is both the beginning of a new conversation and a surprise. The reader must briefly remember back to her exit a little earlier in the Act and, if he had imagined her as exiting by the middle door at that time, go back and readjust his mental picture of this. Since the text had only indicated "ab" for her exit, it had almost invited an error on the part of the reader, in order to heighten the effect of surprise at this point and to give added importance to her entrance. This is especially evident when Helene tells Loth: "Ich habe alles mit angehört" (III, p. 69). The effect on the reader is to force him to recall very briefly the conversation that has just ended, with the now added element of Helene's silently overhearing it. More importance is thus added to what has just passed between Loth and Hoffmann. But this last duo conversation of the Act is kept to a minimum. Helene's avowal of love for Loth - another surprise - abruptly ends it.

For the beginning of Act Four, even more than for

the beginning of Act Three, the reader needs to leaf back and refer to the set sketch. It is unlikely that the complexity of the outdoor setting could be recalled by him in enough detail to enable him to cope with orienting himself to the action of the Act within the space represented. The fact that "Loth kommt reisefertig aus dem Hause und geht langsam und nachdenklich quer über den Hof" (IV, p. 70) and towards the road to the tavern leaves the reader with useless information unless he knows that the house is downstage left and the "Wirtshaussteg" upstage right. Similarly, "Bodentreppe" and "Hofeingang" must be properly situated by the reader in order that the opening tableau can be spatially arranged accordingly. All corners of the stage and several directions of exit and entrance will be used in the first few pages of the Act and without the set sketch the reader's orientation would be severely limited.

The entire area of the stage is used by a variety of characters for several pages after the opening of the Act. Loth begins the process when he crosses from stage left to stage right. This is quickly reversed when he meets Hoffmann and is persuaded to go back. Both men exit into the house, stage left. Then there occurs the entrance of Hopslabaer, stage right, whose brief appearance ends when he has crossed to the left of the stage

and exits "zwischen Wohnhaus und Stallgebäude" (IV, p. 71). This is followed by the appearance of Helene and Hoffmann from the house and Hoffmann's quick exit stage right "durch den Haupteingang" (IV, p. 71). The characters are paraded across the stage, singly or in pairs, a procession that culminates in the long and quiet scene between Loth and Helene that is the pivotal point of the Act.

Before this scene occurs, however, the reader is briefly reacquainted with the farm workers who appeared previously in Act Two. Some long passages of stage directions describe their movements in detail, so that, given the very short dialogue replies, the reader is left with the impression of a (not so idyllic) rural tableau that sets the scene for the reappearance of Loth and Helene from upstage.

Once again, the downstage area is used, this time with even more emphasis on closeness and intimacy: Loth and Helene "gehen durch das Pförtchen in das Gartenstückchen links vorn und in die Laube daselbst" (IV, p. 74). Again, a spotlight effect is achieved by the fact that all stage directions refer only to the movements and emotions expressed between Loth and Helene in this small area of stage. Their long conversation is interrupted less and less by stage directions and these do not refer to any object, character,

or event in the rest of the stage area. At the same time, however, a clear dichotomy is set up between Loth and Helene on the one hand and the house on the other. The alcove they are in is situated just beside the house, as almost an appendage to it, and the two characters act out their duo scene both literally and figuratively "in the shadow of" the house. Moreover, their spatial juxtaposition to the house is echoed in their dialogue:

LOTH. Du hast es wohl sehr schlimm hier
im Hause?

HELENE. Ach, du! - Es ist ganz entsetzlich,
wie es hier zugeht... - mich schäudert's!

(IV, p. 78)

Even in the secluded corner of the "Laube", the couple is not totally isolated from the characters and events in the rest of the stage. Although the text once again shuts out or dims the physical stage by a minimal use of stage directions, it maintains a clear link between the couple and the house by the use of dialogue space just described.

Well over half of Act Four consists of the duo scene between Loth and Helene. Their long and seemingly isolated conversation is finally interrupted and ended by an event from the house. The rest of the stage space is suddenly illuminated for the reader again by the reappearance of stage directions describing new actions: "Frau

Krause stösst ein Wohnhausfenster auf und ruft in den Hof" (IV, p. 80) and Liese runs "aus dem Kuhstall" (Ibid.) to answer. This is followed by more activity: "[Frau Krause] schlägt das Fenster zu. Liese rennt in den Stall und dann mit einem Tüchelchen um den Kopf zum Hofe hinaus. Frau Spiller erscheint in der Haustür" (IV, p. 80). The separation of Loth and Helene is complete when the former exits downstage left, so as not to be seen by Frau Spiller.

Helene is then swept back into the rest of the stage space by the frantic activity that ensues because of the impending child-birth. Her continuing struggle with the characters and events of the house is illustrated again by the appearance of Miele from the front door:

Miele kommt aus dem Hause.

HELENE. Miele! gehen Sie augenblicklich zum Dr. Schimmelpfennig.

FRAU SPILLER. Aber Fräulein...

FRAU KRAUSE. aus dem Fenster, gabieterisch.
Miele! Du kimmst ruff!

HELENE. ebenso. Sie gehen zum Arzt, Miele.
Miele zieht sich ins Haus zurück.
Nun, dann will ich selbst... Sie geht ins Haus und kommt, den Strohhut am Arm, sogleich zurück.

(IV, p. 81)

The Act ends on another full use of stage space, as Helene leaves the house, quickly crosses to the right, and leaves

by the "Hofeinfahrt", upstage right. She leaves Kahl standing by the fence stage right - his vulgar guffaw about "Schweinschlachta" ends the Act and provides suspense for the continuing action of the play.

The final act takes the reader from the daylight outdoor setting of Act Four to a rather dramatic nighttime interior. Again, it is "das Zimmer, wie im ersten Akt" (V, p. 82); but this time the room is dark. However, the middle door is open to provide the reader with a visual focal point: the light in the hallway. Whereas in Act Three the space beyond the middle door had been merely suggested by the conversation between Hoffmann and Schimmelpfennig about the health of Hoffmann's wife, now that space is actually represented on stage:

Durch die offene Mitteltür dringt Licht aus dem erleuchteten Hausflur. Deutlich beleuchtet ist auch noch die Holztreppe in dem ersten Stock.

(V, p. 82)

The use of light to include this space is economical as a dramatic device and serves to maintain and heighten the sense of suspense previously conveyed to the reader at the end of Act Four. As the Act progresses, the middle door remains at least partially open, maintaining the link between the living-dining room and the rest of the house, and thus developing simultaneously throughout the Act

two parallel and similarly suspenseful actions: the birth of the baby, and the relationship between Loth and Helene. Heightening the suspense is one further piece of stage directions: "Alles in diesem Akt - bis auf wenige Ausnahmen - wird in einem gedämpften Tone gesprochen" (V, p. 82). Instead of retroactively, the directions here take their effect in a future sense, and must be kept in mind by the reader as the Act progresses.

The reader's focus on the light and space beyond the middle door is lessened and his sense of the room and its space is brought to the foreground once more by the entrance of Eduard bearing a light: "er entzündet die Hängelampe über dem Esstisch (Gasbeleuchtung)" (V, p. 82). With this begins the dialogue and action of Act Five. Unlike in the previous Act, repeated use is made of stage directions, and the Act ends on an almost exclusive dependence on these by the text in the final few pages.

The reappearance of lengthy stage directions has several effects on the reader. For one thing, they serve to fragment his attention to the dialogue, thereby creating a more unsettled effect in the action of the Act as a whole; that is, the effect of confusion and anxiety is created for the reader by a series of shifts in position of the characters, sudden exits and entrances, and pauses created by paragraphs of stage directions. In addition, the reader

is called upon to add information retroactively or reconstruct positions or occasionally supply his own guesses at exits and entrances again, and this involves him more closely in the text's onward progress.

An example of this occurs in the first page of the Act. Since Loth tells Eduard he has been doing some writing, the latter offers to fetch him more writing materials. He is then shown placing "Tinte und Feder auf den Tisch" (V, p. 82). Because the action so far has been centred around the dinner table, the reader might well assume that this is the table in question. However, Loth is then shown, one page later, as being situated downstage left: "Loth erhebt sich von dem Sofa im dunklen Vordergrunde und geht auf die beiden zu" (V, p. 83). The "beiden" referred to are Hoffmann and Schimmelpfennig, who are shown as having descended the hall stairs and entered the room a few minutes before. For the spectator at a performance, the position of Loth downstage, the entrance of the two other men, and the fact that the downstage is not well lit would be visually evident in a simultaneous fashion. The reader, however, must reconstruct these details for himself. In this particular instance, the scene of Loth's reunion with Schimmelpfennig is an important one and the text indicates this by having Loth cross from downstage left to the centre of the stage, where the meeting takes place.

Act Five is also constructed on a series of dialogues, and Loth and Schimmelpfennig are left alone on stage to begin their re-acquaintance. The stage directions indicate Hoffmann's exit actions precisely, however: "Hoffmann benutzt den Augenblick, am Buffet schnell ein Glas Kognak hinunterzuspülen, darauf dann sich auf den Zehen hinaus - und die Holztreppe hinaufzuschleichen" (V, p. 83). These actions are to be inserted into the spatial apportioning of the action by the reader simultaneously with the greeting actions occurring between Loth and Schimmelpfennig stage centre. Subsequently, the reader's attention is turned entirely on the latter, but he is not informed until well into their dialogue that "beide gehen langsamen Schritts auf und ab im Zimmer" (V, p. 84). Their nervousness (expressed in spatial terms) is conveyed as suspense to the reader, especially since the relationship between the two had been alluded to in previous acts and the anticipation of the reader had thus already been awakened. Less motion is indicated only when Eduard brings coffee for the doctor and sets it down on the table downstage left. However, this position is disturbed again by noises from beyond the middle door, which force the doctor to return upstairs.

Another pause now ensues, as Loth is again shown

alone on stage, pacing: "Einige Augenblicke durchmisst Loth, während draussen Türen schlagen, Menschen die Treppe auf und ab laufen, das Zimmer" (V, p. 86). The attention of the reader then shifts to the right of the stage, as Loth "setzt [...] sich in den Lehnstuhl rechts vorn" (Ibid.)³⁷. From this point on, there is an alternating sequence of duo scenes, as Helene and Schimmelpfennig enter and exit, each talking alone with Loth. The contents of each alternating conversation both contrast with and complement each other, and the result is a heightening of tension and suspense culminating in the final action of the play. The use of space reinforces this tension, as Helene "huscht herein und umschlingt Loth" (V, p. 86), then, shortly thereafter, "springt auf und huscht in den Wintergarten" (Ibid.). Schimmelpfennig, too, is constantly preoccupied with the noises from upstairs and keeps an ear on the middle door, disappearing quickly as needed.

What appears to be a slight inconsistency in the text occurs when Helene enters for the second time. Her previous exit had been shown as being through the door to the conservatory. Now, however, she reappears at the middle door. This would suggest another link between the conservatory and the house, through which she would have circled to reenter centre stage at this moment. However this may be, it at least explains to the reader why, when

she had overheard Loth's conversation with Hoffmann in Act Three (when she was in the conservatory), she has now not overheard what has been said between Loth and Schimmelpfennig. It therefore gives more plausibility to what will occur before the end of the Act.

While the rest of the conversation between Loth and the doctor is relatively free of stage directions, the end of the play, by contrast, consists of little but a long series of them. This begins when Loth is left alone on stage, just before his departure. The pause which he makes while surveying the room once more before leaving gives the reader time to pause also, in order to reassess momentarily the sudden turn of events and Loth's decision to abandon Helene. There is a parallel at this moment with Loth's previous decision to leave, at the end of Act Three. Then, however, Helene had appeared to stop him; now she does not, at least not in time.

The pause is prolonged when Loth leaves and "das Zimmer bleibt für einige Augenblicke leer" (V, p. 96). However, from this point on the stage directions continue in several long paragraphs, which are punctuated only here and there by a few lines of dialogue. The effect is that this Act ends on a much heavier note than the previous ones, since the reader must work his way through the solid mass

of stage directions and incorporate each into his mental picture of the set. Although Hoffmann, Eduard and Miele all appear momentarily, the centre of attention is focused on Helene, as her actions reflect her growing realization that Loth is gone. This culminates in her discovery of his letter on the table, downstage left. A frantic use is made, throughout this last portion of the Act, of all exits and entrances, of the window stage right, and of the area downstage left (and its relative dimness). Even the outside courtyard is drawn into the room by the use of Krause's drunken voice, heard as he approaches the house on his nightly way home from the tavern. Space is used to unite many elements of the play in an economical fashion.

For the reader, the overall effect of encountering such a mass of stage directions at the end of the play is one of density and of slowing down of the action. The wealth of stage directions here is almost like a long passage of description in a parallel situation in a narrative, and the reader finds himself entangled in a multiplicity of information. The text forces him to slow down, thereby making the effect of the last events on him even stronger. The use of Krause's voice, heard like an ominous chorus during the final scene, reinforces the tragedy, and blends the two settings used throughout the

play: "Zimmer" and "Gutshof". The text calls for considerable cooperation on the part of the reader here, relying on his ability to absorb and blend each successive piece of information contained in the stage directions into a highly agitated and dramatic final scene.

One might ask why it has been important, throughout the reading of the play, for the reader to orient himself to and absorb as well as possible the spatial elements and indications made available to him. As we have tried to explain in the theoretical chapter, the answer must lie in the text's very qualities as drama. One of the most important of these qualities is the element of space. Whether this element is emphasized to a greater or lesser degree by the text, it is important that the reader perceive it and work with it, or he risks losing the awareness that he is reading drama, as opposed to other forms of text. Vor Sonnenaufgang is particularly rich in spatial indications of various kinds, as we have seen. The density of directions which the text supplies to the reader provides him with a multiplicity of information upon which to build as he progresses through the drama. The initial variety and density (even to the inclusion of set sketches) condition the reader to expect more of the same as the text progresses. He is not disappointed in this, except for a few spots in

the later acts where, because he has been given so much information to build on, he is able to carry on despite the lag in stage directions. If the reader is called upon less by this text than he might be by other texts to fill gaps in information as regards space, his function nevertheless remains the same: to use the text's "signals" and collaborate with them towards a satisfactory understanding of the whole.

NOTES

1 In this connection, the most noteworthy of the bibliographical works on Hauptmann will attest to my statement. They are: H.D. Tschörtner, Gerhart Hauptmann. Zum 100. Geburtstag am 15. November (Berlin: Stadtbibliothek, 1962); W.A. Reichart, Gerhart-Hauptmann-Bibliographie (Bad Homburg: Gehlen, 1969); S. Hoefert, Gerhart Hauptmann (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1974). The latter is most helpful.

2 C.F.W. Behl and F.A. Voigt, Gerhart Hauptmanns Leben. Chronik und Bild (Berlin: Suhrkamp, 1942).

3 H. Daiber, Gerhart Hauptmann oder der letzte Klassiker (Munchen: Molden, 1971).

4 C.F.W. Behl, "Der Einzelne und die Masse im Werke Gerhart Hauptmanns", Germanic Review 33 (1958), 168-175.

5 Among other articles, see K.S. Guthke, "Die Gestalt des Künstlers in Gerhart Hauptmanns Dramen", Neophilologus 39 (1955), 23-40.

6 H.F. Garten, "Formen des Eros im Werk Gerhart Hauptmanns", Zeitschrift für deutsche Philologie 90 (1971), 242-258.

- 7 F. Rauhut, "Zola-Hauptmann-Pirandello", Germanisch-Romanische Monatsschrift 26 (1938), 440-466; C.H. Moore, "A Hearing on Germinal and Die Weber", Germanic Review 33 (1958), 30-40; G. Dick, "A. Cechov und Gerhart Hauptmann", in: A. Cechov 1860-1890. Hrsg. von T. Eekman, (Leiden, 1960) pp. 8-12.
- 8 C.F.W. Behl, "Zwiesprache mit Gerhart Hauptmann", Aufbau 6 (1949), 510-523.
- 9 R.C. Cowen, Der Naturalismus. Kommentar zu einer Epoche (Munche: Winkler, 1973); J. Osborne, The Naturalist Drama in Germany (Manchester, 1971).
- 10 O. Brahm, "Gesellschaftsdrama und soziales Drama", in: Otto Brahm. Kritiken und Essays (Stuttgart: Artemis, 1964), pp. 295-302; H. Daiber, op. cit.
- 11 R.C. Cowen, op. cit., pp. 156-163; J. Hintze, op. cit., pp. 14-66.
- 12 M. Sinden, Gerhart Hauptmann. The Prose Plays (Toronto, 1957). Especially pp. 16-28.
- 13 K.S. Guthke, Gerhart Hauptmann. Weltbild im Werk

(Göttingen, 1961).

14 J. Osborne, op. cit.

15 The original edition was published separately by C.F. Conrad in Berlin.

16 This is the case, for instance, with the "Ullstein Theater Texte" edition: G. Hauptmann, Vor Sonnenaufgang. Soziales Drama. Mit einem Nachwort von Kurt Lothar Tank (Frankfurt am M.: Ullstein, 1959). The edition claims, on its flyleaf, to be reproducing the "Text der Centenar-Ausgabe", but has actually omitted a vital part in not including the set sketches.

17 N. Zabłudowski, op. cit., p. 11.

18 Ibid.

19 R. Barthes, "Littérature et signification". In: Essais critiques (Paris: Seuil, 1964), pp. 258-276.

20 N. Zabłudowski, op. cit., p. 11.

21 A director could, of course, exercise the option

of changing the objects around somewhat, or introducing different angles to the set. But he would have to work along lines similar enough to the text's suggestions to respect the integrity of the drama as a whole.

22 G. Hauptmann, "Vor Sonnenaufgang. Soziales Drama". In: Sämtliche Werke. Centenar-Ausgabe. Hrsg. von Hans-Egon Hass. Band I. (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1966), p. 15. All subsequent references will be to this edition.

23 Although some stage directions describe physical appearance or tone of voice, the majority refer to physical objects on stage, to movement by the characters, to exits and entrances, or to noise or light, both on and off stage and are thus part of the spatial element.

24 As is apparent later in the text of Vor Sonnenaufgang (I, p. 15), Hauptmann uses the terms stage right and stage left not from the point of view of actor facing audience, but from the point of view of the audience. This orientation will be maintained in the discussion of his play here.

25 The double italics are this author's.

26 R. Ingarden, The Literary Work of Art, p. 23.

27 Ibid. The italics are Ingarden's.

28 Ibid. The italics are Ingarden's.

29 In the sense of disponible.

30 This is a technique that is probably more effective during a performance than during a reading of the drama. In the former, a pause which leaves the stage empty would take up a considerable amount of time (a few minutes, at least); in the latter, however, it takes the reader only a second to read the word "leer" and the effect is not the same. However, the same function is served by an empty stage in both instances.

31 This is a fact the reader is to keep in mind, for it relates to the visibility of the objects on the stage, and to his perception of the volume of space represented. Thus, while some spatial information is retroactive, some, like this example, refers to future phases of the drama. Both types depend on the co-operation of the reader's imagination.

32 This is another instance in which drama and theatre differ. In a performance, the dramatic text, as Ingarden points out, attains concretization. The set descriptions contained in the stage directions become real objects on a real stage. This leaves far less leeway to the imagination of the spectator than is allowed to the imagination of the reader by the text. Language leaves gaps which a performance concretizes. Thus, even though not enough may be left to the spectator's imagination at a performance by the inclusion of excessive details, the same argument is not necessarily true for the dramatic text that employs long stage directions.

33 This may or may not be true for the beginning of the second and subsequent acts of other plays by the same playwright or by other playwrights of other periods. Each would have its own particular circumstances.

34 It is because of the preceding nature of this particular text that we are able, at this juncture, to judge it as increasingly reliant on the cooperation of the reader. The pattern it has set up to this point has been one of abundant and exact stage directions, even set sketches. It has been feeding the reader multiple and

precise instructions, some of which it now seems to be abandoning. But it is precisely because of the previous abundance that the reader is now able to maintain his cooperation with ease.

35 This technique may be compared with the use of the spotlight in a performance. The reader's awareness of objects and space in the rest of the stage area is literally dimmed by the almost total absence of stage directions referring to them.

36 The text had indicated: "Er drückt auf den Knopf einer elektrischen Leitung, deren Draht in Form einer grünen Schnur auf das Sofa herunterhängt" (I, p. 23).

37 This part of the stage has been used very little thus far in the drama.

THE THREE SISTERS

The text of The Three Sisters provides the reader with several short but important remarks as regards space from the outset. He learns that the play's events will occur "in a provincial town" (I, p. 103)¹ and, more specifically, "in the house of the Prozorovs" (Ibid.). The particular setting of Act One is then described: "A drawing room with columns, behind which is seen a ballroom" (Ibid.). While the text does not elaborate on the presence and placement of furniture, this is assumed to be there, and the reader adds pieces of it to his mental setting whenever these are indicated by the stage directions or the dialogue, as the Act progresses. In the opening stage directions, these include the table that is "being set for lunch" (I, p. 103) in the ballroom, and the chair or other piece of furniture Masha is sitting on, although its placement is not specified beyond the fact it would have to be in the downstage drawing room section of the stage.

The division of the stage that is established in the opening stage directions between downstage drawing room and upstage ballroom (this being further emphasized by the presence of columns) is crucial to the reader for his understanding of the dynamics of the dialogue that ensues

in the next few pages. When the play opens, the reader learns that only Olga, Masha, and Irina are present on stage. They are in various positions in the downstage part of the set, the drawing room. The only other activity is, presumably, the presence of an occasional servant upstage, since the stage directions indicate that "in the ball-room the table is being set for lunch" (I, p. 103). The reader must keep this stage direction in mind during the ensuing few pages of dialogue, in order to remain aware that this activity is continuing². The text needs the reader's cooperation in this instance in order to achieve its desired effect of continuing simultaneity.

When the Act opens, then, except perhaps for one or two servants bustling about the table, only Olga, Masha, and Irina are present on stage. Only after Olga's initial speech, and the short reply by Irina, do the stage directions indicate that, in addition, Baron Tuzenbakh, Chebutykin, and Solyony become visible upstage, behind the columns, in the area where the luncheon table is being set (I, p. 104). These two groups of characters, three downstage, and three upstage, dominate the stage for a considerable portion of the opening of Act One. They do not mingle at first, so that the reader's attention is initially centered upon the three sisters, but in a short time the three men descend

to the front of the stage and join Olga, Irina, and Masha in the living room in front of the columns.

By the time the three men join the three sisters, however, the text has already begun to make effective use of the spatial division of the stage. Magarshack's comments on this aspect are of particular relevance:

A significant feature of The Three Sisters is Chekhov's widening of the scope of his new form of drama. In the opening scene he does it by bring on a number of characters who seem to be engaged in some private conversation, but allowing his audience to hear snatches of it, which serve not only as a comment on the views and intentions of the other characters on the stage, but also as a forecast of the inevitable outcome of their plans. This gives the audience the opportunity to know more than the dramatis personae, an indispensable way of assuring audience participation in the dramatic development of the play. To achieve this, Chekhov divides the stage into two parts separated by a colonnade, the front representing a drawing-room, and the back representing part of a dining-room. The six characters in the opening scene are then divided into two groups, the three sisters in front of the columns, and Chebutykin, Tuzenbakh, and Solyony, appearing after the first part of Olga's dialogue, are in time to comment on the plan of the two sisters to go back to Moscow.³

Magarshack rightly attributes to Tuzenbakh, Solyony, and Chebutykin the role of a kind of chorus, saying that both their words and their laughter act as chorus comments on Olga and Irina's words and dreams⁴. These comments are

very obliquely interjected, but they do serve to wrest the reader's attention, if only momentarily, away from the down-stage area and the dialogue of Olga and Irina. Nilsson sees the remarks of the three men, and their laughter, in terms of the rhythm of the scene: "It is obvious, that they [the remarks] are intended to break the lyrical atmosphere, that it shall not become monotonous, by introducing a more trivial one"⁵. However, their effect is more important than that. Not only do they break the lyricism of the remarks made (principally) by Olga, but they also serve as a pertinent commentary on these remarks and are not just a conversational break or interlude. The remarks of the men occur three times during the opening portion of the scene, twice verbally and once in the form of laughter. Each time, they provide an alternative centre of focus for the reader's attention, and, if he takes into account the actual meaning of the words spoken (and not just the disturbance of sound from another area of the stage), the men's remarks provide the possibility of an alternative interpretation of what has just been said by Olga. It is important for the reader to keep the spatial divisions in mind at all times throughout the scene, or the order and content of the speeches of the dramatis personae would risk losing their meaning (or a good portion of their meaning) for him. However, given the spatial division, the

remarks of the three men behind the columns act to break the reader's attention away from close involvement in the speeches of Olga and Irina - they are, in fact, a distancing device.

The first of these comments is by both Chebutykin and Tuzenbakh, and occurs following Olga's second long speech:

OLGA. [...] Oh, dear God in Heaven! This morning I woke up, I saw at once the sunlight everywhere, I saw at once that it was springtime, and I felt my heart would break with joy. I wanted desperately to go home again.

CHEBUTYKIN. The hell you say!

TUZENBAKH. Of course, it's all nonsense!

(I, p. 104)

The physical separation of the two groups of characters on stage allows Chekhov to handle this kind of audience manipulation skillfully and naturally. The effect is achieved in passing, as it were, by the indirect method of manipulation of stage space. Thus, "the family Prozorov", says Styan, "is introduced with the gentle admonishment of satire. Satire, because Olga and Irina continue in the same vein of futile longing, but, undercut [by the remarks of the men upstage], their woes reach our less sympathetic ears"⁶.

Contributing to this distancing effect is the role

played by Masha in the opening pages of the Act. This is conveyed by the text through the use of stage directions which interrupt the flow of the reader's participation in the speeches of Olga and Irina on two occasions before the three men join them:

MASHA, having become thoughtful over her book, quietly whistles a tune.

OLGA. Don't whistle, Masha. How can you! (Pause) After being at the high school day after day and then giving private lessons until dinner, I have headaches constantly. [...]

* * *

IRINA. Brother will probably become a professor. It doesn't matter because he won't live here. The only complication is poor Masha.

OLGA. Masha will come to Moscow for the whole summer, every year.

MASHA quietly whistles a tune.

IRINA. Pray to God it will all work out. [...]

(I, p. 104)

Her whistling is Masha's sole contribution to the conversation while the three sisters are still alone downstage: she speaks only after the men have joined them.

Roskin comments on Masha's apartness in the opening scene:

Dressed in black, she sits silently at a distance from her sisters, book in hand, not taking part in their conver-

sation, indifferently, softly whistling a tune.⁷

And Styan takes Masha's silence a step further by allying her role here with the role performed by the three men upstage:

As an inner witness with her choric whistling, she makes of her sisters' performance a play-within-a-play. Of greatest importance, she is aligned in our minds with the seeming indifference of the gentlemen who are joking in the room upstage.⁸

While Styan's overall focus is different from that in this thesis, he is right in pointing out here that Masha's whistling, interjected between the speeches of her sisters, performs the same kind of distancing function as the interjected comments of the men upstage. Whether or not she can be aligned in the reader's mind with the men's "indifference" is another matter, although she could be said to display fewer flighty, fantasy-prone characteristics than her other two sisters do.

In the reading process, the italicized stage directions which indicate the points at which Masha whistles serve to break up in visual fashion for the reader the speeches of the other two sisters. The brief switch in visual pattern achieves the momentary distancing effect for the reader.

The tactic of presenting the three sisters and

the three military men in two separate parts of the stage here also serves another function. In a condensed fashion, the opening of Act One uses the spatial element to attune the reader to several themes or topics of the play which will be important for his developing understanding of it. Thus, in this opening section of Act One, Olga, Masha, and Irina, "this feminine world of dreams"⁹, are set against a background of three military uniforms whose owners intrude with terse (though natural-sounding) comments and genial, hearty laughter. The reader has already been alerted to the presence of military persons in the play by the military titles in the list of characters¹⁰. In addition to this, before the three men appear on stage, Olga's expository remarks about her father, General Prozorov, alert the reader to the importance of the military in the lives of the sisters:

OLGA. Father died exactly one year ago, on this very day [...]. [...] I remember, as they took Father to the cemetery, the band was playing; at the graveside they fired a salute. He was a general, the commander of a brigade [...].

(I, p. 104)

However, it is significant that the General is no longer alive, and that his daughters, alone on stage at this particular moment, are shortly thereafter contrasted with the group of military men upstage. The complex past and

present relationship of the sisters with the military, a relationship whose thread the reader initially picks up here, is developed as the play progresses. It is illustrated here naturally and concisely for the reader by the use of stage space.

As Ingarden has pointed out, by means of various devices in the dramatic text,

we also learn about objects and events that cannot be depicted in the space represented "on stage" and in the time represented in the course of the play. This essential completion of the represented world has the result that everything of which we (as spectators) are witnesses constitutes only a small segment of what forms the full represented world in the given play.

From the beginning, the text guides the reader towards his mental widening of the space represented on stage. This is done both in the stage directions and by means of the expository dialogue of the sisters. The reader thus learns that "The action takes place in a provincial town" (I, p. 103) and more specifically, "In the house of the Prozorovs" (Ibid.). However, the opening stage directions also indicate that it is "noon. Outdoors it is sunny and bright" (Ibid.). The text immediately sets up the dichotomy between the inside of the Prozorov house and the outside nature or free space, not in any dogmatic manner, nor simply for "atmosphere", but in order to develop the two

spaces and their relationship for the sisters further in the play. The emphasis on the space outside the living-dining room stage space is further seen in numerous allusions to it in the initial scene of the Act. Olga alludes to the fact that "It's warm today, so warm we can keep the windows wide open..." (I, p. 104) and Irina says shortly thereafter:

IRINA. Pray to God, it will all work out.
(Looking out the window.) The weather is
marvelous today. I'm so happy deep in-
side, so excited, and I don't know why.

(I, p. 104)

At this particular point in the play, most of these remarks are, of course, merely expository for the reader, but he is nevertheless forced to direct his attention not only to stage space, but also to its expansion, in a way which closely involves the psychological states of being of the sisters. The particular contrast between the space inside (and represented on stage) and the space outside the Prozorov home is continued by Irina after the three men join the sisters:

IRINA. Tell me, why it is I'm so happy
today? Just as if I were sailing, and
over me the broad blue sky with great
white birds floating by. Why is it I
feel this way, why?

CHEBUTYKIN. (kissing both her hands,
tenderly) My wonderful white bird...

(I, p. 106)

The bird and sky imagery is clearly no longer expository here, but a use of space for psychological description. The text manipulates the reader from a use of description of space as setting to a use of it in more abstract terms, linking the two in a very natural progression.

Besides outside nature and the provincial town as a whole, the beginning of Act One also introduces a further crucial spatial allusion: the reference to Moscow. At first, mention of Moscow familiarizes the reader with the background of the Prozorovs and with their immediate past history and contextualizes their present position in the town. As such, the effect is expository and, in the sense that two separate physical entities are talked about (the provincial town and Moscow), two "real" spaces are apprehended. Olga says:

Father was given command of the brigade, and together we all left Moscow eleven years ago. I can remember perfectly well the beginning of May in Moscow. By this time in Moscow everything is in full bloom, it's warm, everything is bathed in sunlight. Eleven years have gone by, and I remember everything there as if we had just left yesterday. Oh dear God in Heaven! This morning I woke up, I saw at once the sunlight everywhere, I saw at once that it was springtime, and I felt my heart would break with joy. I wanted desperately to go home again.

(I, p. 104)

But this purely descriptive passage about Moscow very quickly changes into a state of mind that Olga and Irina

show they are both experiencing:

OLGA. [...] And just one dream keeps growing stronger and stronger, one dream...

IRINA. To leave for Moscow. To sell the house, put an end to everything here, and off to Moscow...

OLGA. Yes! As soon as possible off to Moscow.

Chebutykin and Tuzenbakh laugh.

IRINA. Brother will probably become a professor. It doesn't matter because he won't live here. The only complication is poor Masha.

OLGA. Masha will come to Moscow for the whole summer, every year.

Masha quietly whistles a tune.

(I, p. 104)

The text quickly moves from the purely expository use of the spatial allusion to Moscow to a much more descriptive use. This second use is reinforced by the two italicized stage directions which interrupt the flow of the conversation between Olga and Irina for the reader. This is the use of space for distancing, which has already been discussed in connection with the remarks of the three men upstage. Here, however, it is used to change the reader's response to the allusion the sisters make to "Moscow".

The repeated references to "Moscow" in The Three Sisters have become almost a trademark of this play, a cliché that one associates with it. Certainly much atten-

tion has been devoted to "Moscow" by the critics, and a brief reference to some of their comments might be appropriate at this point. Some, like Rayfield¹², point out how Moscow becomes the measure of all things for some of the characters. Others comment in a variety of ways on the utopic nature of "Moscow" for the characters in the play, especially for the sisters. Various, they write of the "Moscow" allusions as being references to an unattainable city¹³, a mecca¹⁴, a dream¹⁵, an opiate¹⁶, a useless beacon¹⁷, or the dream of a lost fatherland¹⁸. Whether or not the text of The Three Sisters provides room for some or all of these interpretations is not a question that this study seeks to resolve. However, the fact that so many critics have chosen to interpret the "Moscow" allusion in abstract terms attests to the fact that the text invites the reader to do so (in one way or another) at an early stage. As we have just tried to point out, the reference to Moscow remains purely expository only very briefly. Half a page after it is first introduced, the reader is provided with textual signals that encourage him to begin seeing the spatial reference in less literal terms, and to begin formulating a different response to it. This is done by means of a manipulation of the space represented on stage and by a fragmenting of the reader's attention to various parts of

that space. As the reader progresses through the text, he accumulates and builds upon successive references to "Moscow", as the text continues to endeavour to shape certain responses from him. This process will be commented upon again as it occurs throughout the text.

As we have seen, much is achieved by the text in the brief opening scene that contrasts the three sisters downstage with the three military men upstage. Tuzenbakh breaks the division when he comes into the drawing room to join the sisters and "Sits at the piano" (I, p. 105); Solyony and Chebutykin join him almost immediately thereafter. Except for the major divisions of space on stage, and logical items of setting such as chairs, tables, piano, and windows, the text makes little reference either in the stage directions, or in the dialogue, to the existence or arrangement of objects on stage. This leaves more to the imagination of the reader as regards movement of characters and placement of objects. However, the text is none the less interspersed with stage directions which visually interrupt the reader's progression through the dialogue and force him to momentarily change gears or assimilate and reflect on what has just been said. The frequent indication of "Pause" either between two speeches or during a single speech is one such device. Many of the

other stage directions refer to tone of voice, emotional reaction, or the exit or entrance of a character. The text sets up its own mechanisms for alerting the reader to its use of spatial dynamics, and it utilizes the spatial element skillfully and successfully.

Throughout Act One, both the dining room and living room areas are used alternately, or at the same time, as the stage fills with the additional name-day guests. Indeed, the occasion of Irina's name-day celebration provides a good excuse for Chekhov to assemble all the characters and to present them to us at once, in their various relationships to one another. Act One is orchestrated in a gradual *crescendo* of appearing characters¹⁹. The Act begins with the juxtaposition of the three sisters and three officers; the officers then move downstage to join the sisters and a brief conversation ensues between this initial group of people. As the Act progresses, additional characters appear in succession to join this group. Chekhov introduces them on stage one by one, and, although some of them exit and re-enter at various times throughout the Act, they all eventually re-assemble for the closing scene. Thus, all the characters are introduced individually in the following order: Anfisa and Ferapont bring Irina a cake (sent by Protopopov, who is thus introduced verbally);

Anfisa announces Vershinin; following the sound of his violin off-stage, Andrey appears; Kulygin arrives; Andrey is summoned back for lunch; Natasha makes her entrance; Fedotik and Rode hurry in; finally, "two officers", presumably additional name-day guests, enter to catch Natasha and Andrey kissing, as the curtain falls. Act One assembles all the characters which the play contains, and it mentions some others who are referred to again, but who do not appear on stage: Protopopov, the Headmaster at Kulygin's school, and Vershinin's wife and daughters.

Other inhabitants of the town, and events outside the Prozorov house are mentioned regularly throughout the play, thus expanding the stage space for the reader and maintaining an awareness on his part of the relationship between the Prozorovs in their house, on the one hand, and the outside world, on the other. Thus, when he joins the sisters downstage, Tuzenbakh announces that their new battery commander, Vershinin, will be paying a visit, and describes his family, mentioning his wife and two daughters. He goes on shortly thereafter to describe his own youth in St. Petersburg, and his protected family situation. While these are expository remarks, they also fill spatial "gaps" for the reader and provide points of comparison with the Prozorov family.

Shortly after the men join the three sisters

downstage, the stage directions indicate that "A knock is heard from the floor below" (I, p. 107) and Chebutykin "Goes out hurriedly, combing his beard" (Ibid.). This minor shift in the composition of characters on stage signals a series of new exits and entrances which occur in short succession in the ensuing few pages. The text does not specify whether these occur from the left or right, from up or downstage, and the reader is left to fill these details in his own imagination²⁰. After Chebutykin leaves, Masha also rises to go, and speaks for the first time in the play. However, her intention to leave is pre-empted by the arrival of Anfisa and Ferapont with a cake for Irina from Protopopov. This brief presentation is followed by a more ceremonious one: Chebutykin returns "followed by a soldier with a silver samovar" (I, p. 108). The gross inappropriateness of this expensive gift for the youngest sister causes Olga to go "to the table in the ballroom" in horror and protest. Following some fussing, "the orderly carries the samovar into the ballroom" (I, p. 108) as the stage directions indicate. From a prolonged downstage action, the text again takes the reader's attention to the upstage dining room area, providing a short break in the preceding dialogue of the dramatis personae, and reminding the reader of the impending celebration for Irina's name-day. In a production of the play, the upstage

dining area would be visible to the spectator at all times, so that only lighting could vary this visual availability. In a reading of the text, however, only the stage directions (or, occasionally, direct dialogue), when they make reference to specific parts of the stage, remind the reader at various points of their continuing presence. In the intervals, the reader's imagination must fill the gap. Depending on the length of the intervals, and what has transpired in them, the reader may require a greater or lesser degree of re-familiarization with previous spatial indicators, according to the degree to which the text chooses to tax (or rely on) his power of recall. Although the transition here is not a particularly taxing one, it could vary from text to text.

Following the presentation of the samovar, Anfisa announces another visitor: Vershinin. His arrival, anticipated by the reader because Tuzenbakh had mentioned earlier he would come (I, p. 105), causes a great flurry among the sisters. This occurs as soon as Tuzenbakh mentions that Vershinin is from Moscow. Not only does Vershinin come from the city where the Prozorovs used to live, but he, as it turns out, used to visit the family there and was a friend of their father. Again, the spatial reference to Moscow is expository since it conveys more information both about Vershinin and about the sisters. One could almost say that the title of the play is taken from this

section of it:

VERSHININ. (cheerfully) Oh, I am glad, very glad, indeed! But there were three sisters, you know. I remember - three little girls. I don't remember their faces, but Colonel Prozorov, your father, had three small daughters - that I remember perfectly well. I saw them with my own eyes. How time flies! My, my, how time flies!

(I, p. 109)

But the purely expository side of the allusions to Moscow soon turns into psychological description again. Olga, Irina, and even Masha repeat their longing for a return to Moscow:

IRINA. Alexandr Ignatevich, you are from Moscow... Why it's so surprising, so unexpected!

OLGA. We are going to move there, you see.

IRINA. We're hoping to be there by this coming fall. It's our own home town, we were both born there... On 'Old Basmannaya Street...

Both laugh out of happiness.

MASHA. And now, suddenly so unexpectedly, we see someone from home. (Lively) Now I remember! [...]

(I, p. 109)

While the text does not use a stage division to manipulate the reader into taking care not to take the sisters too literally here, it does provide him with a further and more direct example of the extent to which the sisters

have internalized the idea of "Moscow" and are using it to fuel their own psychological needs. While they idealize what Moscow was like, to the detriment of their present surroundings, Vershinin points out to them how beautiful nature is in their part of the country. His words, however, seem to fall on deaf ears, and may just as well have been spoken to someone else in a different part of the stage:

MASHA. [...] And on what street did you live?

VERSHININ. On old Basmannaya.

OLGA. So did we...

VERSHININ. I lived on Nemetskaya Street at one time. I used to walk from Nemetskaya Street to the Krasny Barracks. On the way there you cross over a dark and dreary bridge, and under the bridge the water rages and roars. When you're by yourself, it can break your heart. (Pause.) But here you have a broad, wonderful river! A marvelous river!

OLGA. Yes, only it's cold. Here it is cold and the mosquitoes...

VERSHININ. You're not serious! Why, it's a good Russian climate here, healthy, exhilarating. The forest, the river... and here too are the birch trees. Lovely, unassuming birches, I love them best of all the trees. It's good to live here.

(I, p. 110)

The conversation continues, with Solyony, Tuzenbakh, and Chebutykin occasionally interjecting. The relationship

between Tuzenbakh and Solyony is slowly developed here, with Solyony continually adding to his irritating remarks to the former, which causes Tuzenbakh to change seats at one point (I, p. 111).

It is a spatial device - the use of sound off-stage that signals another change of scene. The stage directions indicate that "Behind the scenes is heard the playing of a violin" (I, p. 111), and Masha explains that it is Andrey. The reader again becomes aware of an expansion of space, this time by becoming conscious of other parts of the house besides that represented on stage. It is significant that Andrey must be coaxed out of his room by Olga who calls for him "At the side door" (I, p. 112). This is the first indication in the text that there is any kind of side door; and the reader is not informed as to which side of the stage is meant here, but must choose for himself. Andrey remains on stage for a short time only, and does so reluctantly:

IRINA. And see the little frame above the piano. He also made that.

Andrey waves his hand and moves away.

OLGA. He's the scholar in our family, and he plays the violin, and makes different things on the fretsaw - in a word, he is a master at whatever he touches. Andrey, don't leave! He has the habit of always walking off. Come here!

Masha and Irina take him by the arms and, laughing, bring him back.

(I, p. 112)

Before he exits, however, Andrey, again in expository fashion, fills in more information about himself and his sisters. He includes the fact that he and his sisters know three languages, and Irina four. It was all apparently due to the efforts of General Prozorov who "overpowered us all with learning" (I, p. 112); since his death, however, Andrey admits "I started putting on weight [...]. And in one year I've grown fat, just as if my body had been freed of tremendous pressure" (I, p. 113). The role that was played (and appears still to be played) by General Prozorov in the lives of his children, and the manner in which Andrey is introduced into the action on stage both bear commenting on here. Before he appears on stage, Andrey is referred to several times by his sisters. They refer to the fact that he will certainly not stay long in the town, but will go to Moscow to become a professor at the university (I, p. 104). This is repeated again just before Andrey is summoned:

MASHA. That's Andrey playing, our brother.

IRINA. He's the scholar in our family. There's no question that he'll become a professor. Papa was a military man, but his son chose a scholar's career for himself.

MASHA. In keeping with Papa's wishes.²¹

(I, p. 111)

The unmistakable will of General Prozorov is apparent; it is the command of the military father, who seems to have tried to direct the lives of his children as much as he did his soldiers'. The irony here, however, is the dichotomy between the grand build-up which Andrey gets before he appears, and how he acts when he is on stage. Not only is he touted as a scholar, but the sound of his violin off-stage seems almost like the musical interlude before the entrance of an important individual, an announcement before his appearance. Even the fact that Olga goes to the door to summon him builds a certain amount of expectation. When he appears - and the observant reader will have been prepared for this to a certain extent by Masha's italicized remark in the foregoing quotation - Andrey is neither imposing nor noble nor a fulfilment of the expectation of "scholarliness". Instead, he is nervous and out of sorts and seems apologetic about everything. The use of space, coupled with the relationship of that use to certain previous remarks made by the sisters, serves to alert the reader to the gentle irony of the scene. Finally, - and this adds to the psychology of Andrey's movements - the reader learns in the stage directions that "Andrey is gone; he left without

being noticed" (I, p. 113). This is an action which the reader must insert retroactively into the stage movements and speeches that have just occurred, and this brief mental return to the scene with Andrey serves to add more weight to it.

Tuzenbakh and Vershinin go on to philosophize for a few more moments before any new characters appear. During this exchange of philosophizing, however, the reader also absorbs a few more remarks concerning the space of the setting:

VERSHININ. (rises) Yes. But what a lot of flowers you have! (Looking around.) And a marvelous apartment. I envy you! [...] That's what I've missed my whole life - flowers like these here...

(I, p. 113)

Although the remarks are brief, to be sure, and almost lost among the rest of the speeches, they nevertheless remind the reader of Olga and Irina's remarks about the sunny spring day at the beginning of the Act, and make him conscious again of the use of light and of the spaciousness this is intended to create.

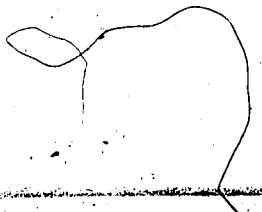
The entrance of Kulygin shortly thereafter, bearing a gift for Irina, begins the move of the characters to the upstage dining-room part of the setting, as they sit down for lunch. Olga and Vershinin go into the ballroom first

(I, p. 114), followed by Kulygin, Masha and Chebutykin, and Solyony. The stage directions then indicate that "In the drawing room, only Irina and Tuzenbakh remain" (I, p. 116). After Olga has summoned Andrey and he has joined the others at table, the text focuses briefly on the downstage conversation between Irina and Tuzenbakh. Both the fact that the stage is divided into living and dining room areas and the fact that Tuzenbakh and Irina are alone downstage results in a scene of relative intimacy between them at this point. The effect of intimacy is created by a sort of spotlighting of the two characters downstage, while the celebrants upstage are momentarily dimmed in the consciousness of the reader. Tuzenbakh's courtship of Irina is first brought to the reader's attention here, as well as her reaction to him.

But their duo scene does not last for long as it is interrupted by Natasha, who enters presumably downstage, since she greets Irina and the Baron first. Again because of the division of stage space, Natasha's entrance gains in importance: since most of the characters are upstage, the relatively empty downstage area allows the reader to focus more attention on Natasha herself, and on her manner. Indeed, a separate scene ensues, as Olga comes downstage to greet Natasha. While the scene is brief, it contributes

to the reader's observation of the manner of the two characters, and ends, significantly, by Natasha's following Olga into the ballroom, not going in with her, as Vershinin had done (I, p. 114; I, p. 117).

The stage directions now indicate that the drawing room is empty and that all are at the lunch table. For the first time in the Act, the reader's entire attention is focused briefly on the upstage dining room area. Short snatches of dialogue are exchanged between the celebrating guests. But the reader is not allowed to involve himself for long in the luncheon party, since the stage directions indicate that "Fedotik and Rode enter with a huge basket of flowers" (I, p. 117). If he has not surmised it already, the reader learns a few speeches later that the two have entered in the downstage portion of the stage and only proceed to the ballroom after snapping a few photographs downstage. Again, all the characters are up stage, but, again, not for long. When she is teased, Natasha "runs out of the ballroom into the drawing room" (I, p. 118), forcing the reader to shift his attention once more. Andrey follows her, and the Act concludes on a second downstage intimate duo scene. At Andrey's urging, the pair even moves towards the window, a fact which reduces the spotlight on them and heightens the intimacy²². But again by the use of



space, the reader is prevented from unduly involving himself in the "idyllic" moment. That Natasha and Andrey's kiss is not meant to be a purely romantic ending to Act One is shown by the stage directions which end the Act. These describe the entrance of two army officers who "stop in astonishment" (I, p. 118) upon seeing the kissing couple. Their military officers' code of propriety is no doubt the cause of the astonishment. But their entrance and reaction also serves to draw the attention of the reader away from involvement with the stolen "idyllic" kiss of Natasha and Andrey, and to focus it on the officers instead. Styan says that, at this point, "the audience is released, the curtain falls, and Chekhov ends his act on a broad laugh"²³. Be that as it may, the reader is not allowed to stop at Natasha and Andrey, and, although his reaction may not be the same as the officers', he is nevertheless invited to pass judgement on the scene which has preceded, and an attempt is made by the text to prevent him from sympathizing to any great extent with the kissing couple.

While Act One does not present any particular difficulties for the reader as regards space, it does require of him frequent changes between the downstage and upstage portions of the set, as the dramatis personae move about in one or the other or both areas. It is important for him to follow these changes, as he must often differen-

ciate between what group of characters is speaking where and who is addressing whom. Were he not to do so, he would be failing to cooperate with the text and thus causing the channels of communication between text and reader to break down, with a resultant loss of meaning for the reader.

The fragmented movements of Act One, as regards the grouping and shifts in position of the dramatis personae, become much more frequent in Act Two. This Act begins quietly, with the appearance of only Natasha on stage. The setting is the same as in Act One, but "There is no light" (II, p. 119) and it is evening, not noon, as was the case in Act One. If it begins with only Natasha present on stage, the Act soon shows the arrival of a series of dramatis personae whose exits and entrances swell the numbers of those present on stage, and keep them in constant movement. Both the drawing room downstage and the ballroom upstage are used extensively, as characters move between the two areas in constantly fluctuating groups. Dialogue from those downstage is intermingled with dialogue from those upstage in a rapid succession of shifts and nuances.

The reader is introduced gradually into this somewhat hectic pace of gear shifting by the quiet beginning of the Act. A conversation between Natasha and Andrey had closed Act One; Act Two begins with another conversation

between these two characters. Since Natasha is walking about late at night in a dressing gown, the reader can presume from the opening stage directions that she now belongs inside the house, and is no longer a guest. Indeed he quickly finds out from the dialogue that Andrey and Natasha are married and have a child, Bobik. The almost total lack of light which is indicated by the stage directions, and the fact that Natasha is carrying a candle increases the intimacy of this scene, since it reduces the space of the stage. The spotlight is, so to speak, on Andrey and Natasha and their relationship, and the dimly-lit, late night setting makes their present behavior even more of a contrast with the manner of the two at the end of Act One. Now it is Natasha who does most of the talking. Again, Andrey is in his room - this has become almost his trademark - but this time it is Natasha, not his sisters, who summons him out. His involvement in the conversation with his wife is minimal, and Natasha is shown as already contributing a rather heavy organizational hand to the household. This is demonstrated from the beginning of the Act by the use of space. In contrast to her shy appearance on stage at the end of Act One, Natasha now walks boldly to various parts of the stage on a tour of inspection, asserting her territorial rights: "She walks

and stops at the door which leads to Andrey's room. [...]
Walks, opens another door and, having looked in the room,
closes it," (II, p. 119). Her manner has changed entirely,
 and the text uses space both to show this and to comment
 on her marital relationship with Andrey.

Andrey remains on stage when she leaves, as Ferapont
 is coming to see him. The scene between Ferapont and Andrey
 is prepared for by a slight pause in the dialogue. Stage
 directions mark this pause by describing what Andrey does
 when he remains alone on stage, and by lingering further
 to describe, as well, Ferapont's manner of dress:

Natasha goes out. Andrey, bending over
the candle, which she has forgotten, reads
his book. Ferapont enters. He is dressed
in an old, tattered coat with the collar
turned up; his ears are bound.

(II, p. 120)

For the text of the drama as a whole, these are rather
 lengthy stage directions, as, usually, only a few words
 or a short sentence interrupt the dialogue at one time.
 Here, however, a quiet stage, with only Andrey present
 and reading his book, interrupts the flow of the text for
 some moments. The reader pauses momentarily, and is given
 the time both to reflect on Andrey and his previous con-
 versation with his wife, and to anticipate Ferapont's
 arrival. The next scene is "introduced", as it were, by

the brief pause. It is an important scene, not so much because Ferapont is present, but because of the manner in which he and Andrey interact and the information which is thus conveyed to the reader. The text uses the brief pause that is caused by the stage directions (and the nearly empty stage) to force the reader into an awareness of the importance of the next scene, no matter how momentary that awareness might be. What ensues is a dialogue at cross-purposes during which Andrey and Ferapont communicate very little, since Ferapont is quite hard of hearing, and Andrey exploits this fact in order to "unburden his soul" a little²⁴:

ANDREY. If you heard all right, then I doubt if I'd be talking to you in this way. I must talk to someone. My wife doesn't understand me. I'm afraid of my sisters for some reason or other. I'm afraid they'll make fun of me, put me to shame...

(II, p. 120)

Despite the fact that they are alone together on stage, and despite the dim lighting which should be suggestive of or conducive to intimate communication, Andrey and Ferapont communicate little with one another. This is reinforced and made ironic by the use of space and light.

For the first time in the play, Andrey mentions Moscow in terms of longing reminiscence here. In accordance with the pattern already established by the text

in previous instances when Moscow was alluded to by his sisters, the reader witnesses once again the dichotomy between Moscow as real place and Moscow as psychological state of mind. Here it is Ferapont who, by his remarks, makes the reader aware of this:

ANDREY. [...] I don't drink, I'm not fond of taverns, but how I would love to be in Moscow right now, to be sitting in Testov's Restaurant, or in the Bolshoy Moskovsky, my dear fellow.

FERAPONT. But in Moscow, as a builder was saying at the Council the other day, some merchants were eating pancakes in Moscow. One of them who ate up forty pancakes, it seems as if he died. If it wasn't forty, then it was fifty. I don't remember.

ANDREY. You are sitting in Moscow, in a huge hall of the restaurant, you don't know anybody, and no one knows you, and at the same time you don't feel that you're a stranger. But here you know everybody and everybody knows you, and you are a stranger, a stranger... A stranger and alone.

FERAPONT. What is it? (Pause.) And that very same builder said - maybe he was lying - it seems as if a rope or cable is stretched all across Moscow.

ANDREY. For what purpose?

FERAPONT. I can't know. The builder said it.

ANDREY. Nonsense, hokum.

(II, pp. 120-21)

As he progresses in linear fashion through the text, the reader accumulates in his mind the instances of reference

to Moscow, and the similarity of approach with which the text counters in gently ironic fashion the Prozorovs' longing references to it begins to emerge as a pattern for him. The reader's ability to recognize this pattern is contingent upon his continuing ability to differentiate between Moscow as a geographical, spatial entity and Moscow as a remembrance of the past and a projection for future dreams. The text subtly manipulates the reader into the gradual awareness that only the latter conception of Moscow seems possible for Andrey and his sisters.

When Ferapont exits and, shortly thereafter, Andrey "in no hurry goes to his room" (II, p. 121), the text again uses the tactic of a rather lengthy stage direction, as a pause to introduce the next characters and their scene together. This time, however, the stage remains entirely empty for a few moments. Moreover, the reader is momentarily forced to widen his spatial awareness beyond that shown in the setting by the following stage direction: "Behind the scenes a Nurse sings, rocking a child to sleep" (II, p. 121). This description of sound from another part of the house distances the reader briefly from what has just taken place, and prepares him for the next dialogue. It also serves to maintain his awareness of the fact that other life, and other lives, continue to follow their course all around those characters and their involvements who

are actually represented on stage²⁵. Finally, since "a child" could only refer to Andrey and Natasha's Bobik, the reader is reminded of Natasha's fussing at the beginning of the Act and of her wish (allegedly because of Bobik) to prevent the evening's festivities from taking place. A small amount of tension of anticipation is also created in the reader by this brief stage direction.

The slight pause that has been created continues for another moment as further stage directions are included:

"Enter Masha and Vershinin. While they are chatting, a maidservant lights the lamp and candles" (II, p. 121).

These directions must be kept in mind by the reader as he continues through the dialogue between Masha and Vershinin. The imaginative cooperation of the reader is the only means at the text's disposal for overcoming, as it were, its "handicap" of linearity as opposed to the simultaneity of presentation which is available to the stage production. The conversation between Masha and Vershinin is the third in a series of duos that have occurred since the opening of Act Two. Although the stage presumably becomes brighter and brighter as lamps are lit, the conversation begins in relative dimness, a fact which should add to the intimacy. And, as indicated near the end of the conversation, the characters have been located in a less well-lit part of

the stage throughout most of their talk:

VERSHININ. That's strange. (Kisses her hand.) You're a wonderful, marvelous woman. Wonderful, marvelous! It's dark here, but I can see your eyes shining.

MASHA. (sits in another chair) There's more light over here...

(II, p. 122)

Despite this spatial closeness, however, Masha and Vershinin communicate only barely. For most of the conversation, each talks about his or her concerns and, although no one is hard of hearing, there is little reaction from either party to what the other is saying. Only at the end does a major turning point occur: Vershinin expresses his love for Masha and, after a brief hesitation, she accepts his advances:

VERSHININ. I love you, love you, love you... I love your eyes, I dream about the way you move... Wonderful, marvelous woman!

MASHA. (laughs quietly) When you talk to me like that, somehow or other I laugh even though it frightens me too. Don't say any more, I beg you... (In a low voice.) But anyway, please go on, it doesn't matter to me... (Covers her face with her hands.)

(II, p. 122)

The intimacy of these final words of Masha's are reinforced by the stage direction "In a low voice". The reader, imagining a performance, is forced closed "into" the scene by the reduction in sound which acts to blot out the rest

of the stage for a moment.

However, this moment is very brief, as the reader is not allowed to linger over the sentimental turning point. Immediately thereafter, Masha continues: "It doesn't matter to me. They're coming in here, talk about something else..." (II, p. 122). It is Irina and Tuzenbakh who "enter through the ballroom" (Ibid.). This immediate re-positioning of the reader's attention from downstage to the ballroom upstage cuts short the scene between Masha and Vershinin and changes the tone of what is occurring on stage. A more neutral, general conversation ensues. The break is especially apparent when, after a few speeches between Tuzenbakh and Irina, the text indicates: "([Tuzenbakh] having seen Masha and Vershinin, overjoyed.) Is that you? How are you?" (II, p. 123). The reader's attention is meant to be entirely and cleanly wrested from downstage with Masha and Vershinin to upstage with Irina and Tuzenbakh, and the two couples do not mingle until a few speeches later.

From this point on, the text uses the upstage and the downstage areas in rapid succession, with characters located in each simultaneously, and individuals moving from one part to the other at frequent intervals. The text continues to be imprecise on the amount and location

of furniture on stage. It gives landmark placements only: the table upstage, armchairs and the piano downstage. The rest is left to the imagination of the reader, but it is certainly implied. Thus, Irina "sits in an armchair" (II, p. 123) when she and Tuzenbakh join Masha and Vershinin downstage. And, later in the Act, Solyony "goes into the drawing room and sits in a corner" (II, p. 126), Andrey "quietly enters and sits down by a candle" (II, p. 128) and Tuzenbakh, "sits at piano, plays a waltz" (II, p. 129). The exact placement of these pieces of furniture is not indicated by the text, since it relies, instead, on the two more general entities of upstage and downstage for achieving its effect.

After Irina and Tuzenbakh have joined Masha and Vershinin downstage, "a knock on the floor" (II, p. 123) announces Chebutykin's imminent arrival. When he appears several speeches later, he "enters the ballroom and combs his beard; then he sits at the table and takes a newspaper out of his pocket" (II, p. 123). There ensues a sort of "picture frame" effect, whereby Chebutykin's presence at the table in the dining room is commented upon by the rest of the characters on stage, all of whom are in the living room:

MASHA. There, he's just come up... Has he paid for the apartment?

IRINA. (laughs) No. Not one kopek for eight months. Apparently, he's forgotten.

MASHA. (laughs) Doesn't he look important sitting there!

Everyone laughs. A pause.

(II, p. 123)

The break in the previous dialogue, and the content of the above conversation serves to make the reader even more conscious of the two areas of the stage than he already is. The text halts the reader's momentum for a few seconds in order to make him fully conscious of where everyone is on stage at this particular point in the Act. This consciousness will then be his basis throughout the rest of the Act for keeping track of the flow of characters and their conversations between these two parts of the stage.

This shifting or movement of the characters begins almost at once when, two speeches later, Chebutykin calls Irina and she joins him at the table upstage (II, p. 124). Only Masha, Vershinin, and Tuzenbakh now remain downstage. A short "philosophizing" conversation follows, mainly between Tuzenbakh and Vershinin, with Masha interrupting briefly. However, the reader is not given a chance to involve himself too long in this, since the text takes him upstage again:

Fedotik and Rode appear in the ballroom;
they sit and sing quietly, strumming on

the guitar.

(II, p. 125)


These stage directions not only interrupt the flow of the previous conversation, but they serve to establish both upstage and downstage as simultaneous areas of activity, since the reader is to keep in mind the continuation of the guitar strumming. Tuzenbakh and Vershinin then continue their philosophizing for a few more speeches, but they are interrupted again by activity upstage. This time, the text switches directly from up to downstage. No intervening stage directions are used to introduce the transition: the text goes from Tuzenbakh's speech to Chebutykin's, relying on the familiarity of the reader with the previously-established location of the characters to serve as guide. It is important, moreover, that the reader be conscious of the spatial division here, or he will be losing much of what the text intends.

For the next few pages, the reader is forced to make many such transitions. A few speeches after the short interruption from Chebutykin and Irina, Tuzenbakh rises and joins the characters in the ballroom. For a brief interval, the upstage is spotlighted, as Fedotik and Irina engage in conversation. That part of the stage gains further importance when the samovar is brought in and Anfisa, then



Natasha, and, later, Solyony join those at the table (II, p. 126). But the reader is not allowed to lose track of downstage, as a brief snatch of dialogue between Masha and Vershinin (who are alone in the living room) brings him there again. After another few replies from upstage, Anfisa is shown as going up to Masha, who is still downstage, to offer her tea; she is then summoned upstage again by Irina. This continues until, after Vershinin has left (II, p. 127), Masha also joins those at the table and, except for Solyony, everyone is in the ballroom for a few moments. Tuzenbakh then reverses this flow by coming downstage to join Solyony (II, p. 128), and most of the characters soon follow.

Throughout all of this activity, only snatches of conversation are heard, and none of the characters pause long enough with one another to achieve any significant amount of communication. The use of two parts of the stage facilitates the expression of this lack of communication to the reader, since he himself is forced to switch back and forth continuously, and is never able to stay for very long with any one conversation, such as it is. Even the "philosophizing" between Vershinin and Tuzenbakh shows little communication between the two men, since they talk at cross-purposes and do not seem to try to understand what



the other is saying. Despite the fact that over a year has passed in the lives of the characters since Act One, little in the way they interact with one another seems to have changed. The fragmented use of stage space by the text illustrates in a concise and natural fashion the fragmented nature of their relationships with one another²⁶.

Only at a few brief instances during the Act does any honest communication occur between any of the characters. This was so in the earlier duo scene between Masha and Vershinin (II, p. 122), and it occurs again here between Tuzenbakh and Solyony, when the former moves downstage with a decanter of cognac. At this point, since Solyony has not spoken for several pages, the reader must remember that he moved to the drawing room just after addressing Natasha, and has been sitting in a corner since then. When Tuzenbakh joins him, already buoyed by the mood of celebration (i.e., the cognac), the two manage to exchange a few honest words before anyone else joins them downstage:

TUZENBAKH. You always make me feel as if something has happened between us. Although I must admit there's something strange about you.

SOLYONY. (declaiming) "I am strange, but who is not strange! Do not be angry, Aleko!"

TUZENBAKH. And what's Aleko got to do with it... (Pause.)

SOLYONY. When I am alone with someone or other, then it's all right, I am like anyone else. But when I'm together with a group of people, I'm despondent, shy, and... I talk all sorts of nonsense. All the same I'm more decent and noble, much more so than a lot of others, a lot. And I'm able to prove I am.

TUZENBAKH. I often get angry with you, you're constantly needling me, when we're together with a group, but I still find you likeable somehow. Oh, what the hell, I'm going to get drunk tonight. Let's drink!

SOLYONY. Let's drink. (They drink.) [...]

(II, p. 128)

Even the above exchange, however, seems to communicate more to the reader than to either of the characters who are participating in the dialogue. Each character talks about himself and his own reactions, but does not really hear or absorb what the other is expressing. However, the reader is able to learn more about the thoughts and frame of mind of the two dramatis personae, and a tension and foreboding is communicated to him here, which subsequent scenes in the Act reinforce. Moreover, the importance of this dialogue is underlined by the fact that the two men are alone downstage.

The end of this dialogue is signalled by stage directions which indicate that "while they are speaking, Andrey quietly enters and sits down by a candle" (II, p. 128).

Several things are left undetermined here: the exact location of Andrey's position on stage when he sits down, and the moment during the preceding dialogue at which he has entered. The reader must remember that he would be coming from his room, as that is where he went earlier in the Act (II, p. 121); however, he must imagine his entrance retroactively, and he must place him downstage at will, since only the indication of his presence is given.

Visually, the stage directions serve to interrupt the previous dialogue for the reader and prepare for what follows. The downstage then fills up with the rest of the characters who follow Chebutykin and Irina and begin to dance in celebration while Tuzenbakh plays the piano. However, this celebration is short-lived, as Natasha returns, "says something to Chebutykin, then quietly goes out" (II, p. 129). At Natasha's request, the guests leave, and the hectic pace of the Act now slows down as the stage empties. The text indicates that "Andrey goes out the right door to his room; Chebutykin goes with him; in the ballroom they say goodbye" (II, p. 130).

The downstage area empties again, this time more definitively, since the text indicates that "everyone is leaving. Anfisa and the maidservant clear the table and put out the lights" (II, p. 130). As at the beginning of

the Act, the dimming of the lights brings a quieter atmosphere and a slower pace. Like a sort of leitmotif for the Act, the text indicates that "the nurse is heard singing to the child" (Ibid.), and the reader is reminded not only of Bobik, but also of the presence of life in general continuing beyond the space of the rooms represented. From this point on, except for a brief dialogue between Chebutykin and Andrey before they slip away, only Irina remains continuously on stage, while a series of people return for one reason or another to the dimmed and quiet drawing room.

The scene between Chebutykin and Andrey, though short, is an interesting interlude here, and seems important. The fact that the two men are virtually alone on stage underlies the importance of the scene, since it serves as a spotlight effect. The doctor refers to the past and to Andrey's mother, with whom he was allegedly in love, and Andrey asks him what to do about shortness of breath. These two things, as well as the fact that Chebutykin is a military man and old enough to be Andrey's father, should remind the reader, to a certain extent, of events in Act One, and the allusions to General Prozorov by Olga and Andrey. At that time, their father had been dead for only a year and Andrey had mentioned how much

weight he had gained since the General's death. Although these are separate comments, to be sure, one cannot minimize their recurrence, as well as the influence (past, and perhaps still present) of General Prozorov. As his contemporary and as a military figure, Chebutykin pales greatly in comparison and displays none of the discipline and action for which General Prozorov seems to have been known. Instead, he is accompanying the General's son on yet another gambling spree, reference to which has already been made earlier in the Act by Irina:

IRINA. [...] Look, something or other had better be done. The doctor and our own Andrey were at the club yesterday and they lost again. In town they're saying Andrey lost two hundred rubles.

MASHA. (Indifferently) What on earth can be done now!

IRINA. He lost two weeks ago, he lost in December. Maybe, just maybe, the sooner he loses everything, the sooner we can leave this town. [...]

(II, p. 123)

This scene between Chebutykin and Andrey brings together allusions to several other points in the play and to persons or concepts which are important: the military in the lives of the sisters and Andrey, the "release from pressure" which Andrey experienced after the death of his father, and to which he seems to be succumbing more and

more, and even the longing for "Moscow" which recurs so often throughout the play. However, the text relies on the memory and imagination of the reader to bring these references together here; it helps his imagination along by "spotlighting" the two men alone on stage, and he must be aware of the spatial manipulation of the text, or the short conversation will remain for him only a comic interlude showing a harassed husband escaping from his domineering wife.

When the two men have left, Irina enters. She remains on stage for the rest of the Act and her words end it. Just before she appears, the text indicates that the sound of a bell is heard, then another (II, p. 130). Repeated use is made of sound until the end of the Act: the bells announcing the arrival of the mummers, the bells of Protopopov's troika, the sounds of an accordion in the street and, once again, the singing of the nurse. These sounds achieve much more than "atmosphere" or local colour. As on previous occasions in the text, they broaden the reader's awareness of space beyond that represented on stage, thus illustrating Ingarden's views. As well, the sound of the bell indicating the mummers have arrived presents a sort of anti-climax for the reader, as it causes him to briefly think back to the guests who

just now filled the drawing room in anticipation of these people. The mummers' arrival is the signal of outside activity, an activity which must now pass by the Prozorov house. The sound of the accordion a page later produces the same effect. The use of these sounds helps to heighten the reader's frustration with the abortive nature of the previous festivities. It contrasts for him the activity outside (i.e., life in general) with the lack of activity inside the Prozorov house, where the same longings and the same ideal notions are being repeated, despite the fact that over a year has elapsed since Act One.

The short pause provided by Irina's being alone on stage after Anfisa leaves serves to introduce the following scene between her and Solyony (II, p. 131). Solyony's reappearance at this time is somewhat of a surprise, as some time has passed since he angrily left the stage earlier in the Act. Nor is his avowal of love for Irina any less of a surprise, since he had given no previous indication of this. However, his oath to kill any rival he might have for Irina's love now puts a more ominous light on previous rather bizarre and abstract statements he had made to Tuzenbakh, and adds suspense at this point. Again, their being alone on stage for a few moments puts extra emphasis on what is said between them.

Irina is spared more of Solyony's confessions by the reappearance of Natasha. The latter goes through almost exactly the same motions as she did at the beginning of the Act, again carrying a candle and crossing the stage to peer into various doors, on a tour of inspection. The repetition of her motions forces the reader to compare Natasha's position at the beginning of the Act and now, and shows her increased boldness. She proceeds to tell Irina she is to move to Olga's room to make room for Bobik, and Irina is too surprised by her statement to react with anything more than passivity. The question of Natasha and her role in The Three Sisters has been discussed at length by the critics of the play, both by itself and in connection with her relationship with Protopopov. This relationship develops in this Act when he picks her up for an evening ride in his troika. The critics have seen Natasha and Protopopov as evil figures who, by their underhanded scheming, succeed in dispossessing the Prozorov family. Magarshack goes as far as to say: "Though he never appears on the stage, Protopopov will be responsible for the eviction of the three sisters from their home and the installation of Natasha and himself in it"²⁷. He describes Natasha as "a ruthless predator who would kick her [Irina] out of her beautiful home"²⁸. Styan

speaks of Natasha's take-over as "the victory of the forces of Philistinism"²⁹, and Rayfield refers to her as a "predator"³⁰ as well. Stroeve reports that Nemirovich-Danchenko saw the fable of The Three Sisters in spatial terms: the Prozorov house; the life of the sisters there, after the death of their father; the takeover of the house by Natasha³¹. Moreover, writes Stroeve, Stanislavsky saw the struggle of the characters with their environment as the central concept of The Three Sisters and tried to instill a sense of distress in the spectator "by creating the oppressive atmosphere of the everyday world surrounding Chekhov's heroes"³², especially in Act Two. Nina Gourfinkel concludes that Chekhov's characters give way to their stifling environment³³, and Gassner, also, states that it is the milieu that oppresses in The Three Sisters, even though the characters are not diminished as individuals³⁴. Other critics have commented along the same lines: for Stroeve, "banal everyday life becomes an active, aggressive, far more dangerous force"³⁵ in The Three Sisters than in the other plays; for Styan, the sisters have "an existence which has been deadened by the philistinism of Natasha and Protopopov encroaching upon their happiness"³⁶; as for Rayfield, he sees the play as a progression in which the Muscovites are opposed to the provincials (Kulygin,

Natasha, and Protopopov), and in which provincial reality triumphs act by act:

In the final act, the battery is posted elsewhere and all contact with Moscow is broken. The provinces triumph: Natasha has reduced Andrey to a dummy and has ousted the sisters room by room from the house, filling it with her babies and her vile and vicious presence.³⁷

It is true that, on the surface, these things do happen; the sisters look down on the provincials and restrict their social contacts to the military, while, in the end, the very people they regard with disdain seem to have dispossessed them. Both Roskin and Magarshack thus consider Natasha's affair with Protopopov and the eviction of the sisters from the house by them as the peripeteia of the play³⁸; that is, that there is a reversal of the situation, whereby the money and the house which at first belong to the sisters subsequently end up belonging to Natasha. But, although these events do occur, they cannot be considered to be the central action of The Three Sisters because of a very important factor: the text's irony. Natasha, although she is malicious and narrow-minded, is constantly shown to be a comic character as well. As Styan remarks, Natasha would be the villain, "were it not for the fact that her narrowness of spirit makes her the most satirically comic character in the play"³⁹. Moreover, writes

Styan;

Natasha is only symptomatic of those little pressures of destructive self-interest present everywhere, part of the cruel nature of life which fragile people like the sisters are unable to withstand. [...] The audience finds Natasha's vulgarity so familiar that it is laughable.

If the true comic tone and balance in the details of the play as a whole are achieved, none of these dangerous forces will be felt as anything other than the sort of human hazard we all expect to meet from time to time.⁴⁰

Nowhere, indeed, does the play suggest that Natasha and Protopopov consciously set out to scheme to dispossess the sisters. Although Natasha is a schemer and manipulator, and wishes to assert her dominance in the house, she does so as a self-interested petty-bourgeois and is shown to be somewhat ridiculous in the process. Her role should not be seen as that of the representative of a provincial environment that actively stifles the sisters, repressing their hopes. The sisters and Andrey end up being acted upon, not by an oppressive environment, but by the simple fact that life around them goes on. Pitcher is right, therefore, when he criticizes Stanislavsky for having emphasized unduly the role of environment in this play:

Concrete everydayness does not seem to be at all important in Three Sisters. Chekhov was very anxious that the details of military uniform and bearing should be life-

like, but this was only because he was so afraid that his characters would be turned into "stage officers". [...] The atmosphere of the provincial town is suggested only fleetingly and indirectly-- through what people say about it. In emphasizing one element, the suffocating atmosphere, so strongly, Stanislavsky can be criticized for upsetting the balance of Three Sisters. [...]

More fundamentally, Stanislavsky can be criticized for trying too hard to fit Three Sisters into existing dramatic patterns. In seizing upon the greyness of provincial life, Stanislavsky was falling back on a theme which had been familiar in Russian fiction and drama at least since the time of Gogol. In seeing Chekhov's play as a dramatic conflict between the characters and their environment, he was relating it to the traditions of action-based drama - failing to see the full extent to which the drama of Three Sisters was contained within the inner lives of its characters.⁴¹

It would be too easy a solution to this play to see the sisters and Andrey as fragile and refined victims of a dull and oppressive environment. Nor does the text suggest this. Rather, by the use of off-stage sound to indicate space and life beyond the Prozorov drawing room, as in Act One, but especially Act Two, the text tries to convey to the reader much more than the force of mere philistinism, but rather that of life in general, which is following its course.

Thus, the Act ends with more allusions to "the whole town" by Olga (i.e., everyone knows that Andrey is gambling), and the stage directions again refer to the sound of an

accordion in the street, and to the singing of the nurse (II, p. 132). In contrast, Irina, who remains alone on stage at the end, can only repeat to herself her longing for "Moscow". This is a refrain which she repeated not only in Act One, but again in Act Two (II, pp. 123, 126), thus reinforcing for the reader her psychological distancing from the events around her by means of this verbal use of space.

Several other allusions to space are made in passing by various characters throughout Act Two, and deserve brief comment. Their effect on the reader of the text of this play is somewhat greater than it would be on the spectator at a performance of it. This is true because the reader is dealing with one medium only (the printed text) and can control its timing (i.e., can leaf backwards or forwards in it). As a result, he becomes more conscious of the use of those spatial elements which are not directly related to space represented on stage. For example, when he is sitting upstage with Irina, while Masha, Vershinin, and Tuzenbakh are downstage, Chebutykin throws out the following random comment, which is then picked up by Irina:

CHEBUTYKIN. (reading the newspaper) Balzac was married in Berdichev. (Irina hums quietly.) Better write that down in my little book. (Writes.) Balzac was married in Berdichev. (Reads newspaper.)

IRINA. (lost in thought, she sets out the cards for a game of patience) Balzac was married in Berdichev.

(II, p. 125)

The repetition of this phrase, inserted between two snatches of the downstage dialogue of Vershinin, Tuzenbakh, and Masha, strikes the reader as unusual, and serves to interrupt his involvement with the downstage dialogue. Critics of the play have commented on this passage as being both bizarre and a variation on the theme of happiness which the play deals with. Magarshack writes:

Stanislavsky states in his reminiscences that the sentence "Balzac was married in Berdichev" was not in the original script, but was sent by Chekhov from Nice, where he must have come upon a reference to Balzac's marriage in a town proverbially known as the dullest in the whole of Russia. But why repeat the sentence three times and why make Irina repeat it "reflectively", unless the thought might have occurred to her, if only for a moment, that one need not seek happiness in Moscow seeing that one of the greatest writers of France found it in Berdichev? Chekhov's intention in introducing this sentence seems to have been to find a conclusive connection to the rather inconclusive argument about happiness.⁴²

This reference by the text to a far-away place achieves a multitude of simultaneous functions: it expands the space of the play (i.e., that represented on stage) in the manner commented upon by Ingarden; it distances the reader momentarily from the dialogue downstage by visually disturbing its flow

on the printed page; it adds to the uses of space which can be linked to symbolic or thematic patterns that the play contains (i.e., the idea that other places beyond the confines of the provincial town the play is set in - such as Moscow - are better or more conducive to happiness).

In the same manner, two additional references to the flight of birds in this Act manipulate the response of the reader to the element of space and force him to stretch his ability for drawing connections between various parts of the text. The first of these occurs during the philosophizing between Vershinin and Tuzenbakh and seems to be an example drawn at random by the latter in support of his argument:

TUZENBAKH. [...] Life does not, will not change. [...] Those birds that migrate from place to place, cranes, for example, fly and keep on flying. And whatever thoughts, great or small, that may wander through their heads, they'll go on flying and they'll never know where they're going or the reason why. They fly and will go on flying however many philosophers may turn up among them. And let them talk as much philosophy as they want, so long as they keep on flying...

(II, p. 125)

The above passage and its reference to the flying of birds is echoed a few pages later in a speech made by Vershinin:

VERSHININ. The other day I was reading the diary of a certain French minister. It

was written when he was in prison. He'd been convicted for his part in the Panama Canal affair. In the diary he mentions with delight, even with ecstasy, the various birds he can see from his prison window - birds which he hadn't noticed before when he was a minister. Of course, now that he's been freed from prison, he will return to his old habit. He won't even notice the birds, just as he did before. In the very same way, you won't even notice Moscow when you go to live there. We have no happiness, and we never will, we only long for it.

(II, p. 127)

Both speeches form a natural part of the conversations to which they belong, but they also achieve - in a manner which is not at all belabored - the drawing together of some themes that are crucial to the text and which recur throughout. The imagery of birds flying (and the open spaces this connotes) is linked to the allusion to Irina as a "white bird" in Act One (I, p. 106). Since Irina and her sisters all seem to long for escape from their confining provincial town and to equate freedom and happiness with "Moscow", Vershinin's speech, in its subtle transition from prison, to birds, to flying, to Moscow, to happiness, takes on more complex meaning for the reader. The text seems to delight in random (but appropriate and natural) sprinklings of inter-related allusions of this nature, thus challenging the reader to perform ever more intricate connections. In this instance, the spatial allusion to the flight of birds

continues a pattern set up in the text whereby the space represented on stage (i.e., the Prozorov house) is linked to the psychological state of mind of the three sisters and Andrey. The house (General Prozorov's house) is their haven in what they consider to be a backward provincial town, except for the presence of the military. On the other hand, they are continually eager to leave the town (and the house) for Moscow, or at least the "Moscow" of their imagination.

Nowhere, in all of this, does the text draw any direct parallels or leave room for any simple conclusions, however. The fact that Irina is compared to a white bird in Act One is not directly relevant to Vershinin's Panama Canal story nor to Tuzenbakh's argument. The two occur in very different parts of the text and would hardly be noticed, were it not for the fact that they fall into a pattern which consists in the repetition of certain key allusions (with slight variations) throughout the text. Thus, the frustration of the sisters at their - albeit psychological - confinement to the provincial town relates indirectly to the imprisoned minister in Vershinin's story. The irony, of course, is that no organized agent of society is keeping the sisters confined - it is left up to the reader to draw his own conclusions as to who or what is. Also, Vershinin

has already indicated to the sisters in Act One that Moscow, for all their idealizing of it, may not always be such a perfect place, and that he sees much beauty in the "good Russian climate" (I, p. 110) of the provincial town. This previous example of a gap in consciousness concerning one's surroundings is repeated in Vershinin's story about the prisoner and the birds.

The verbal allusions to space in Act Two require of the reader a much more intricate set of mental operations for their effect to be perceived. They are far more "available" to the reader of the drama than to the spectator of the play, since the reader can leaf back to previous acts (or forward to future ones, on a second or subsequent reading) in order to refresh his memory. The spectator cannot do this since, even if he were to attend several performances, he would be tied to the temporal progression of each. In addition, since the same medium (the printed word) is used for this as well as all other spatial devices or allusions in the text, the more complex metaphorical allusions to space are better able to compete for the reader's attention on the printed page than they would be at a performance.

Act Three presents a completely new stage setting: "the room of Olga and Irina". From the living room - ballroom setting of the previous two acts, the space

changes to the more intimate location of the sisters' bedroom. The exits and entrances of all of the play's dramatis personae through this otherwise private space are legitimized by the fact that it is "between two and three o'clock in the morning" (III, p. 133) on a night when a fire has destroyed a large section of town and everyone is in a panic. This provides a natural reason to use the bedroom as setting, and characters drift in and out, congregating to the sisters' room as they are squeezed out of other parts of the house by acquaintances and townspeople who have been allowed to take refuge there. This information is given to the reader both in the opening stage directions and in the conversation between Olga and Anfisa at the beginning of the Act.

The text's shift from a larger, more impersonal setting (the drawing room) to a smaller, more intimate one (the bedroom) adds to the pattern of claustrophobia that has been established to this point. That is, the recurring longing for escape to "Moscow" that has been voiced by the sisters (and, to a certain extent, by Andrey) has been reflected by the text's use of space in the stage setting. In Act One, the feeling of claustrophobia was demonstrated spatially by the use of the window, through which sunshine and fresh spring air were entering the drawing room.

Indirectly adding to this effect of claustrophobia was the fact that Irina was shown standing close to the window at one point and was then compared to a white bird by Chebutykin. In Act Two, the dark atmosphere of a winter evening, together with the repeated wanderings of Natasha across the stage on her tours of inspection, increased the sense of diminishing space and continuing confinement as regards the sisters. Act Three, in showing the re-arrangement of spatial priorities in the house, and in using a more intimate space for the comings and goings of a great number of characters, increases considerably the reader's awareness of a heightened frustration and claustrophobia on the part of the sisters.

As in the previous two acts, the text provides only a bare minimum of orientation to the reader as regards the organization of the space on stage. The opening stage directions indicate that "to the left and right are beds, blocked off by screens" and that "Masha is lying on the sofa" (III, p. 133), although the position of the sofa is not given (the reader may assume it is somewhere in the centre of the stage, since the two sides are occupied by the beds). Information concerning the location of doors for exits and entrances is given only in the course of the Act, and the reader must add this to his mental picture of the set at the appropriate times. For instance, Olga and Anfisa are

merely said to enter, but the location and presence of the door is not described until a few speeches later, when Olga needs Ferapont to carry some items downstairs and goes to the door to summon him. Even here, however, the reader is left to assume the exact position of the door, since only the following information is given:

OLGA. [...] (At the door.) Come up here, whoever is there! (In the open door is seen a window, red from the glow; the sound of the fire engine going past the house is heard.) Oh, it's terrible, terrible! And how tiring it is! (Ferapont enters.) [...].

(III, p. 133)

Only a sense of the conventions of the stage that the text is using, and a good mental picture of the setting given will allow the reader to "place" the door for himself at this point. If he keeps in mind that, if the door were to be placed at one or the other side of the stage in the actual production, a good part of the audience would be unable to see "a window, red from the glow" when the door is opened, then the reader has no alternative but to imagine this door's location as being upstage centre. This assumption is confirmed for him during the latter part of the Act, when the stage directions indicate that "Natasha, with a candle, enters through the right door, walks across the stage, and goes through the left door"

(III, p. 141): The linear progression of the text forces the reader to return to his mental picture of the set at intervals where additional information about its properties or proportions is added, in order to reconcile the new facts to those previously given, and adjust his optic. Depending on the importance of the new information, the reader is forced to pause briefly in order to reassess his position, and the pause distances him from involvement in what has just preceded.

The first few pages of dialogue in Act Three establish the main areas of preoccupation, in terms of space, in the Act: the town, in which a major fire has occurred; the Prozorov house; the stage setting itself, i.e., the bedroom of Olga and Irina. The use of sound - the fire engine and the fire alarm bell - , heard off-stage at periodic intervals, keeps the reader constantly aware of the life and activity beyond the house, and the continuing crisis. As well, various characters comment and report on the progress of the fire. Both stage directions and direct dialogue are used to keep the reader aware of the crisis throughout the Act, thus adding to the tension and emotion of what is occurring on stage. References to the fire in the stage directions especially, serve to distance the reader from time to time from what is being said or done on stage, and

help to heighten his awareness of the actions and words of the dramatis personae that appear.

Other parts of the Prozorov house are mentioned only briefly, but allusions to them increase the reader's knowledge of what has happened in the interval between Act Two and Act Three. More than the preceding Acts, however, Act Three is dominated by the use the text makes of the space represented on stage. The most important elements in the organization of this space are the beds and screens to the left and right, and the door upstage centre. Except for specific instances where a character is described as using one of the other doors, the reader may assume that most of the exits and entrances are made by the door upstage centre. The position of this door has the effect of adding importance to or "spotlighting" those who use it to come into the room. During the course of this Act, many of the characters take advantage of the crisis atmosphere in order to reveal themselves or confess thoughts or feelings; the use of the door upstage centre becomes a tool for emphasizing some of these moments. One of the first examples is the entrance of Chebutykin, which is prepared for in the conversation between Olga and Kulygin before he arrives. Both in speaking about Chebutykin before he comes in, and in purposely moving to remote

corners of the stage space as he is about to enter, the dramatis personae add to the intensity of the spotlight which falls on Chebutykin when he does appear:

OLGA. What is it?

KULYGIN. The doctor's having a drinking bout, as if he'd done it on purpose tonight. He's terribly drunk. Tonight of all nights, on purpose! (Rises.) There, he's coming up here, I think... Do you hear? Yes, up here... (Goes to the wardrobe and stands in the corner.) Oh, he's a pirate, he is.

OLGA. He hasn't been drinking for two years, and here all of a sudden he's gone and gotten drunk... (Goes with Natasha to the upstage part of the room.)

CHEBUTYKIN enters; as if sober, not reeling, he walks about the room, stops, looks, then goes to the washstand, and begins to wash his hands.

(III, p. 136)

If he is not aware of the way the stage space is organized by the text before and after the entrance of Chebutykin, the reader will fail to understand its effect as drama at this point, and the impact of what the character says will be greatly diminished. The tension of the scene is organized on the spatial indications contained in the text; the silent dramatis personae hiding in the corners of the stage are both like voyeurs and like secret judges of Chebutykin and his voiced thoughts. The stage directions which interrupt what Chebutykin is saying to state that

"Olga and Natasha, unnoticed by him, go out" (III, p. 136) further draw the reader into collaborating with the heightened tension of this particular passage.

The tension is alleviated (but not eliminated) by the entrance of Irina, Vershinin, and Tuzenbakh, who engage in some lighter conversation and give Kulygin an excuse to come out of hiding. However, Chebutykin remains on stage, and his presence is brought to the reader's attention again half a page later by the stage directions: "Chebutykin takes a porcelain clock in his hands and examines it" (III, p. 137). The smashing of this clock shortly thereafter creates another pause and confusion among those on stage, and Chebutykin indulges in some more philosophizing and truth-revealing. Only his exit at this time alleviates the tension he has created. A very long speech by Vershinin fills the subsequent gap.

Vershinin's speech creates a transition. It stands in sharp contrast to the usually short speeches which the play contains, and its length creates a lull, a pause in the action of the play at this point. The exact positioning of the characters while he is speaking is not indicated, except for the fact that, at about half-way through the speech, "Masha enters with a pillow and sits on the sofa" (III, p. 138). As it turns out, Masha is his only audience

on stage since, towards the end of his philosophizing, he notices that no one else is listening:

VERSHININ. [...] Allow me to continue, ladies and gentlemen. I want terribly to give my views, I'm in the mood for it now. (Pauses.) It seems everyone has gone to sleep. [...]

(III, p. 138)

Again, the channels of communication between the characters have closed down, as everyone has taken refuge from Chebutykin's truths by dozing off. This creates an opportune moment for Vershinin and Masha to act out their affinity for one another in the following exchange:

VERSHININ. [...] Today I feel in a special mood. My lust for living runs full rein... (Sings.)

"All ages are obedient to love,
Its passions are good to... (Laughs.)

MASHA. Tam-tam-tam...

VERSHININ. Tam-tam...

MASHA. Tra-ra-ra?

VERSHININ. Tra-ta-ta. (Laughs.)

(III, pp. 138-39)

The silence of the other characters creates a momentary shrinkage of space around Masha and Vershinin, who remain as if alone on stage. However, the importance of their nonsensical exchange - and the suspense of it - is heightened by the fact that others are also present,

including Kulygin.

The delicate balance of the exchanges between Masha and Vershinin is tipped by the entrance of Fedotik, whose dancing and laughter stirs the rest of the characters. A short interval of conversation occurs, which leads into the ensuing trio dialogue between the sisters, who remain alone on stage after the men have left. Apart from the opening of the play, this is the only other moment to this point that the sisters have been alone on stage. For them, too, the late night crisis becomes an occasion to confess the truth, using each other as audience. Very few stage directions interrupt their dialogues, except for a point about mid-way through their conversation when "Natasha, with a candle, enters through the right door, walks across the stage, and goes out through the left door" (III, p. 141). This rather bizarre interruption contrasts the sisters with Natasha. Before leaving the room, Tuzenbakh had made reference to the events of Act One:

TUZENBAKH. [...] I look at you now, and it comes back to me, that day a long time ago, on your saint's day - that day as you talked of the joy of work, you were cheerful, bright... Oh, the happy life I imagined at that time! Where is it now?

(III, p. 139)

Now, two pages later, Natasha's walk across the stage also

serves as a contrast for the reader between her attitude in Act One and her attitude here, as well as between the relationship of the sisters towards her then and now. In addition, the walk is related to what Masha and Irina have been saying about Andrey here:

MASHA. [...] Look, I can't get it out of my head... it's simply outrageous.
 [...] What I'm talking about is Andrey... He's gone and mortgaged this house to the bank, and his wife has taken all the money. And you know the house doesn't belong to him alone, but to all four of us! He must realize it if he has any honesty at all.

(III, p. 140)

IRINA. If the truth were said, our Andrey has been cut to pieces, lost whatever depth he had. [...] The whole town is talking about it, laughing at him, and he's the only one who knows nothing and sees nothing... And at this very moment when everyone is running off to the fire, he sits in his room and pays no attention, none. Only sits playing his violin. (Nervously.) Oh, it's terrible, terrible, terrible! (Weeps.) [...]

(Ibid.)

The spatial device of Natasha's walk across the stage brings together all of these points in a very economical fashion and is not simply a diversion or an unusual idiosyncrasy.

The scene between the sisters also makes use of a

very effective device that has been on stage throughout the Act: the screens. When Masha confesses that she is in love with Vershinin, Olga refuses to listen to her and immediately takes refuge behind her screen. This physical action expresses a state of mind, and the breakdown in communication between the sisters is shown visually on stage by the screen that separates them. Even more extensive use is made of the screens in the following scene, when Andrey joins his sisters. The entrance of Andrey has been prepared for by the allusions to him made previously in the Act by Masha and Irina. When he does appear, the commotion created upstage centre between him and Ferapont serves to emphasize or "spotlight" his entrance even more. A certain curiosity is created in the reader by his entrance, since Irina had previously mentioned that he was alone in his room, playing the violin. When he asks where she is, Olga comes from behind her screen to talk to him; however, Irina now "goes behind her own screen" (III, p. 143) and Olga, "avoiding her brother's conversation, soon does the same again. This little game of "hide and seek", as it were, adds considerable tension and emotion to the scene⁴³. From the outset, Andrey tries to engage all of his sisters in a frank discussion:

ANDREY. [...] (Pause.) Why is it you're

quiet, Olga? (Pause.) It's time to give up all this nonsense and pouting the way you do, there's no reason for it. Masha, you're here, Irina is here. Well, that's excellent - let's talk about it, openly, frankly, once and for all. What do you have against me? What?

(III, p. 143)

But his attempt at communication, such as it is, is in vain. Olga tries to put him off with words, and so does Masha, both citing the late hour as an excuse. His effort is undermined even more, when Masha leaves to join Vershinin. Finally, with Olga and Irina behind their respective screens, Andrey is left to deliver his long speech to no one in particular. But even this is interrupted briefly by the comical appearance of Kulygin in the doorway, looking for Masha. This creates a slight pause for the reader, a break in the mood. Only after this pause does Andrey, realizing he is getting no response from his sisters, echo Vershinin's earlier "It seems everyone has gone to sleep"

(III, p. 138):

ANDREY. They aren't listening. Natasha is a pure, splendid person. (Walks to and fro on the stage, in silence, then stops.) When I married, I thought that we were going to be happy...all of us, happy... But dear God in Heaven... (Weeps.) My dear sisters, my precious sisters, don't believe what I've said, don't believe me... (Goes out.)

(III, pp. 143-44)

As in Act Two during his scene with Ferapont, Andrey can speak only when he believes no one is listening, or can hear and understand. The physical division of the stage in this Act illustrates to what extent, though they show some feeling for each other, Andrey and his sisters are strangers.

After Andrey's exit, Kulygin reappears briefly once more, still searching for Masha. But the Act ends slowly and on a quiet note. Although the alarm bell is heard off-stage, there is silence for a few moments, and Olga and Irina, when they speak, are still behind their screens. The stage is virtually empty and only Irina's head reappears from behind her screen, to tell Olga she will marry the Baron, and to long, in the same breath, for "Moscow".

The reference to Moscow at the end of the Act may remind the reader not only of its previous repetition, but also of Ferapont's oblique observation at the beginning of Act Three:

FERAPONT. Yes, ma'am. In the year eighteen and twelve Moscow also burned down. Oh, dear Lord God in Heaven! The French were surprised.

(III, p. 133)

This sort of "random" comment, scattered throughout the text, is used as a device to intertwine and bind together the play's various themes and allusions. Ferapont's mention

of Moscow, the fire, and Napoleon's French troops helps bring to the reader's mind, in a concise fashion, many allusions at once. He may remember Act Two, and the conversation between Andrey and Ferapont concerning Moscow; he will certainly contrast the heroic fire of Moscow in 1812 with the crisis of the fire in the town at the present moment; the mention of the French troops will remind him of the military and, in turn, since Moscow and the military are talked about at the same time, he may even be reminded of General Prozorov. While the last link is not as strong as the rest, the implication is certainly there, since Moscow was very much talked about in connection with General Prozorov in Act One. The sisters' apparently happy life in Moscow was interrupted by the move of General Prozorov to this town. The General's children seem to have been greatly influenced and directed by him and their lives were linked to and dependent on the society of the military that surrounded them constantly. The play shows the gap that has been created in the lives of the Prozorov children by the death of the General and how they try to cope with that gap, i.e., how they succeed at taking over the management of their own lives.

Very brief mention is also made in Act Three of an impending event in the lives of the dramatis personae:

the projected transfer of the brigade to another part of the country. This information is included in the general conversation around the middle of the Act, and is then repeated by Irina at the very end:

VERSHININ. [...] (Pause.) Yesterday I heard in passing that they want to move our brigade some place far away. Some say to occupied Poland; others to Chita, it seems.

TUZENBAKH. I heard it too. Well, hmm? The town will become deserted, completely so by then.

(III, p. 137)

* * *

IRINA. What a restless night! (Pause.) Olga! (Glances out from behind the screen.) Have you heard? They are taking the brigade away from us, sending them some place far away.

OLGA. It's only a rumor.

IRINA. We shall be left alone then...

(III, p. 144)

The impending transfer of the military away from the town constitutes the last stage in the sisters' forced detachment from their father and the links they have had with the military. Their "abandonment" and consequent forced independence becomes complete in the last act.

Another change of setting occurs in Act Four. From being indoors, the action is now moved outdoors and takes

place in "the old garden attached to the Prozorov house" (IV, p. 144). Two long paragraphs of stage directions introduce the Act and give more explicit information on the organization of the stage space and the location of dramatis personae than had been available for the previous three acts. Besides the terrace of the house, stage right, the text describes the presence of "a long avenue of fir trees at the end of which is seen the river. On the other side of the river - a forest" (IV, p. 144). Dominating the stage, however, is the garden itself in which, when the Act begins, Chebutykin is sitting complacently in an armchair. The stage directions require the reader to keep in mind some ongoing activity, as well, since it is indicated that "now and then passers-by from the street go through the garden on their way to the river" (IV, p. 144). As in Act One, the time is twelve o'clock noon.

From a wide angle of the whole stage space, the reader's attention is directed to the right of the stage, since this is where Irina, Kulygin, and Tuzenbakh are saying goodbye to Fedotik and Rode. As in the previous three acts, this seems to be a special occasion, a time both of calamity and celebration. Some indication of this had been given in the first few lines of stage directions: "On the right is the terrace of the house. On it a table with bottles"

and glasses - it is apparent they have just been drinking champagne" (IV, p. 144). Besides the interest generated in the reader by the complete change in setting, some suspense is also created by the indication of a leave-taking. This is then explained by the conversation between those who are leaving (Fedotik and Rode) and Irina, Tuzenbakh, and Kulygin. The rumours of the military's imminent departure in Act Three are now being shown as taking place: the regiment is to be transferred to Poland.

The Act begins with a focus of the reader's attention to the right of the stage, but both the conversation between the characters, and the departure of Fedotik and Rode help to emphasize the whole stage and the expanse of space that it is meant to represent. At one point Rode is indicated as looking at the whole garden and then saying goodbye to it:

RODE. (takes in the garden at a glance)
 Good-bye, trees! (Shouts.) God-god!
 (Pause.) Good-bye, echo!

(IV, p. 145)

Both Rode's shouting and the indication of an echo serve to expand stage space and to underline the free open spaces it is meant to represent. As well, the departure of Fedotik and Rode upstage makes the reader aware again of the space of the garden, and of the perspective of river and woods

beyond this space which has been described in the opening stage directions:

FEDOTIK. [...] We'll go to the river this way... Fedotik and Rode go out, both glancing back.

RODE. (shouts) Gop-gop!

KULYGIN. (shouts) Good-bye!
At the back of the stage, Fedotik and Rode meet Masha and say good-bye to her; she leaves with them.

(IV, p. 145)

Considerable use is made of the upstage (what the text calls "the back of the stage") in Act Four. Soon after the departure of Fedotik and Rode, Andrey appears at the back of the stage and "wheels a baby carriage with a sleeping child in it" (IV, p. 146). With brief exceptions, Andrey remains upstage with the baby carriage for most of the Act. His position in that part of the stage, as a constant backdrop for the conversations that are occurring in other areas, can be compared to a certain extent to the role of a chorus, except for the fact that he speaks little. Even at the end of the play, he is still wheeling the pram about, according to Natasha's wishes, and has become a sort of fixture, an appendage to the house, in which his wife dominates. His constant presence is also important because it reminds the reader that while the lives of almost everyone around him are changing and moving on,

his has come to a standstill and promises to remain that way.

The upstage is also important in relation to Tuzenbakh. Gradually, through parts of conversations, the reader is informed that Tuzenbakh has been challenged to a duel by Solyony and that it is to take place that day. First Irina, then Andrey and Masha try to question Chebutykin about it, and the latter finally reveals what is to occur:

ANDREY. [...] (Pause.) Something happened yesterday near the theatre. Everyone is talking about it, but I don't know.

CHEBUTYKIN. Nothing. Stupidity. Solyony started needling the Baron, and the Baron lost his temper and insulted him, and it finally turned out that Solyony had to challenge him to a duel. (Looks at his watch.) Seems it's about time now... At half-past twelve o'clock, in the government grove, there, the one you can see from here, on the other side of the river... pif-paf. (Laughs.) [...]

(IV, pp. 148-49)

From this point on, periodic shouts of "Yo-ho! God-gop!" from upstage remind Chebutykin, and, later, Tuzenbakh, that they must be off to the duel. These sounds expand the stage space for the reader and create suspense. Solyony himself appears upstage with two officers to summon Chebutykin and, after a brief conversation, the two go off together (IV, p. 150). Similarly, Tuzenbakh leaves via the avenue of firs upstage when he goes to meet his

opponent (IV, p. 151). This creates a somewhat longer leave-taking with Irina, and allows more time for reflection on the situation as the character is departing.

The house stage-right is also used throughout the Act, not only for the exits and entrances of dramatis personae, but as a source of various sounds that interrupt the conversation occasionally. For instance, the stage directions indicate that "In the house, 'The Maiden's Prayer' is being played on the piano" (IV, p. 147) during a conversation between Irina, Kulygin, and Chebutykin. This draws the criticism from Irina that "Protopopov keeps sitting there in the drawing room. He came today too..." (Ibid.) It is ironic that Irina is the one to say this, since, in Act One, Protopopov had not been invited to her name-day party, but sent a cake. The change in regimes in the Prozorov house is thus well illustrated. On the next page, it is Andrey who draws attention to the sounds in the house: "And when will they quiet down in the house, when? Such noise" (IV, p. 148). Constant attention is drawn to the house in other ways also: Natasha appears in the window to scold Andrey (IV, p. 153); Masha vehemently refuses to enter the house again (IV, p. 155); Kulygin goes into the house and comes back with Masha's hat and cape at the end of the Act. Great care is taken to emphasize the new

changes in the house (Irina does not like her room; ironically, Andrey is to inherit it when she leaves) and to demonstrate the sisters' new relationship to it. Since the house - and, by extension, because it is their father's house, General Prozorov - had played an important role in the lives of the sisters to this point, the text deliberately emphasizes to what extent this has changed in Act Four. All of the sisters (including Masha, who refuses to go back in) have left or will shortly leave the house. This fact and the departure of the military are closely related, since they represent a total break from the past for the sisters. As Masha says at the end of the play, "Oh, listen to the band playing! They are leaving us, one has gone, gone, gone forever, we are left alone to begin our life over again. We must live... We must live..." (IV, pp. 156-57). This is not necessarily an optimistic new beginning for any of the dramatis personae, but, for the sisters, it does represent a total change. That change is illustrated spatially on stage by the use of the outdoor setting and by the references to the house in this Act.

The continued allusions to the flight of birds also serve to reinforce the momentum of change that is shown in the Act. Whereas, previously, the mention of the flight of birds had been contrasted with the inability

of the sisters to change their lives, here there is a direct comparison between the sisters' lives and the birds:

CHEBUTYKIN. [to Irina] (with tender emotion)
 My wonderful, my fine... my precious...
 You've gone so far ahead I can't catch
 up to you. I'm left behind, like a bird
 of passage, one who's grown-old, unable
 to fly. Fly, my dear ones, fly away,
 and God go with you. [...]

(IV, p. 147)

Several speeches later, Irina states that her soul had "grown wings" after she made the decision to marry Tuzenbakh, and Masha also comments on the seasonal flight of the birds:

MASHA. [...] Living as you do in a climate
 where it might start snowing any moment,
 and what do you do - keep on talking,
 that's what... (Stopping.) I'm not going
 into that house, I can't stand going in
 there... When Vershinin comes, tell me...
 (Walks along the avenue.) And the birds
 of passage are flying already... (Looks
 up.) Swans or geese... My dear, happy,
 lovely birds... (Goes out.)

(IV, p. 149)

Just as the birds are forced to fly because of the change of seasons, so the sisters must cope with the various changes that their lives are bringing them. These changes are associated with the house and the military. If, as Olga says "nothing turns out the way we want it to. That means we shall never live in Moscow" (IV, p. 154), then at least the "birds have left the nest", to use a phrase that

is perhaps trite for the events of the play, but nevertheless applicable.

An emancipation occurs for the sisters, one which is illustrated by the strength which they show at the end of the play. This strength is expressed spatially by the fact that "the three sisters stand, pressing next to one another" (IV, p. 156) at the end, a trio united by their positive front against the unhappy changes in their lives. Masha repeats "We must live... We must live..." (IV, p. 157), Irina resolves to leave on her own for the school where she will teach, and Olga still shows optimism: "Listen, listen to the band play - so joyfully, so happily, you want to live!" (Ibid.). The three women are a contrast to the three men who remain on stage with them. Kulygin, who brings Masha's hat and cape, remains the same as he has been throughout the play; although his position is not clearly indicated by the text, the reader may assume he is standing somewhere near them. By contrast, Chebutykin is upstage, sitting on a bench (IV, p. 156) and Andrey is wheeling Bobik's baby carriage, presumably also upstage. The unchanged monotony of Chebutykin and Andrey's lives and attitudes (despite the fact Chebutykin is leaving with the regiment) is expressed in the refrain repeated by Chebutykin: " 'Ta-ra-ra... boom-di-yah... sitting on a curb today...'

What does it matter, anyway!" (IV, p. 156). This refrain uttered upstage by Chebutykin while Olga alternately repeats "If only we knew, if only we knew" downstage reminds the reader of the upstage/downstage division at the beginning of Act One in which the three sisters were contrasted to the military. This time, only Chebutykin speaks upstage, but the contrast is nevertheless there. It shows two opposite human attitudes: that of not caring at all about life, and that of always wishing to know much more than one can humanly find out. The reader is tempted, at the end, to repeat a sentence used earlier in the play by Tuzenbakh: "And let them talk as much philosophy as they want, so long as they keep on flying..." (II, p. 125).

The reader must be aware of the use of space on many levels in The Three Sisters. He must follow the divisions of stage space and the movement of the dramatis personae within it; he must integrate information both from the stage directions and from direct dialogue which adds to his knowledge of off-stage space and use that knowledge towards an understanding of the play. More importantly, however, he must co-operate on a more symbolic level at which the use of space in The Three Sisters reinforces and expands some of the more literal uses. This, for example, was the case in the references to "Moscow"

which occur so frequently. Chekhov has taken delight in interweaving themes and symbolic allusions throughout his text which, when spoken by the characters, often produce a bizarre effect within their context, but which, if related to similar references elsewhere in the text, form a coherent pattern and an important element of meaning. The text uses relatively few stage directions and often leaves it to the imagination of the reader to co-ordinate key spatial elements such as direction of exit or entrance and position on stage. This in no way detracts from the impact of the play, since the major links are present, and since the reader is not called upon to perform any unusually difficult manoeuvres of the imagination in order to follow the intent of the text. What is more complex for him is the symbolic or allusive level of the use of space. That is where the text is far more complex and demanding, and where the reader must either dispose of an excellent memory or must refer back to certain portions of text in order to try to follow the pattern that is being built up in each successive act. This is a play which uses the basic components of stage space in an economical and masterful fashion, and goes beyond this to a more complex (though, on the surface, straightforward) use of space. It demands a great deal of cooperation on the part of the reader and, as a result, constitutes a rewarding challenge.

NOTES

- 1 Although, in preparation for writing this chapter, a reading of the original text in the Collected Works, Volume 9, (Moscow, 1963) was made, all references to the text of The Three Sisters here will be quoted from Eugene K. Bristow's translation in the Norton edition of Anton Chekhov's Plays (New York, 1977).
- 2 This is an instance of where a reader's experience differs from a spectator's. In a production of the play, this activity would be visible to the audience for the first part of the Act and would be simultaneous with the first few minutes of dialogue.
- 3 D. Magarshack, The Real Chekhov, p. 128.
- 4 Ibid., pp. 129-30. See also, A. Roskin, A.P. Chekhov, p. 361, where he calls the voices of Tuzenbakh, Solyony, and Chebutykin in this opening scene an accompaniment.
- 5 N. Nilsson, "Intonation and Rhythm in Chekhov's Plays", p. 178.
- 6 J.L. Styan, Chekhov in Performance, p. 163.

7 A. Roskin, A.P. Chekhov, p. 407. The translation is this author's.

8 J.L. Styan, Chekhov in Performance, p. 162.

9 J.L. Styan, op. cit., p. 163.

10 Interestingly enough, besides the servants, there are six civil and six military characters listed.

11 R. Ingarden, "The Function of Language in the Theatre".
In: The Literary Work of Art, pp. 392-93.

12 D. Rayfield, Chekhov: The Evolution of His Art,
p. 217.

13 M. Valency, The Breaking String, p. 212.

14 J. Coakley, "Chekov [sid] in Ireland: Brief Notes on Friel's Philadelphia", p. 192.

15 D. Rayfield, op. cit., p. 217.

16 M. Valency, op. cit., p. 214.

17 Ibid., p. 241.

18 A. Roskin, A.P. Chekhov, p. 274.

19 Roskin and Pitcher also remark on this: Roskin, op. cit., p. 371; Pitcher, The Chekhov Play, p. 118.

20 Again, the reading process differs here from an actual performance, since, in the latter, the exits and entrances would be concretized by the fact that the actors performing the roles of the dramatis personae would need to enter and leave from designated places, and would be seen to do so by the spectator.

21 The italics are this author's.

22 The window, as seen earlier in the Act, also symbolizes spring and hope (it is letting in the sunny spring air) and, as such, adds to the "romanticism" of the scene.

23 J.L. Styan, Chekhov in Performance, p. 180.

24 Among others, Peter Szondi has commented in an

enlightening fashion on this scene between Andrey and Ferapont. His argument is both interesting and rewarding, but, while it touches on much of what is developed here, its purpose is quite a different one and cannot be applied directly to this thesis. See P. Szondi, Theorie des modernen Dramas, pp. 32-40.

25 The same effect is achieved by the stage direction at the beginning of Act Two which says that "Behind the scenes the sound of an accordion is barely heard outside on the street". This is connected with the fact that it is Carnival Week and that the mummers are expected that evening at the Prozorov house. The sentence is neither an embellishment nor merely included to create atmosphere, but serves to direct the reader's attention to space beyond that represented, and to the current of life continuing its course all around the Prozorovs and their friends.

26 This is shown, verbally, in its most extreme form in the chekhartma/cheremsha argument between Chebutykin and Solyony (II, p. 129). Unlike Ferapont earlier in the Act, neither character is deaf, so that the effect is both comic and tragic here.

- 27 D. Magarshack, The Real Chekhov, p. 133.
- 28 Ibid., p. 138.
- 29 J.L. Styan, Chekhov in Performance, p. 227.
- 30 D. Rayfield, Chekhov: The Evolution of His Art, p. 214.
- 31 M.N. Stroeva, loc. cit., p. 134.
- 32 M.N. Stroeva, loc. cit., pp. 125 and 132.
- 33 N. Gourfinkel, "Les Interprétations russes de Tchékhouv," p. 135.
- 34 J. Gassner, "The Duality of Chekhov," p. 178.
- 35 M.N. Stroeva, loc. cit., p. 134.
- 36 J.L. Styan, "The Idea of a Definitive Production: Chekhov in and out of Period," p. 182.
- 37 D. Rayfield, Chekhov: The Evolution of His Art, p. 212.

- 38 A. Roskin, op. cit., p. 271; D. Magarshack, Chekhov, the Dramatist, p. 235.
- 39 J.L. Styan, Chekhov in Performance, p. 152.
- 40 J.L. Styan, Chekhov in Performance, p. 153.
- 41 H. Pitcher, The Chekhov Play, p. 122.
- 42 D. Magarshack, The Real Chekhov, pp. 147-48. A variation on this argument also occurs in Charles B. Timmer, "The Bizarre Element in Chekhov's Art," reprinted in Anton Chekhov's Plays, trsl. and ed. by Eugene K. Bristow, p. 282.
- 43 Of the critics, only Roskin and Styan seem to comment directly on the use of the screens in Act Three. Roskin attributes the sisters' retirement behind the screens to their unwillingness to listen to what they know will be Andrey's lying excuses (op. cit., p. 329) and compares Andrey's speech in this scene to a monologue (Ibid., p. 409). Styan sees the use of the screens as indicative of the physical discomfort of the sisters (Chekhov in Performance, p. 197).

CONCLUSION

It has been the aim of this dissertation to try to apply the theories of text/reader interaction which were outlined in the Introduction to specific analyses of three dramatic texts. The emphasis was placed on text and reader rather than on performance and spectator, since the goal of the thesis was to try to apply Prof. Iser's hermeneutic approach to dramatic texts, something which had not been attempted previously in this manner.

The choice of dramas followed naturally from previous work with the authors concerned, and, in that sense, it was arbitrarily arrived at. Other periods or other dramatic texts might be just as appropriate and as fruitful for analysis and, although no certain predictions can be made as to the outcome, it would be interesting to pursue future work using the same theoretical stance, but other texts. Specifically for the work of Zola, Hauptmann, and Chekhov, the choice of dramas was arrived at for slightly varying reasons. Within Zola's dramatic output, which pales considerably in comparison with his novels, Thérèse Raquin stands out as one of the richer and more approachable texts. By contrast, Chekhov's major plays offer a far more complex and polished oeuvre to choose

from, and use of The Three Sisters was thus a personal preference. In the case of Hauptmann, I decided to use the first of his plays to be published and produced. Other choices would have been as appropriate, since Hauptmann's dramatic career was long and productive, and indeed it might be enlightening to attempt a comparison between some of the earlier and the later dramas.

No attempt has been made to determine whether or to suggest that Zola, Hauptmann, and Chekhov influenced one another in any significant way, since a historical approach was not the aim of this thesis. Rather, having completed the three analyses as regards space, we are able to observe to what extent Zola and Hauptmann especially and, to a degree, Chekhov worked with the same technical "repertoire" in mind. Repertoire is used here in the sense that Prof. Iser has developed it in his analyses of narrative texts, to refer to prevalent conventions. The reader of Thérèse Raquin and Vor Sonnenaufgang must be aware of the "Kastenbühne" or "fourth wall" convention, while the reader of The Three Sisters relies less on it and more on that text's expansion of it for its own internal purposes.

It becomes apparent from analyzing the three plays that the reader of a dramatic text, while he is handicapped

in some obvious areas vis-à-vis his counterpart the spectator, can achieve a considerable and fruitful interaction with the text in his own right, as he is indeed motivated to do by certain mechanisms that the text uses. The fact that stage directions are present, and are printed in order to be differentiated visually from the direct dialogue, for instance, is already a major indication that the reader is invited to perform mentally certain tasks he is not asked to do in reading a narrative text. While this is a basic example, it shows the importance of the particular concern of this thesis for the drama: the use of space. This is vital not only for the texts used as examples here, but for all dramatic texts, in varying ways and degrees. However, it has not been the aim of this thesis to prove that the foregoing is so, but rather to demonstrate how and to what extent the reader of the dramatic text must also be involved in the spatial co-ordination present in that text. His involvement as regards space, though different from a spectator's, is just as deep and complex, and he is forced by the text to participate. If he does not, one of the most important levels of meaning of the drama becomes closed to him.

The application of the theoretical viewpoint explained in the Introduction has yielded somewhat different results as regards the three plays discussed.

A progression from Zola to Chekhov is quite apparent in that Thérèse Raquin is almost simplistic in its use of space, whereas The Three Sisters presents a much more considerable challenge for the reader. Whereas the strategy of Thérèse Raquin, such as it is, necessitates very little shifting of viewpoint on the part of the reader, and leaves few gaps of any complexity, that of The Three Sisters forces him to perform far more numerous changes of perspective and synthesizing of what Ingarden has called schematized aspects. In addition, because it often progresses in seemingly straightforward fashion, the latter uses its surface simplicity to mask a more complex level of activity, and thus requires more effort on the part of the reader. Vor Sonnenaufgang stands somewhere in between the other two plays in the extent to which it manipulates the reader with regards to space. It is different from them in that it uses very specific diagrams of the stage layout, diagrams that conform strictly to the fourth wall convention, and on which the text subsequently relies, especially in Act Two and Act Four. Those editions which omit the diagrams are in effect editing out an important part of the text. While it also relies heavily on convention, however, Vor Sonnenaufgang presents far more of a challenge for the reader than does Thérèse Raquin, exercising, as it does, his ability

to anticipate, or to integrate information retroactively, or to orient himself within a relatively complex series of spatial stimuli. Thus, while it was possible to apply the theoretical stance of this thesis to all three plays, its most satisfying application in terms of text/reader interaction occurred in the most complex of the dramas: The Three Sisters. The latter's strategy was far less than obvious, and the consequent involvement of the reader occurred on a deeper level.

The dramatic literary text is just as "available" to the reader as is the text of narrative literary works. As he progresses through the drama, the reader is able to establish patterns of consistency by cooperating with the strategies already inherent in the text. While most dramatic texts are written with performance in mind, their concretization in the imagination of the reader during the reading process is as legitimate as their concretization by performance on a stage and in front of spectators. However, the reader of the dramatic text is bound to keep in mind during the reading process, as a convention that is inherent in all dramatic texts, its potential performance. While this changes his imaginal process, it in no way detracts from its legitimacy or from its achievement.

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