Martin Humpál

THE ROOTS OF MODERNIST NARRATIVE:

Knut Hamsun's Novels

Hunger, *Mysteries*, and *Pan*

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PREFACE

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INTRODUCTION

The present work argues that Hamsun's novels *Hunger* (*Sult*, 1890), *Mysteries* (*Mysterier*, 1892),[1] and *Pan* (1894) are examples of early modernism. Although Hamsun's works were not considered modernist in his lifetime, recent criticism increasingly sees them in a modernist perspective. Modernism, as I see it and define it in chapter 1, is an aesthetic aimed at disrupting the traditional cultural codes of modernity.[2] For this reason, modernism not only focuses on new themes, but also presents them in new forms – formal innovation lies at the core of modernist poetics. The attempt to classify Hamsun's works as modernist must therefore involve a comparison with modernist works both in themes and forms. Critics have already made important thematic comparisons,[3] but the formal argument is still missing. Therefore the primary aim of the present analysis is to provide such an argument, while maintaining that the formal criterion must be seen in conjunction with the theme-content criterion. If the latter sometimes seems to be in the background of my analysis, it is not because the formal criterion is more important for assessing Hamsun as modernist. Rather, the purpose is to highlight the formal aspect of Hamsun's modernism which has not yet received sufficient attention.

Analyzing the formal aspects of modernism requires an adequate formal theory. Since I focus specifically on prose-works, I use as my principal instrument theories of narrative. The goal of my narrative analyses is two-fold: first, to show that Hamsun's formal innovation arises from thematic concerns and a view of literature's function that he shares with modernist writers; second, to show how his use of narrative techniques differs from earlier narrative aesthetics and how it corresponds to that of other modernist prose-works. My method thus could be called "historical narrative poetics." It is narrative poetics because it compares various forms of narrative representation. It is historical because it indicates how these forms differ historically according to the differing goals of modernist and pre-modernist writers.

This method ultimately determines the choice of narrative theories I use. The major inspiration has been the studies of Dorrit Cohn,

Franz K. Stanzel, and Monika Fludernik. Cohn and Stanzel are particularly helpful in assessing the historical significance of narrative forms because they historicize narratology. Their insights help us avoid both the reduction of the differences between modernism and earlier period styles to differences in content on the one hand, and the exaggerated formalist claims of modernist radical invention on the other. Their theories allow us to see modernist narrative as a complex of new uses and new constellations of earlier techniques in conjunction with new themes, rather than as the invention of brand new techniques. When I therefore sometimes speak of modernist "new forms," "formal innovation," and "modernist narrative techniques," I normally mean these new uses and constellations.

All three theorists, and most consistently Fludernik, also offer alternatives to some of the theoretical drawbacks of mainstream narratology[4] that prevent critics from rethinking the issues of modernist narrative representation. Specifically, two major theoretical biases have generated some of the problematic assumptions about modernist narrative. One is the anthropomorphic view of every narrator as a single enunciator of the entire narrative. The underlying assumption is that the narrator is a figure resembling a real-life oral storyteller. The alternative to this view is considering the narrator principally as a *textual function* which can take various shapes. Accordingly, we should speak of the narrator as a person with a certain psychology only if the textual signals evoke him/her as such. This alternative makes possible a better approach to those modernist works in the third-person that openly contradict the idea of a single enunciator. The situation is somewhat different in first-person fiction whose basic construction normally does presuppose a single enunciator. Yet even here the narrator does not always manifest his/her present voice or thoughts; therefore the consideration of narrator as a textual function enables a more precise description of narrative representation in first-person fiction, as well.

The idea that every narrative is enunciated by a single coherent narrator-personality causes a second widespread bias, namely the discussion of modernist narrative under the distinction "showing" (direct presentation) vs. "telling" (indirect representation), where the former is often said to be more modernist. While I agree that the emphasis on immediate presentation or expression rather than mediated representation is a generally valid distinguishing mark of modernist narrative, I argue that this distinction should not be reduced to a strictly linguistically defined one between direct and indirect discourse (both for speech and thought). Yet this is precisely what terms such as "showing" and "telling," or "mimesis" and "diegesis," mean both in mainstream criticism and among many narratologists. To see direct

discourse as typically modernist is, besides being historically problematic, theoretically incorrect, for it assumes that direct discourse always enables the most direct presentation of fictional reality to the reader. Fludernik argues persuasively that the effects of direct, indirect, and free indirect discourses depend on the contexts in which they occur. Indirect and free indirect discourses can sometimes provide a greater illusion of mimetic directness than the direct. To see these dimensions of narrative representation and appreciate their significance for our definitions of period styles such as realism and modernism, we must not reduce our discussions of fictional narrative to theories of oral utterance. The alternative is to approach written narrative as a *textual simulation* of fictional reality, including the processes of narration. Such an approach enables us to find out that while a particular narrative technique may not be direct "in terms of mimetic *viewpoint*," it can still be direct "in terms of *mimetic effect*" on the reader (Fludernik 327).

Each of the three analyses I undertake in chapters 2, 3, and 4 differs considerably from the others in theoretical focus and in specific arguments. It is because, from the formal perspective, each of the three narratives is modernist for slightly different reasons. While there are many similarities in the themes these novels convey, the presentation of these themes differs notably. Each novel exemplifies a slightly different type or constellation of modernist narrative features.

CHAPTER 1
HAMSUN AND MODERNIST NARRATIVE

> Now, if some bold novelist, tearing aside the cleverly woven curtain of our conventional ego, shows us under this appearance of logic a fundamental absurdity, under this juxtaposition of simple states an infinite permeation of a thousand different impressions which have already ceased to exist the instant they are named, we commend him for having known us better than we knew ourselves.
>
> (Henri Bergson, *Time and Free Will*)

1.1. Hamsun as a Modernist: An Unfinished Project

Knut Hamsun "is today the only Norwegian writer besides Ibsen and Undset who belongs to world literature. He is also the best known Scandinavian novelist . . ." (Næss, *Knut Hamsun* 158). One of the major sources of Hamsun's renown is

> his place in the development of literary modernism. His manic-depressive heroes, his elitism, his emphasis on the unconscious life of the mind, his stream of consciousness techniques—make him at the same time a disciple of Dostoevski and Nietzsche, and a precursor of Kafka and Joyce. (Næss, *Knut Hamsun* 158-59)

Many today consider Hamsun to be an early modernist almost as a matter of course. Hamsun's undeniable influence on most of the major European writers has prompted I. B. Singer to claim that "[t]he whole modern school of fiction in the twentieth century stems from Hamsun" (8). Peter Kirkegaard even sees Hamsun's works as "centrale udtryk for den europæiske modernisme" (39).

Yet serious scholarly attempts to provide arguments in this regard have been few and rather recent. This should come as no surprise. Until quite recently, the term "modernism" served, more often than not, to denote a rather narrow canon of iconic authors who wrote in major world languages and considerably later than Hamsun: Eliot, Pound, Joyce, Woolf, Kafka, Proust. Despite the often repeated claim that modernism was a cosmopolitan phenomenon, literatures in minor languages were mostly disregarded. In the last few decades crit-

ics began to broaden the concept of modernism both spatially (toward minor literatures) and temporally (back into the nineteenth century, until at least the 1890s). The widely read anthology, *Modernism 1890-1930*, edited by Malcolm Bradbury and James McFarlane, is an important milestone in this revision. It is therefore no accident that the latter editor is also the author of the first article on Hamsun's works of the 1890s as modernist.

McFarlane's essay "The Whisper of the Blood" (1956) laid the foundation for all later attempts to consider Hamsun as a modernist writer.[1] An important feature of this article is McFarlane's selection of novels: he discusses *Hunger* (1890), *Mysteries* (1892), *Pan* (1894), and marginally *Victoria* (1898). He argues that Hamsun's twentieth-century work retreats from the modernist position to a more traditional realist idiom (594), a distinction that has rarely been disputed.[2] Concentrating on Hamsun's three most groundbreaking novels, McFarlane gives a well-balanced reading of Hamsun's position in the context of the turn-of-the-century culture, and delineates the relationship between Hamsun's early works and the works of canonical modernists such as Joyce, Kafka, Proust, and Woolf as a prospective field of research. While pointing out clear affinities between the latter writers and the early Hamsun, McFarlane indicates that a revolutionary aspect of Hamsun's early works are his narrative techniques. Like later modernists, Hamsun employs innovative techniques to foreground the perspective of individual consciousness rather than present a broad social analysis:

> We look with the hero equally when he examines the secret areas within himself and when he looks at the world about him, a world in which the things of greatest significance are precisely those other secret mental lives of his fellows. It is this arrangement above all else that has given the richness to Hamsun's early work; and to realize this is to shift the search for the cause of its strange and arresting quality away from questions of character analysis and on to the more technical problems of narrative perspective. (571)

The last sentence contains an important programmatic statement: a certain shift in Hamsun research from *what* to *how*. McFarlane is aware of the fact that standard definitions of modernist fiction involve the concept of formal aesthetic innovation or, more precisely, innovation in narrative techniques: truly modernist works present modernist *themes* in modernist *forms*. McFarlane himself discusses Hamsun's early works more or less in terms of modernist themes (psychology of the unconscious, individualistic subjectivity), and leaves the shift from *what* to *how* to future scholars. His essay concludes that, in order to classify Hamsun's early works as modernist, one has to explore not

only the thematic affinities between Hamsun and other modernists, but also similarities in narrative presentation (592-3).

The present work aims to be such a project. McFarlane's point about the necessity of inquiring into Hamsun's modernism along the lines of narrative innovation is a challenge that remains open. There is as yet no such study of Hamsun's early novels McFarlane's article suggests, despite the fact that some critics see Hamsun's narrative techniques as "the real novelty of his work" (Popperwell, "Attitudes" 2) and claim that "though not as fully developed as in the work of Proust and Joyce, [Hamsun's techniques] are largely the same innovations we associate with the psychological novel inaugurated on a European scale by these writers . . ." (Sehmsdorf 357). While narrative studies of modernists writing in major world languages (Joyce, Kafka, Proust) proliferate, only a few narrative analyses of Hamsun's early novels exist, Mickelsen's of *Pan*, Nybø's of *Mysteries* and Musarra-Schrøder's of *Hunger*.[3] While Mickelsen indicates some connections between modernism and the techniques in *Pan* (his view of the novel's narrative situation largely concurs with mine), the major drawback of the studies by the latter two critics is their formalism: they make virtually no connection between the narrative forms they analyze and literary history.

While these analyses do not link Hamsun's narrative techniques to modernism, studies that do describe Hamsun as a modernist disregard the question of narrative form. Eggen's article on alienation and human reification in *Hunger* makes interesting theoretical connections to modernism, but does not go beyond McFarlane's discussion of narrative techniques. Tiemroth's existential-phenomenologic study explores the ways Hamsun's individuals face the various aspects of the age of lost transcendence: inauthenticity, melancholy, alienation. Following Gustav René Hocke, Tiemroth subsumes modernism under a broader concept of "mannerism," whose earliest periods Hocke dates back to the ancient times. Unfortunately, Tiemroth's philosophical framework is ultimately too broad and historically too vague to specify what is modernist about Hamsun's novels.

Peter Kirkegaard concludes his Marxist study of Hamsun as modernist with an out-of-the-blue "P.S.": "Forøvrigt mener jeg, at Knut Hamsun skriver røven ud af bukserne på de fleste!" (206). This highly favorable evaluation sharply contrasts with the 200 preceding pages of Kirkegaard's ideological criticism of Hamsun's early works. Concentrating mostly on *Hunger*, the author sees Hamsun's early work as a more or less direct reflection of the author's ideology and experience with the socio-economic reality of capitalism. While Kirkegaard's thematic observations about the role of the artist in the modern capitalist city are penetrating, he fails to supplement his ideological

approach with an aesthetic one, and the curious P.S. is a symptom of this absence. He labels Hamsun's work as modernist simply because it reflects a certain historical configuration of social modernity. Yet literature does not need to be modernist to do so. Realism or naturalism can also reflect historically new, and modern themes. Kirkegaard fails to explain what distinguishes Hamsun's modernist works from non-modernist fiction, because he does not sufficiently specify Hamsun's aesthetic representation of social modernity.

Atle Kittang's psychoanalytic study is so far the most ambitious reading of Hamsun as a modernist writer. For Kittang, Hamsun's individual is split between "illusion" and "disillusion," that is, between a narcissistic desire for identification with an image that is external to him on the one hand, and an awareness of existential emptiness and the impossibility of achieving authentic identity on the other (*Luft* 19-26). The hero lives in a "void" that cannot be filled and experiences a "lack" that cannot be satisfied. Art feeds on this void, or the "dialectic of lack" ("mangelens dialektikk" 307), since language appears to be both an empty and yet necessary desire that at once alienates and protects the subject from social reality. Hamsun's writing typically reflects on the values, norms, and ideologies of the character/narrator, but it constantly undermines the validity of any of them by highlighting their fictional, illusory status (28).[4] Kittang sees this ironic "sjølvrefleksjon" (28), or self-consciousness, of the text to be a modernist phenomenon.

Kittang's Lacanian analysis has substantially advanced the inquiry into the theme of modernist subjectivity in Hamsun's works that McFarlane initiated. The theme of inauthenticity resulting from a mind-split between social constructs and private anxieties is indeed a central modernist theme. Kittang correctly observes that Hamsun's characters' (self-)projection in the text is inauthentic: due to Hamsun's irony it is typically impossible to tell the difference between the characters *an sich* and their textual (self-)representation. Yet the question is whether the criterion of aesthetic self-consciousness, the way Kittang uses it, is in itself a criterion general enough for interpreting Hamsun's works as modernist. Kittang does seem to be aware of the criterion of formal innovation as a defining characteristic of modernism, but he weakens his argument by finding the modernist aesthetic self-consciousness mostly on the thematic level of the text (structure of the motifs), and only on the very basic formal level (composition, repetition). The examples of Hamsun's text's ironic self-reflection are limited to the organization and interplay of themes and motifs.

I believe that, in addition to phenomena such as those described by Kittang, a more formal innovation needs to be detected in Ham-

sun's narrative if we are to call it modernist. (I explain the reasons in the next section in which I define my view of modernism.) This is also where McFarlane differs from Kittang—in the emphasis on form. While both critics speak of aesthetic innovation in Hamsun's texts, McFarlane has a more formal conception of narrative than Kittang does. The former scholar seems to be interested in how the formal properties of Hamsun's texts represent the fictional world and the character's speech and consciousness. Kittang, in a post-structuralist fashion, sees "narrative," "text," and "writing" mostly in terms of organization of themes, motifs, and symbols. This difference explains, first, why McFarlane refuses to see Hamsun's twentieth-century works as modernist, whereas Kittang does not limit his conception of modernism to Hamsun's early work. Second, it explains why Kittang, unlike McFarlane, downplays the importance of Hamsun's narrative techniques as a criterion for classifying him as modernist: "Hamsun er vår fremste tidleg-modernistiske romanforfattar ikkje så mykje på grunn av sin skriveteknikk og sitt 'psykologiske' program, som på grunn av den særeigne måten romankunsten blir til sjølvrefleksjon på i bøkene hans" (27-8).

Of the two formal-aesthetic conceptions of Hamsun's modernism, I follow McFarlane's, rather than Kittang's. Like the former critic, I am also less willing to see Hamsun's twentieth-century production as modernist, although the scope of the present work does not allow space for an extensive argument in this regard. This does not mean, however, that my own analyses of Hamsun's early novels are at odds with Kittang's. On the contrary, they complement each other quite well. I will argue that Hamsun's early books *Hunger*, *Mysteries*, and *Pan* are modernist precisely because in them narrative techniques highlight the modernist themes of existential void, inauthenticity, and the tension between illusion and disillusion which Kittang describes. But first I must explain why formal innovation is an important criterion in theories of modernism.

1.2. Modernism against Modernity

Modernism is an aesthetic usually seen in opposition to the cultural-historical phenomenon of bourgeois modernity which has "produced the notion of 'realism'" (Calinescu 90).[5] The term "modernity" itself is probably best defined as "the process through which rationalism is channeled into empiricism, which in turn provides the theoretical foundation for the Enlightenment, whose outlooks, goals, and predispositions characterize the 'modern' world" (Berman viii). This process is closely linked to the rise of the middle classes as the driving force behind the development of capitalism, industrialization and sci-

entific positivism. Therefore the term "bourgeois modernity," as used for example by Calinescu (41-42) and Nicholls (7), appropriately indicates that the bourgeois has traditionally been the bearer and executor of the idea of modernity.

The bourgeois idea of modernity, according to one of its more concise summaries, involves

> [t]he doctrine of progress, the confidence in the beneficial possibilities of science and technology, the concern with time (a *measurable* time, a time that can be bought and sold and therefore has, like any other commodity, a calculable equivalent in money), the cult of reason, and the ideal of freedom defined within the framework of an abstract humanism, but also the orientation toward pragmatism and the cult of action and success. . . . (Calinescu 41)

Against this background, modernism can be defined as "the negative other of capitalist-bourgeois ideology and of the ideological space of social harmony demarcated for the bourgeois subject" (Eysteinsson 37). This negation of bourgeois modernity has been discussed and conceptualized "in terms of thematic, ethical, sociological, psychological, philosophical, and ideological issues" (38). But such conceptualization is clearly not sufficient:

> Surely we can imagine a traditional realist text that fulfills the thematic requirements of such a negation. It seems, therefore, that in order for us to begin finding the edges of modernism, we have to relate the above issues to modes of presentation, to language and formal mediation, winding our way back to the question of "modernist form." (38)

Eysteinsson here indicates a basic premise of standard theories of modernism: that modernism involves, among other things, an aesthetic, formal disruption or "interruption" (Eysteinsson 6; 240) of bourgeois modernity. While the works of authors such as Balzac, Dostoevski, Dickens, Zola, George Eliot, and Galsworthy engage in the "analysis of modern life" (Berman 27), and may even share many themes, concerns, and ideologies with modernists, they are normally not associated with them. What distinguishes modernist from non-modernist works is not only the *what*, that is, the themes they portray, but also the *how*, the way these themes are presented. In this respect, the following conception of modernism is typical:

> To qualify as modernism, the consideration of aesthetic form must take precedence over content. . . . [F]orm and content must be understood to be indistinguishable. Worldview is not simply placed inside form; worldview is equivalent to form. Not only is the content of the work the content of the psyche, but the form of the work is also the form of the psyche. Creativity at its best requires formal innovation. (Berman 28)

This definition can serve us as a starting point, but only if we slightly rephrase its somewhat rigid formulation as follows: the formal element must be present in the work in such a way that the narrative expresses modernist themes in their own idiom; in this sense, the work is "self-generated," rather than adopting pre-established aesthetic rules.

This basic definition of modernism has to be taken seriously if Hamsun's works are to be included in the modernist canon. Otherwise Hamsun will always remain a writer intimately concerned with modernity, but not modernist in the above sense. The present work therefore intends to answer the question whether Hamsun's narrative aesthetic allows critics to place his early novels alongside modernist works. I do not suggest that the formal consideration should be the exclusive criterion of modernism. Many exaggerated ahistorical claims have been made in formalist theories of modernism. The formal criterion must be seen in conjunction with thematic, historical, and ideological issues. It cannot, however, be absent, and section 1.2.1. explains why.

1.2.1. Modernism and the Question of Literary Representation

The basic purpose of modernist form is to oppose the rules of conventional representation: modernism "resists reality-fabrications that are recuperable as 'stories' or as situations that can readily be reformulated in sociopragmatic terms" (Eysteinsson 187). This tendency toward what is sometimes called "non-/anti-mimetism" or "non-/anti-representationalism"[6] reflects a basic modernist ideology which has several historical aspects.

1.2.1.1. Social Mimesis: The Public and the Private

The need for aesthetic subversion of conventional literary language in the nineteenth century arose as a reaction against the pressures of what one might call "social mimesis." According to Nicholls, authors from Baudelaire onward

> were increasingly aware of a mimetic principle at work in bourgeois modernity, in its fondness for representational art, in its parasitic dependence on 'tradition', and in the psychology of emulation underpinning a culture in which moral continuity was ensured by institutionalised habits of imitation. Bourgeois culture thus seemed to ground itself in the awkward paradox that we become truly ourselves only by copying others. (13)

This social mimesis is predicated upon rationality as a guarantee of modernity's progress. The essentially human is rational and finds its true expression in public interaction. Individuals are supposed to mature through education and critical public discussion, recognize their place within society, and comply with its rational organization.

This compliance needs to take on public forms to be recognized. Accordingly, bourgeois society determines that the proper forms of individuality and subjectivity are those oriented toward the public: those that contribute to modern society's "natural" progression. While individuality becomes confused with a social role played in front of other people, the genuinely private experience (including irrational impulses, body functions, sexual fantasies) is repressed by the public.

Thus a split occurs in many individuals between the public role of private individual they play and the genuinely private experience which often conflicts with it. This conflict becomes internalized in the individual's mind as one between what I call the public and private worlds.[7] For the individual, the *public world* is a psychological configuration representing the forces of bourgeois modernity; being aware that s/he is supposed to play a social role, the individual perceives his/her existence in the public world as inauthentic. The individual's essentially private experience, or the *private world*, involves anxieties, dreams, and fantasies that are normally not revealed in front of other people; while authentic existence seems impossible without such forms of subjectivity, the public world suppresses them as inappropriate. Yet this genuinely private is precisely what most modernists perceive as the essentially human.[8]

If the ideology of bourgeois modernity defines individuality in terms of rational, social compliance, modernists see individuality as "won through an assertion of difference" (Nicholls 15). Against the dehumanizing pressure that the passive imitation of bourgeois-capitalist modernity involves, modernists postulate the essentially human as the genuinely individual, which is synonymous with the genuinely private. The works of several turn-of-the-century thinkers point in the same direction. Bergson finds life's real dimension and the source of its vitality in private psychological time, while criticizing institutionalized public time as a manifestation of rationalist analysis which society promotes at the expense of private intuition. Nietzsche stresses the necessity of individualist vitalism as a defense against the passivity of mass psychology. Freud sees the origin of neuroses in the intrusion of public institutions upon the private life of individuals. These thinkers indicate that "consciousness is not fully transparent to itself" (Schwartz 4) and can therefore never be reduced to public language. Similarly, modernists locate the area of private difference in the non-public areas of the mind, including the unconscious, because these cannot be entirely translated into public constructs.

Modernism thus sets out to liberate the individual subject's private world from the power of public constructs and assert it as truly private. This historical development has often been discussed as the mod-

ernist "inward turn," or the effort "to place everything in the mind" (Stevenson 17). In line with turn-of-the-century thought, especially that of Nietzsche's, modernism becomes an aesthetics of perspectivism, often accompanied by a relativism of traditional values, as if there were just as many realities as there are points of view, and none of them is to be privileged over another.

However, one should be careful not to overstress the everything-in-the-mind criterion as a definition of modernism. To understand modernism as a historical phenomenon, it is better to conceive it as an aesthetics which foregrounds the social crisis between the public and private that the development of modernity brought about. In this aesthetics presentation of consciousness plays a central, yet not exclusive, role. Most modernist works do not limit themselves to the presentation of individual points of view and rely on more traditional techniques, as well. Modernist works typically present—though often indeed through a solitary consciousness—the theme of the crisis between private and public: "As the public became more intrusive, the individual retreated into a more strongly fortified and isolated private world. That is why we can observe in this period *both* a greater interpenetration *and* a greater separation of the two worlds [emphasis added]" (Kern 191).

This dialectic of private and public needs to be stressed, since the modernist turn to subjectivity is deeply ambiguous. While modernism sees the rejection of bourgeois modernity as the only way to authentic living and art, it usually renders, at the same time, the possibility of an authentic self as only illusory, or at least very problematic. Modernists, like the turn-of-the-century thinkers, recognize that "consciousness is structured by forces of which it is unaware" (Schwartz 213). Thus the modernist subject is split, alienated, uncertain about values. The historical background of the profound disturbance of the relationship between private and public has been repeatedly described under the name "modernization," which involves notions such as: loss of traditional values due to advancing secularization; restructuring of class distinctions due to massive industrialization and the ensuing demographic changes; changes in perception of time and space due to rapid technological developments in communication; anonymity of urbanization and bureaucracy; alienation and dehumanization in the face of mechanization of work; and last, but not least, the commodification of life and art in the age of production for the mass market.

Modernists intend to show the impact of these changes on the individual's private life, but they find the traditional bourgeois aesthetics unsuitable for this task. Traditional literature masks the damaging effects of modernity, because it is itself part of bourgeois modernity. In order to emancipate the character's private world from the social

mimesis sustained in the public language, modernists have to break away from the traditional aesthetic norms and forms.

1.2.1.2. Literary Mimesis: The Window and the Prism

The modernist efforts to assert individuality as private difference advance the idea of private language. One may indeed identify in this idea the origin of all the various modernist modes of formal defamiliarization of traditional literary language (Nicholls 18). On the epistemological level, the modernist idea of creativity and literature as the unique expression of a unique psyche is rooted in the belief in perspectivism. Realism sustains the illusion that literary language, like the language of rational public discourse, is a transparent medium which can provide access to universal meaning and truth—the reader participates in a collective understanding of reality. Modernism, however, maintains that such participation is only a shared illusion enforced by the power of the public discourse, while deeper meaning—that is, not the banal meanings of public communication, but rather one which has to do with the individual's existential questions—can only be a matter of private experience. Realist mimesis presupposes that one can comprehend reality before representing it. For modernists, the creative process is a unique expression of private language that requires its own form and cannot therefore be constrained by mimetic tradition.

This difference in the intent of realism and modernism is often summarized as tendencies toward *representation* vs. *presentation* respectively.[9] Stevenson explains this distinction in concrete terms: the realist mimesis assumes that the language of a literary work is a transparent *window* upon the world, whereas modernism rather sees the language of a particular work as a refracting *prism* (168). In terms of the socio-historical distinction between public and private I have delineated above, I add that the realist window is always public: various realists just add more glass, so to speak, which is always of the same transparent material. The prism of the modernist work, on the other hand, is private: the language material of the work is individual, and can present the world in a uniquely distorted or fragmented way. The modernist work, then, "presents" or "expresses," but does not "represent" in the realist sense of the word. (It is unfortunately common to equate this general distinction with the narrower, linguistically-narratologically defined one between "telling" vs. "showing," or "diegesis" vs. "mimesis." Below I argue against such a reduction, since modernist "presentation" can involve other phenomena than only these.)

If the modernist prism is a true self-expression of the private (language), authentic art can no longer depend on any universally valid aesthetic rules of representation and criteria of beauty. For this rea-

son, Calinescu defines modernism historically as an "aesthetics of transitoriness," one which is opposed to all the previous "aesthetics of permanence" (3). The history of western literature since the Middle Ages may be seen as a history of "modern" schools of literature attacking the "traditional" ones; but all schools shared the idea of beauty "as a transcendental, eternal model" (3). The various "moderns" throughout the centuries have criticized the traditionalists for not having met the "demands of timeless perfection," yet the "concept of perfection itself was never questioned" (32). In contrast, modernists—or the artists of "aesthetic modernity," as Calinescu calls them—seem to look for beauty in the eminently modern, that is, in the immediately present, transitory and contingent.[10] Thus for modernists, to be modern is no longer a historical necessity, but a conscious choice (50).

Modernist rejection of the public criteria of beauty and traditions is not only part of an effort to emancipate the perspectives of private uniqueness from the public power of bourgeois discourses, but it also effectuates, more generally, an attack on the very foundation of modernity: reason. As a prime inheritor of the Enlightenment, rationalist modernity not only permits, but actually requires continual self-criticism. The social imitation modernists attack is not necessarily uncritical. Yet it is characteristic of modernist ideology that it discredits modernity's capacity for self-criticism. Modernity permits critique only on its own premises: public reason and its forms, agreed on by the community. In this sense even critical realism, perhaps the ultimate manifestation of bourgeois modernity, is a corrupt instrument of critique: "Even though realism may be highly critical of capitalist reality . . . , it evinces a tendency to reproduce the narrative structures and the symbolic order that form the basis of this society and its ideology" (Eysteinsson 208). This disbelief in the critical potential of the realist idiom has grown as mass-media manipulation of public opinion has replaced the classic liberal socio-political models.

One cannot negate, or radically criticize, modernity in forms corrupted by the public ideologies of modernity. Modernists therefore prefer presenting life in its irreducible concreteness to translating it into a readily understandable social discourse. That is, ultimately, why modernism develops as an aesthetics that "resists reality-fabrications that are recuperable as 'stories' or as situations that can readily be reformulated in sociopragmatic terms," to return to Eysteinsson. In this sense, modernism is an aesthetics of disruption or interruption of bourgeois modernity: it interrupts modernity's social paradigms, including literary forms and their functions.

This is the ideological background of the various modernist modes of formal disruption and defamiliarization of language, such as the following. Modernists prefer to depict the chaotic concreteness of psychic life instead of an effort to formulate abstract ideas and ideologies. Modernists strive toward non-mimetic, self-referential, or autotelic language to undermine the illusion that the instrumental rationalism of modernity promotes—the illusion that we can have immediate access to meaning. The textual irony and parody in modernist works highlight the deceptive ease with which we appropriate the world through ideological and moral codes. Modernist works demand the reader's attention to detail and re-reading in order to prevent the passive consumption that is characteristic of the culture of bourgeois modernity. Modernists create non-organic forms to frustrate the expectation of organic unity as a traditional criterion of literary quality. Modernists try to avoid repeating the same forms of aesthetic disruption in their works in order not to congeal into a new tradition and become just another discourse of modernity.

Modernists, to summarize, assume that a culture corrupted by established aesthetic forms is also corrupted by the public ideologies of bourgeois modernity. Therefore modernism strives to negate modernity in the name of private difference that public art and literature usurp and misrepresent. Thus the modernist concern with formal uniqueness and innovation has two major sources: an effort to emancipate the private world of individual difference from usurpation by public discourses; and a need to disrupt literary mimesis as a conveyor of the social mimesis which bourgeois modernity demands.

1.3. Modernism and Narrative Theory

The rise of narrative theory in the twentieth century is closely related to the rise of modernist narrative. With the growing defamiliarization of ordinary literary language in modernist fiction, critics began to shift their attention from the historical-biographical inquiries to the formal questions of narrative discourse and language representation. Not surprisingly, one of the first theorists of narrative was Henry James, arguably an early modernist, whose preoccupation with techniques for rendering consciousness is well-known. The title of one of the early books of narrative theory, Lubbock's *The Craft of Fiction* (1921), also reflects a time when questions about a writer's craft and technique began to assume urgency. Today narrative theory is a well-established discipline within literary studies, though no longer as widely popular as during the period when it flourished in the 1960s and 1970s. The most significant complaint critics have launched against narrative theory is that it is formalist in the sense of disregarding social reality and history for the sake of purely formal analysis, and avoiding interpretation in search of dehumanized abstract struc-

tures. Such claims, however, are often based on serious misrepresentions of both the scope and the history of narrative theory.

The most common case of such misrepresentation is the equation of all narrative theory with only one of its early branches, the French structuralist narratology of the 1960s and early 1970s. Both individual works of criticism and general introductions to literary theory, as well as various dictionaries of literary criticism, misleadingly limit narrative theory to scholars such as Bremond, Greimas, Barthes, Todorov, and Genette.[11] To identify all narrative theory with these names provides a distorted, one-sided image of the discipline, and creates a false impression that narrative theory has ended with Genette.

French narratologists before Genette drew inspiration mostly from Vladimir Propp and the Russian Formalists. They did indeed typically disregard the issues of interpretation, history, and ideology, as they searched for some general structures of narrativity literature employs. Their attempts to create a science of narrative "grammars" often led to abstract typologies describing the story world in terms of "narrative syntax," that is, a static organization of story elements, plot, or action. Today many of these models and efforts to create a comprehensive universal grammar of narrative are rightly seen as a kind of formal neo-positivism whose usefulness for literary studies is marginal.

Genette's *Narrative Discourse* (orig. 1972) was a first step out of the cul-de-sac formalism of his fellow Frenchmen. The latter were interested predominantly in the organization of the *story*, or the distinction made by the Russian Formalists between *fabula* (story world) and *sujet* (narrative organization of the story world). Genette broadened the field of narratology by beginning to pay attention to a third dimension of the narrative text, the *act or process of narration* (Genette's "narrative enunciating"; Stanzel's "mediacy"), that is, narrative representation, or the way in which narrative mediates the narrated information to the reader. The discussion of the communicative aspects of narrative implicitly drew on Jakobson's famous "communication model" between the sender and receiver of an utterance. This interest in the dynamics of narration and narrative representation became the major focus of narrative studies after Genette, and distinguishes them from the narratology of the 1960s. Yet while Genette's book is undoubtedly a cornerstone of these new efforts, it does not go much beyond enumerating abstract categories. Genette's discussion of narrative enunciation is still limited to establishing static categories based on short examples with little attempt to show how they interact in a longer narrative text. Genette does not avoid interpretation (his essay is partly an interpretation of Proust's *Remembrance of Things Past*), but he underestimates the role that context plays in affecting the reader's perception of the techniques discussed. He also makes almost no connec-

tion between narrative forms and literary history. Later studies such as Bal's *Narratology*, Chatman's *Story and Discourse*, Prince's *Narratology*, and Rimmon-Kenan's *Narrative Fiction* did not significantly improve upon the Genettean model; nor did Genette himself in his *Narrative Discourse Revisited*.

These narratologists—let us call them Genettean—are indeed predominantly interested in creating formal poetics of narrative, and they make few connections to literary history or interpretation of particular works. In various degrees, they all subscribe to the problematic distinction the French structuralists made between criticism and theory. The underlying assumption of this distinction, that one can separate objective theory from subjective criticism, has rightly been challenged. Yet one need not therefore entirely discard formal approaches to narrative, as some have suggested.

Critics who diminish the importance of formal inquiries into narrative representation come from both objectivist and subjectivist camps. On the one hand, strictly ideological criticism had problems with narratology from the very start. Marxists have maintained that inquiries into the formal properties of texts lead away from the "real issues": the social reality and the ideologies literature reflects. Such a critique mistakenly assumes that one can objectively describe the social forces behind and within the work without attending to the question of literary form. The literary text, however, does not reflect reality and ideology directly, but mediates or, to borrow from Bakhtin, "refracts" them. That is why throughout the centuries various formal poetics have been needed for our understanding of the different ways literature represents the world.

While the adherents of objectivist ideological criticism may reject the usefulness of narrative theory, they may not necessarily dispute the existence of the categories narratologists identify. Many post-structuralists, on the other hand, have attacked the above narratologists for believing that they can approach a literary text as an objective entity. They have criticized many basic narratological categories as untenable, because literary texts mean different things to different readers and, therefore, any systematization of narrative is just an illusion. Post-structuralists often imply that narratologists do not understand the real nature of narrative; but when they speak of "narrative," they actually use the word in a different sense. Narratologists usually define narrative empirically as a written imitation of oral narration that aesthetically mediates information to the reader. Post-structuralists, in contrast, see narrative more phenomenologically, whether conceived as an epistemological category or an unstable locus of signifiers to be interpreted.[12] Thus the latter use the word "narrative" sometimes to mean "plot," sometimes the thematic organization of the text; and

sometimes they even conflate "narrative" with its interpretation.[13] It is therefore not necessarily "[o]ne of the insights of recent literary theory" that "narrative is really not so much a literary form or structure as an epistemological category" (Sarup 141). This is not an "insight" invalidating the narratologists' definitions of narrative, but only one of many possible uses of the word "narrative" that the English language permits. The post-structuralist critique of narratology is thus often an unnecessary pseudo-critique, because its object of inquiry simply lies elsewhere. Both the more empirical and the more phenomenological definitions of "narrative," "text," "story," etc., can exist side by side without having to exclude each other, precisely because they refer to different areas of inquiry.

Undoubtedly, narrative theory in the tradition of Genette, Chatman, etc., is at its core a formal approach to the literary text: it concerns itself with the formal aspects of narrative mediation. Yet there is no reason why it could not be linked to social reality, history, and even ideology to go beyond the traditional tenets of French structuralism, if narratologists stop insisting on the idea of objective narratology as a science of pure forms. Narrative theories which are dialectically linked to reader-reception and history, have actually existed for quite some time, but mainstream criticism often ignores them or classifies them as structuralist narratology.

The theorists I have in mind are, first of all, Franz K. Stanzel and Dorrit Cohn. They draw marginally on French narratology, but rather extensively on German literary scholarship, traditionally both very historical, but also reception-oriented and attentive to the questions of narrative form. Thus what distinguishes these two theorists from the narratologists I mentioned above is a much greater interest in interpretation, reader-reception, and history. Rather than freezing their object of study in synchronic structural typologies, they examine the diachronic development of narrative forms, showing how they function in various historical contexts. Rather than isolating a static general theory from the dynamics of concrete criticism, they let the first one dialectically interact with the other. Because of their interest in reader-reception, they examine the dynamics of narrative representation, demonstrating how narrative techniques transmit social reality to the reader and how they can affect the reader's perception of the larger units of texts, including entire books (whereas French structuralism was all too often content with a few short sentences). For Cohn and Stanzel, in short, theory is never an end in itself, but serves our understanding of literary history and reader-reception.

Stanzel's disciple Monika Fludernik is less historically oriented, but otherwise she extends many arguments of Stanzel and Cohn. Her magisterial work *The Fictions of Language and the Languages of Fiction:*

The Linguistic Representation of Speech and Consciousness constitutes a turning point in the most recent narrative theory. In this book she most convincingly undermines two cornerstones of classic narrative theories, the Jakobsonian "communication model" of narrative based on oral communication, and, consequently, the rigidity of the distinction between direct representation ("showing," "quotation," "mimesis") and indirect report ("telling," "narration," "diegesis").

The Genettean narratologists assume that everything in the narrative is either reported or quoted by an always already present narrator; this narrator may be covert in certain parts of the text, but is nonetheless postulated as the ultimate "enunciator" of the entire narrative.[14] In contrast, Fludernik's basic premise is that this classic postulate often contradicts empirical evidence. The postulate is based on the uncritical application of the model of oral communication (which always has some empirical speaker) to the narrative text. A fictional narrator, Fludernik argues, is not an empirical entity, but a language construction. All narrative *representation* is textual *simulation* (of the world, of consciousness, of the act of narration, etc.). Fictional narrative, in principle, is not the utterance of a narrator, but the textual simulation of "narrative utterance," "diegesis," "mimesis," "narrator," "voice," "consciousness," "speech," etc., by means of various expressive linguistic signals. The narrative text sometimes does present fictional reality through the voice of a narrator, but it also often simulates fictional reality directly, without its being either "reported" or "quoted" by the narrator. Thus fictional narration sometimes does not resemble oral narration at all. The reader's perception of the narrator as more or less personalized or depersonalized, reliable or unreliable, is only the effect of the author's use of narrative discourse. Some narrators resemble real people more than others not because they are "closer" to their authors, but because their authors use narrative techniques that create greater mimetic effects. As a textual construct, a narrator can be an ambigous mixture of incompatible narrative voices that defies mimetic resemblance to real people, and must then be treated as a mere "narrative function."[15]

If the postulate that every narrative originates in a coherent, anthropomorphic narrator-personality is wrong, the cherished narratological axiom of direct quotation ("showing," "mimesis") vs. indirect report ("telling," "diegesis") can no longer be an absolute distincton. In order to prove this, Fludernik makes the central theme of her theory the boundaries between direct discourse, indirect discourse, and free indirect discourse, the latter technique usually being defined by the classic linguistic-based narratology as a hybrid between the former two categories.[16] Fludernik notes that theorists have either avoided or failed to successfully conceptualize and define the trouble-

some phenomenon of free indirect discourse (FID), because the boundaries between direct, indirect, and FID are much more fluid than previously thought and sometimes impossible to distinguish. By demonstrating that narrative mimesis and diegesis are only textual simulations whose originators often cannot be determined, Fludernik undermines the validity of classic narratological categories such as "voice," "perspective," or "focalization," which have always been defined in relation to an assumed anthropomorphic narrative agent. It is no wonder that the treatment of thought-representation—crucial for the discussion of modernism—in Genettean narratology is profoundly unsatisfactory, since it ultimately reduces all narrative representation to the narrator's "speech": "mimesis in words can only be mimesis of words" (Genette, *Narrative Discourse* 164).[17]

Fludernik wants to challenge precisely the uncritical, automatic equation of the linguistically direct discourse with direct literary representation. Due to this equation, the classic structuralist narratologists have failed to handle ambigous representational forms such as FID (and figural narration, as we will see later), because they have not given sufficient thought to the differences between FID for presenting thought on the one hand, and FID for presenting speech on the other; and because they have classified the representational functions (the effects on the reader) of direct, indirect, and free indirect discourses as if they were immune to the context in which they occur.

The Genettean postulates of "pure" mimesis, "pure" diegesis, and the "dual-voiced" FID cannot be successfully isolated as pure categories outside a particular context. These categories are only approximations; their functions, that is, effects on the reader, can never be fully systematized, because they are not essential properties of these categories, but context-dependent textual configurations.[18] The effects of a particular narrative technique can vary considerably in the actual text. In order to see this, one must analyze individual techniques not only through isolated abstract categories, but one must also pay attention to the particular narrative context in which the technique occurs, and the way this context influences reader-reception.

To summarize, the present work intentionally avoids the French-structuralism-based narratology, including Genette, and relies on the German/Austrian (in Cohn's case, German/Austrian-inspired) scholarship for three major reasons. First, Genettean narratology lacks a socio-historical dimension. Cohn and Stanzel, on the other hand, show how the various changes and developments of narrative forms are related to socio-historical issues: what effects writers in certain periods (want to) achieve, whether a text imposes certain ideologies

blatantly or with an ironic detachment, or what role the reader's expectation in a particular era plays for his/her perception of the literary text. Second, the Genettean narrative theory sustains the idea of a narrative text as the utterance of a single enunciator and thus postulates too rigid a distinction between direct quotation and indirect report. Cohn, Stanzel, and especially Fludernik show persuasively that such a distinction is much more fluid, and includes important phenomena that have been neglected (e.g., "figural narration") or misunderstood (e.g., "FID"). Third, the Genettean analytic effort to isolate formal narrative categories lead him to disregard how these categories interact in a broader context and how this context affects the reader. Cohn, Stanzel and Fludernik, on the other hand, stress that one has to examine how narrative techniques intertwine in a concrete text, and discuss their ultimate effects on the reader in larger textual units. This contextual orientation links Cohn's, Stanzel's, and Fludernik's work to Suzanne Fleischman's impressive theory of tense in narrative. Fleischman's work improves upon the earlier narratological discussions of tense and time for two major reasons: it shows how the temporal functions of tenses and their effects on the reader vary in different contexts; and it indicates that the treatment of tense and temporality is often imprecise because critics do not discuss tense in connection with the closely related grammatical category of aspect.

All these theorists offer useful correctives to some concrete problematic approaches to modernist narrative; these correctives can also help us understand Hamsun's significance in the development of modernist narrative. First, the critics who discuss every narrator as a single "person" often fail to appreciate certain third-person texts that defy such a conception of narrator—e.g., Joyce's *Ulysses* or Hamsun's *Mysteries*. In contrast, approaching narrator as a variable textual function enables a better understanding of these texts and their purposes. The main principle of this approach, which postulates that one should speak of narrator in anthropomorphic terms only to the degree in which the narrative reveals the explicit signs of a narrator-personality, also makes possible a more precise description of first-person narratives. Critics sometimes exaggerate the quasi-autobiographical, retrospective dimension of *Hunger* because they try to approach the narrative as if through the narrator's present perspective. Yet such a perspective is largely missing or, more precisely, is neutral, since the narrator reveals almost no explicit signs of his present view of the past. Instead, *Hunger* presents the immediate experience of the narrator's past self with minimum signs of narratorial mediation.

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rowly conceived linguistic-narratological distinction between "showing" and "telling." Because of this equation, many critics overestimate the presentation of consciousness in direct discourse as distinctly modernist and underestimate the role of other techniques for rendering the mind. Cohn's, Stanzel's, and particularly Fludernik's undermining of the showing/telling paradigm correct the misunderstandings of the socio-historical significance of techniques such as FID and figural narration. Not only do these techniques permeate many modernist works; they can also be just as successful in simulating the directness of presentation as direct discourse. They are thus important criteria for the definition of modernist narrative. The analysis of Hamsun's use of these techniques is crucial especially in the case of *Hunger* which employs them extensively for presenting consciousness.

Third, there are other ways of simulating consciousness than by means of direct or free indirect discourse. For example, Fleischman's theory helps us understand that the differences in the ways in which narrative tense can simulate subjectivity may often depend much less on switching between tenses *per se* (e.g., between the preterit and the present) than on how the category of aspect modifies particular tenses. Following Fleischman, I extend the grammatical category of aspect into "narrative aspect" in my discussion of *Pan*. The shifts in narrative aspect in *Pan* reflect the ways in which the narrator's mind constructs the image of itself in the narrative.

1.4. Toward a Historical Poetics of Modernist Narrative

Several critics have noted that modernism is difficult to define as a period style; indeed, some have even suggested that precisely the absence of a period style characterizes modernism: "Modernism is less a style than a search for a style in a highly individualistic sense; and indeed the style of one work is no guarantee for the next . . . . The condition for the style of the work is a presumed absence of style for the age" (Bradbury and McFarlane, "Name" 29).[19] Such critical observations are understandable in light of what I have said about the modernist foregrounding of private language and the self-generated aesthetics of the individual work. Yet while such characterizations are generally valid, modernist works obviously do share many common aesthetic denominators. Drawing predominantly on the works of Cohn, Stanzel, and Fludernik, I will now delineate the basic distinguishing marks between modernist narrative on the one hand, and realist narrative as modernism's primary target on the other.

I have claimed that the nineteenth-century realist novel is an expression of bourgeois public reason and serves public purposes: it educates individuals into recognizing the necessity of social mimesis

within the boundaries delineated by public reason.[20] The realist text includes various discourses, some of which may even represent private deviations—some temporary, some permanent—from public norms. But due to its public orientation and didactic intentions, the realist narrative always contains one superior discourse which secures an appropriate public perspective and communicates this perspective to the reader. MacCabe calls this superior discourse "meta-language" and observes that it "allows the reader (and critic) to read from a position of dominance" (25) in the sense that the metalanguage devours all the other languages as its objects.[21]

In contrast, modernist works typically lack such a metalanguage. Public discourse in modernist works is not allowed any epistemological privilege over other discourses. More often than not, it is subject to critique, irony and parody from the perspective of the private discourse(s). The reader loses his/her position of epistemological privilege to the extent that the private language(s) can be a hindrance to immediate understanding. The reader confronts an unfamiliar territory of literary communication: s/he either faces one radically private discourse with little or no external anchoring in the public discourse, or a plethora of conflicting discourses, whose significance and ideologies may appear disturbingly unclear and relative due to the lack of an organizing superior power.[22]

The public metalanguage of realism can assume various forms. In third-person narration, the realist narrator is typically "authorial," not in the sense of expressing the opinion of the real author, but in the sense of appearing to be the ultimate creator and enunciator of the entire narrative of which s/he is not part.[23] This narrator is sometimes overtly personalized, addressing the reader directly or otherwise demonstrating to be a personality with a body and mind. When the explicit personality-features are absent, public metalanguage still reveals itself in the narrator's conventional generalizations, gnomic observations and institutional judgments. The first-person narrative form offers more opportunity for the narrator-character's subjectivity, but the narrator still assumes a public perspective of a mature—and typically male, paternalistic—citizen. Private deviations are only temporary in the realist novel; the narrator's metalanguage always eventually provides a public perspective.[24] When I thus speak of "realist narrator" from now on, I mean a narrative voice—whether first- or third-person—which, sooner or later, subsumes private perspectives under a public metalanguage in the sense I have defined above.

In contrast, a major tendency of modernist works is to eliminate, or at least suppress, narratorial metadiscourse in order to emancipate private language. One way to do so is to make the authorial narrator only one unprivileged voice among many by curtailing his omni-

science and subverting his authority, often with an ironic and parodic twist (as happens for example in Joyce's *Ulysses* or Hamsun's *Mysteries*). More often than not, though, the narrator of third-person modernist fiction simply lacks personality features and explicit voice (as in Joyce's *Portrait*, Kafka's *The Trial* and *The Castle*, but also in most of Hamsun's *Mysteries*). Sure enough, not even modernist narrative can do without the basic simulation of the narrator's voice (such as, usually, the past-tense and third-person reference); but the narratorial voice is often so neutralized and depersonalized that it no longer evokes any narrator, not to speak of a personality. One can eliminate the narrator's voice in the first-person narrative, too, but it is harder to do away with the first-person narrator's narrating self altogether, since the first-person form, allowing for only one personal perspective, generally thrives on the tension between the narrator's present, narrating self and his/her past, experiencing self. This seems to be the reason modernists prefer third- to first-person narrative, Hamsun's *Hunger* being an important exception. In first-person modernist works that do deploy a relatively explicit narrator at least to some extent, the narratorial voice nonetheless eschews public metalanguage (as in Proust's *Remembrance*, or Hamsun's *Pan*).

How does the suppression of the narrator's voice concretely emancipate the character's private world? The nineteenth-century realist narrator prevents the private world from unfolding and expressing itself in its own idiom, because s/he, sooner or later, translates it into public discourse and puts all indeterminacy of subjectivity into proper perspective. Even if presentation of consciousness occurs, it mostly focuses on "human action and its motivation" (Pavel 25), rather than on private irrational anxieties and desires; the inner life of the characters is only "a sounding-board for general truths about human nature" (Cohn 23). The reader expects this; therefore extended presentation of the individual's subjectivity seems little justified. The rise of long presentation of consciousness is thus an understandable result of the modernist revolt against the realist narrator's public usurpation of private subjectivity. Modernists eliminate the narratorial discussion of subjectivity and tend to present subjectivity on its own. In this development, at least three techniques become important criteria for defining modernist narrative: the well-known "direct stream of consciousness" or "direct interior monologue," but also "figural narrative" and "free indirect discourse." Strictly speaking, modernists have not invented these techniques, but they begin to use them much more extensively and/or in qualitatively new ways.

What critics usually call the "direct stream of consciousness" or "direct interior monologue"[25] is "direct" because indirect narratorial report is absent; the character whose introspection is being presented

refers to him/herself in the first person; and his/her present experience is conveyed in the present tense:

> I suppose she was pious because no man would look at her twice I hope Ill never be like her a wonder she didnt want us to cover our faces but she was a welleducated woman certainly and her gabby talk about Mr Riordan here and Mr Riordan there I suppose he was glad to get shut of her. . . . (Joyce, *Ulysses* 738)

The direct stream of consciousness is probably the most overrated defining criterion of modernist aesthetics. Certainly, this technique intends to simulate the character's subjectivity in its present state, unmediated by the narrator; and modernists indeed often attempt to render the character's subjectivity in its immediacy. However, the all-too-common assumption that the above is the quintessential modernist technique and the one best suited for direct presentation of human subjectivity is a myth, based on the traditional criticism's uncritical equation of direct "quotation" of consciousness with direct representation, and on disregarding both the contextual factors of individual texts and the overall historial facts of modernist practice. In reality, this technique is just as common, if not less common, in the canonical modernist works as another technique for presenting consciousness, free indirect discourse:

> He dropped her hand. Their marriage was over, he thought, with agony, with relief. *The rope was cut; he mounted; he was free, as it was decreed that he, Septimus, the lord of men, should be free; alone (since his wife had thrown away her wedding ring; since she had left him), he, Septimus, was alone, called forth in advance of the mass of men to hear the truth, to learn the meaning, which now at last, after all the toils of civilisation—Greeks, Romans, Shakespeare, Darwin, and now himself—was to be given whole to ...* "To whom?" he asked aloud [emphasis added]. (Woolf, *Mrs. Dalloway* 101-02)

Free indirect discourse is customarily neglected as a criterion of modernist narrative. One reason is that classic narratology defines the technique purely linguistically as a "dual-voiced" phenomenon: it includes the signs of the character's subjectivity (exclamations, favorite personal expressions, etc.), but maintains the narrator's third-person and past-tense reference.[26] The standard assumption is that since the technique is a linguistic hybrid, the narrative representation it effectuates is also "impure" and therefore "indirect," which in turn degrades it to a status that it is less modernist. This misunderstanding, again, is based on the assumption that direct linguistic discourse is always equal to direct "mimesis" or "showing." In the chapter on *Hunger*, I explain Fludernik's important argument that FID can be—in its effects on the reader—just as direct as the "direct stream of con-

sciousness," depending on the way it is used. Another reason critics neglect FID as a modernist technique is that many consider this technique—unlike the direct stream of consciousness—to be a relatively traditional phenomenon, since it indeed is widespread in nineteenth-century fiction. However, narratological studies have shown that there are several crucial differences in the way FID is used in the classic nineteenth-century novels and modernist novels. Mainstream criticism does not pay attention to these differences, because it is usually informed about narrative only by Genettean narratology which, being little interested in reader-reception, fails to conceptually differentiate between FID for expressing speech, on the one hand, and thought, on the other. In each case the effects on the reader are very different; and these effects also differ in first- and third-person contexts (more on this in the chapter on *Hunger*). By not paying attention to these observations, mainstream criticism obscures at least two historical facts that distinguish the premodernist use of FID from the modernist. First, eighteenth and nineteenth-century authors employ FID predominantly for presenting speech (Fludernik 86-88; 452), whereas modernists use FID much more extensively for presenting consciousness (Cohn 115; Stevenson 34-35; see also my section 2.2.1.) than their predecessors. Second, while FID in the realist novel commonly conveys the narrator's explicit irony and thus reinforces the authority of the public metalanguage, FID in modernist fiction is typically neutral or empathetic with the character, since there is no explicit narratorial voice that could be the source of overt irony.

The third technique that is characteristic of modernist fiction is what Stanzel calls "figural narrative" (sometimes also "reflector-mode narrative"):[27]

> He was alone. . . . The air was soft and grey and mild and evening was coming. There was the smell of evening in the air, the smell of the fields in the country where they digged up turnips to peel them and eat them when they went out for a walk to Major Barton's, the smell there was in the little wood beyond the pavilion where the gallnuts were.
>
> The fellows were practising long shies and bowling lobs and slow twisters. In the soft grey silence he could hear the bump of the balls: and from here and from there through the quiet air the sound of the cricket bats: pick, pack, pock, puck: like drops of water in a fountain falling softly in the brimming bowl. (Joyce, *Portrait* 59-60)

In this technique, the narrator is effaced—except for the basic features of narrative process, i.e., the past tense and third-person—and the field of perception is strictly limited to that of the character ("figure") who is in this case referred to as a "reflector" (Stanzel's term): s/he reflects, but does not narrate or "speak" to the reader in the

same way the narrator can. FID and figural narration are very similar in that they both can be described linguistically as "dual-voiced"; but whereas FID may include non-narrative elements (interjections, non-verbal constructions, and other non-narrative fragments) that are not presented in the narrator's past-tense clauses, figural passages are clearly narrative, that is, usually in the past tense and with third-person reference—the character's perception is, strictly technically speaking, "narrated," but the technique actually creates the illusion of immediate presentation of the character's perception. Like FID for presenting consciousness, figural narration is also an old phenomenon, but begins to be used much more extensively in modernist fiction.

Another important feature of modernist prose is the perspectivization of narrative. As a result of the disintegration of the narrator's public metalanguage and the introduction of free combination of various narrative perspectives, a narrative may present various points of view on the world without providing one explicit superior perspective as a conveyor of a superior ideology or value. Normally, the perspectivization simply consists in presenting various points of view while the narrator is suppressed. Sometimes, however, the very narrative discourse becomes perspectivized to such a degree that it defies realistic verisimilitude. It may create unrealistic points of view, simulate collective consciousness, or create conflicts between omniscience and ignorance in what a verisimilar narrator-personality would be able to know. In such cases the language turns upon itself, and modernist narrative may become more or less what so many critics have described as "non-mimetic," or even "autotelic" or "self-referential," as the ultimate consequence of the modernist effort to free creative language from the instrumental functions it has in the culture of bourgeois modernity.

On the basis of what was said above, I suggest that the basic characteristics of modernist narrative poetics may be summarized as follows. 1) The suppression or elimination of the figure of the narrator and the explicitly narratorial discourse ("voice") as an effort to eliminate the public metalanguage characteristic of the realist novel. The reduction of the narrator's discourse to a neutral narrative function opens space for more concrete and authentic presentation of subjectivity which was previously reduced to the status of short concrete illustrations of abstract public contexts. 2) The marked increase and extensive use of the following three techniques for rendering the character's private world in its unmediated concreteness: stream of consciousness or interior monologue in the first person and the present tense; FID for presenting consciousness; and figural narration. 3) The perspectivization of narrative as an effort to promote epistemological perspectivism and

to free aesthetic creativity from the constraints of mimetic verisimilitude.

I do not mean to imply that all these phenomena have to figure together in the same text; neither do I claim that other techniques do not occur in modernist texts. The above strategies are, nonetheless, typical major tendencies in modernist fiction. The high occurrence of at least some of them in modernist texts is not accidental, but determined by the themes they express. Particular texts are thus not modernist only because they employ the above techniques, but because these techniques express modernist themes. This is true of canonical modernists, as well as Hamsun.

1.5. Hamsun's Modernism and His Narrative Poetics

In this scheme, Hamsun's *Hunger, Mysteries,* and *Pan* undoubtedly represent an aesthetic disruption of bourgeois modernity. These works eschew the idea of literature as furthering social progress through participation in critical public dialogue and emancipate the individual's private world from such a framework. This approach has both its thematic and narrative aspects; while most Hamsun studies have described the former, I will show that Hamsun's narrative techniques, too, play an essential part in this effort.

The 1870s and 1880s in Scandinavia were a period of realism and naturalism called the Modern Breakthrough, advocated most notably by the famous Danish critic Georg Brandes. In Norway particularly, the idea of socially engaged, critical realism found especially fertile soil, due to the delayed economic development and the relatively late appearance of constitutional parliamentarism. The period 1875—1885 represents the struggle for liberalism and the heyday of belief in the possibility of progressive social reforms. During this time Norwegian writers enjoyed a similar social status as politicians. The works of Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson, Henrik Ibsen, Alexander Kielland, and Jonas Lie "took problems up for debate," in Brandes's famous words. Literature was to advance social progress by furthering rational and critical discussion, to educate citizens about social issues and to promote a liberal political agenda. The underlying premise of this literature was that humans are rational beings, capable of mastering their uncertainties and confusions, and thus responsible for their actions. This belief, central to the development of modernity since the Enlightenment, also promoted objectivity in rendering facts in accordance with the recent development of scientific positivism.

With the disappointing performance of liberals in the parliament after 1884, the major event being their scandalous participation in the 1885 refusal to award Alexander Kielland a state-funded writer's

stipend, the writers' critical optimism subsides. The new cultural-political situation produces a more deterministic naturalism on the one hand, and the interest in symbolism and the individual psyche on the other. The latter orientation becomes the major trend of Norwegian literature in the 1890s, a period traditionally called Neo-Romanticism, which focuses on the mysteries of the psyche and the senses, intuition and imagination.

Hamsun is the most important of the Norwegian writers of the 1890s to reject the idea of literature based on utilitarian reason and scientific objectivity. In his controversial public lectures he maintains that literature should not serve any social, educational, and political purposes, but be good and interesting *per se.*[28] The quality of contemporary Norwegian literature, according to Hamsun, is poor, because it serves other purposes than purely literary ones: it propagates social reforms and serves to enlighten the broad population, "farmers," "people," "masses" and "bourgeois," all of which Hamsun consistently derides. Due to its democratic and didactic emphasis, literature presents life as less complicated than it actually is, and in a less poetic way: "[V]or Literatur . . . er en Poesi *om* Samfundet *for* Folket, . . . vor Digtning af Hensyn til det demokratiske Princip lægges niveauisk tilrette for de mindre udviklede Mennesker, og . . . derfor ogsaa Poesien og Psykologien faar lide under dette" (*Paa Turné* 26). Writers offer only pre-fabricated objective facts that anyone can easily understand, focusing on the most ordinary and typical people so that even the "less developed people" could "kontrollere Objektiviteten" of their depiction (49).

Two basic axioms govern Hamsun's critique of contemporary literature and determine his own early works. First, the human being is primarily an individual mind, and only secondarily a social creature: "Livet yttrer sig ikke bare som Samfund, og Menneskene optræder ikke bare som Karakterer" (*Paa Turné* 41). Second, the human mind is an inexplicable mystery governed by the irrational forces of the unconscious.[29] Consequently, Hamsun in his lectures calls for literature that would focus on the complexities of the individual psyche; and he ridicules the aspects of bourgeois modernity and realist objectivity ("reason," "understanding," "morality," "truth," "science"), celebrating rather their opposites.

The early Hamsun's major concern is thus the illumination of the individual's mind and portrayal of humans as complex, even inexplicable, individuals. The realist idiom is, however, inadequate for conveying this concern, because it depicts humans in a broad social context which reduces man to an abstract social function. Contemporary writers and dramatists use the individual's psychology to express the social context that frames it: "[N]aarsomhelst Ibsen behandler indi-

viduelle Spørgsmaal, som altsaa da skulde være psykologiske, saa er det kun forsaavidt, som de staar i Forbindelse med de sociale" (*Paa Turné* 32).[30] Such a literature, according to Hamsun, depicts people superficially: it does not treat individuals as individuals, but only as simplified, objective social "types." This "billige ydre Psykologi" ("Fra det ubevidste" 42) shows only the tip of the human iceberg.

Against this "false" psychology, Hamsun launches the program of "psychological literature."[31] Hamsun is obviously not correct in condemning writers such as Ibsen or Kielland as bad psychologists, but his critique reveals his own definition of psychological literature: psychology is not supposed to illustrate anything but itself—it is to be psychology for psychology's sake, so to speak. A psychologist, according to Hamsun's definition, is a subjective artist who has nothing but contempt for scientific objectivity: "Han skyr ingenting, han fornægter Virkeligheden aabenlyst, fremstiller de mest forhærdede Løgne—stik imod al Videnskab og sund Fornuft—, sætter Videnskaben skammelig Bét, haaner den ved den hensynsløseste Overseen" (*Paa Turné* 69).

Not all modernists share the young Hamsun's anti-rationalistic fervor. Nonetheless, the above statements indicate an important distinction between realist and modernist psychology. According to Thomas Pavel, the concern of psychology in most of nineteenth-century literature was to illuminate human action and its motivations, or "the links between visible deeds and inner deliberation based on moral and strategic reasoning. . . . [The self] appeared thus analogous to a *deliberation chamber*, rather than to an absolute *origin* of solitary discourse" (25). The purpose of realist psychology is still more or less public. The early modernists want to explore a different, essentially private psychology, including fleeting sensations and inexplicable desires which defy formulation in public language and which earlier literature therefore failed to render—hence Hamsun's interest in sensations devoid of language such as "sælsomme Nervevirksomheder, Blodets Hvisken, Benpibernes Bøn" ("Fra det ubevidste" 42). Hamsun's psychology for psychology's sake must therefore be understood as focusing on the eminently private subjectivity, not one which is already public-oriented. In this regard, Hamsun's psychology has a clearly modernist orientation. The psychology of Hamsun's heroes is not entirely severed from the social context, but the public perspective in these novels, where there is any, is characteristically subordinated to a private one which often enfolds it.

Hamsun's effort to present private subjectivity in its immediacy and detailed concreteness is the crux of his modernist poetics. The distinction Hamsun makes in his lectures between "objectivity" and "subjectivity" corresponds to the distinction I have made between "representation" and "presentation," or "window" and "prism." For Hamsun, objectivity is reductionist *representation*, whereas subjectivity in his psychological literature is to be non-reductionist *presentation*.

Objectivity in literary representation is nothing but a fabricated idea ("Paafund"), one that originates in the educational goals society promotes and in the related effort to model literature on science (*Paa Turné* 49). Objectivity is unity and simplification, and therefore life in the abstract; it reduces life to crude "facts": "[H]vor Kendsgærningerne er overfladiske! . . . [E]t Faktum tager blot et Par grove Faktorer i Betragtning, men jeg aner og fornemmer, at der er et tusind finere bag dem" (51). Realism cannot "paavise Fænomenerne, uden i deres faste, haarde Resultater" (68); its psychology is therefore superficial: it creates only "Typer" (26), "Karakterer" (30), "Sjæle i Konturer" (32), "Apparater, som har staaet frem og repræsenteret Begreber og Ideer" (35), but not real people.

Subjectivity, on the other hand, is multiplicity and complexity, and therefore real, concrete, individual life. In the new age of "Elektriciteten" and "[d]en almindelige Nervøsitet" (46), humans have become more complex and sensitive, and literature should reflect this: "[E]r Menneskene blevne mer komplicerede, skulde ogsaa Literaturen blive det" (46). Instead of superficial "Sjæle i Konturer," Hamsun calls for "Sjælemaleri" (64) that will reach deep into the human psyche ("[d]en dybe sjælelige Ransagelse" 83) and will do so thoroughly ("en Sjæl belyst og forhørt" 66). The human being is plurality, a multiplicity of concrete details ("hundrede Smaating, fine Bagateller" 67), all of which make the individual unique, and all of which must therefore be depicted.

Hamsun's preference for presenting experience in its concreteness and immediacy is shared by most modernist novelists, as well as by the major turn-of-the-century thinkers who influence modernism. Philosophers such as William James, Henri Bergson, Friedrich Nietzsche believe that reality is an immediate flux (James's "stream of consciousness," Bergson's "duration," Nietzsche's "chaos of sensations") irreducible to our ordinary conceptualization and language representation (Schwartz 19-20). Therefore they draw a sharp line between conceptual abstraction and immediate experience (5). The idea that real experience eludes representation in ordinary language supports modernists in their abandonment of traditional literary forms and in their search for new forms that might present or express immediate experience in its own idiom, and hence more authentically.

In *Hunger*, *Mysteries*, and *Pan* Hamsun emancipates immediate and concrete subjectivity in several ways. First, he closely focuses on the individual psyches of highly individualistic social outsiders. Their extreme individualism, heightened sensitivity to beauty and emotions, as well as their sense of their own uniqueness alienate them from the

bourgeois public world: they are not willing to compromise their individuality by giving in to the leveling pressures of ordinary bourgeois existence.

Second, Hamsun tends to present the fundamental conflict between the individual and society in such a way that the reader does not see it from an overarching public perspective, but rather as internalized within the character's mind. Therefore I prefer to speak about the conflict between private world and public world: I do not mean by these terms simply individuality and society in a broad sociological sense, but configurations of the character's psyche. The protagonist experiences a split between two desires: a desire for authentic living in the public world from which the character cannot entirely tear himself away; and a desire for an authentic self-enclosure in the privacy of one's dreams, sensations and emotions. The character is unable to achieve either. The former requires an unacceptable identification with a pre-determined social role. The latter is predicated upon the elimination of communal life and an impossible unity of the self, impossible because his self is shaped by the unconscious forces which he cannot control. Thus the early Hamsun's protagonist never attains authentic identity. The character is unable to fully understand either himself or the world, and remains a split prisoner of the mind. Nevertheless, his search for identity seems to generate a positive energy which manifests itself predominantly as artistic creativity. The psyche in early Hamsun is thus an ambiguous phenomenon: it is both an obstacle to happiness and a source of positive vitalism.[32]

In order to eliminate the public metalanguage characteristic of the realist novel and to present the above modernist themes from an immediate and concrete private perspective, Hamsun uses all three modernist methods identified above: 1) The suppression or elimination of the figure of the narrator and the explicitly narratorial discourse; 2) The extensive use of techniques for rendering the character's private world in its unmediated concreteness: stream of consciousness or interior monologue in the first person and the present tense; FID for presenting consciousness; and figural narration. 3) The perspectivization of narrative.

Hamsun does not use all these three techniques with the same intensity in each of the three novels. Undoubtedly, these novels present similar modernist characters and share the same themes of the inauthentic self governed by the unconscious, and the split between the public and the private. Still, these works do differ in individual thematic concerns, and they are therefore narrated in three quite different ways: *Hunger* and *Pan* are both first-person narratives, but whereas the former concentrates exclusively on the character's immediate experience (the narrator's past self), the latter novel foregrounds the narrator's

remaking of his past experience; *Mysteries* is a third-person narrative and also introduces an outside view of the protagonist.

It is my thesis that, in regard to the narrative presentation of particular themes, each of the three texts is modernist for a slightly different reason. Therefore, each of the following chapters is devoted to one of the novels and concentrates on somewhat different issues. I show that the differences in narrative presentation are closely bound up with the differences in thematic focus of each novel. My analysis of *Mysteries* and *Pan* shows that the misunderstandings of the narrative workings of these texts is related to some of their interpretive misunderstandings. Chapters 3 and 4 therefore contribute to the thematic understanding of *Mysteries* and *Pan*. In chapter 2 on *Hunger*, though, I do not focus on thematic analysis because, in my view, critics have discussed *Hunger* as a modernist novel rather successfully in terms of its themes and composition. Since I mostly agree with the earlier thematic interpretations and my narrative analysis does not contradict them, the purpose of chapter 2 is not to bring a new interpretation, but to place *Hunger* in the context of the history of narrative poetics and to explain why the narrative is modernist from the formal-historical perspective.

In *Hunger*, the thematic tensions between the public and the private are channeled through the immediate experience of the isolated protagonist who refuses to enter the paradigms of bourgeois life. I will show that Hamsun eliminates the narrator's voice for the sake of figural narrative and free indirect discourse which both simulate the character's immediate experience. The traditional Hamsun criticism has failed to see *Hunger* as a novel with a distinctly modernist presentation of consciousness because of two traditional critical biases. First, critics assume that the first-person narrative, by definition, cannot present the character's immediate experience convincingly enough, because such a narrative is enunciated by a narrator-personality who cannot but see his past self from the outside and from a temporal distance. The presentation of consciousness is thus said not to be "direct" enough for *Hunger* to qualify as a modernist "stream-of-consciousness novel." I show that in the case of *Hunger*, such claims are not based on textual evidence, given the elimination of the narrator and the use of figural narrative. Second, Hamsun critics failed to consider free indirect discourse—which thoroughly permeates the narrative of *Hunger*—as a criterion of modernist presentation of consciousness, because they see FID as a technique not direct enough, containing traces of narratorial voice. This view, as I have already indicated, is wrong both theoretically and historically. Theoretically, it is based solely on the strictly linguistic definition of FID which disregards the questions of narrative context and reader-reception. Historically, the view

is based on an exaggerated assumption that a truly modernist presentation of consciousness must be a direct stream of consciousness in the first person and the present tense.

Mysteries is the most misunderstood book of the three, often by its defenders as well as detractors. The core of the misunderstanding is the purpose of the very elaborate, yet ultimately totally confusing narrative. While Hamsun's detractors see the book as a failure, some of Hamsun's defenders have tried to make it more understandable and organically unified than it actually is. In my opinion, *Mysteries* is essentially an anti-novel that follows scrupulously one character, yet at the same time frustrates all attempts at our final understanding of him. The purpose of such a puzzling narrative is to present the character as having no identity. The narrative parodically deconstructs the representational pretensions of realist/naturalist narrative: the protagonist Nagel cannot be explained in terms of cause and effect; and the quasi-positivistic heaping up of detailed information about him turns out to be of no help, just as the narrative presentation of Nagel from various angles gives no overarching perspective. Hamsun in this novel uses not only figural narration and FID to present the character's experience in its immediacy as in *Hunger*, but partly also the authorial narrator to indicate the way society sees Nagel. However, Hamsun uses the authorial narrator only parodically to deconstruct him: this narrator is only one voice among many and has no cognitive authority, not to speak of omniscience. Hamsun combines many different narrative techniques in such a way that they illuminate the protagonist from various angles, but none of them becomes a superior public metalanguage and none of them helps to explain Nagel. This modernist perspectivization of narrative deconstructs the cognitive privilege of a particular perspective and the possibility of an objective portrait of a personality, suggesting rather that no one can ultimately gain objective insight into another person, because the human being is a complicated and self-contradictory mystery. What makes the narrative form of *Mysteries* specifically modernist is that the combination of various narrative functions and voices in narrative perspectivization defies realistic mimetism: the expression or presentation of the main theme takes precedence over verisimilitude. Concretely, this antimimetic feature of *Mysteries* consists in an unlikely combination of narratorial omniscience and ignorance: the narrative as a whole defies being seen as an "utterance" of a coherent narrator-personality with one voice, and must rather be understood as a non-mimetic blend of narrative functions, presenting the character in a radically fragmented way. I show that the absence of a superior perspective and the presence of the non-mimetic multiplicity of conflicting perspectives also characterize modernist painting.

Pan is the story of a person who has fled the public life for a solitary life in nature, but seems to be unable to live outside society. Lieutenant Glahn's retrospective narrative reveals a split in his mind between nature and society. Because of the back-to-nature theme and other romantic motifs, critics have traditionally labeled the novel as romantic or neo-romantic. I argue that the consideration of how the narrative presents the thematic discrepancy between the private and the public allows for a modernist reading of this novel. The mechanisms of Glahn's narrative reveal themselves as the projection of his psyche and betray all the images of nature and romanticism as inauthentic. The avoidance of reflection on the part of the narrator's present self and his attempts to freeze the past in the perpetual present of an artistic image, as well as the conspicuously different narrative presentation of his public and private worlds reveal that Glahn's romanticism is a half-conscious aesthetic self-deception. The psyche becomes the very form of the narrative in a typically modernist fashion.

The three narratives thus illuminate the experience of the modern psyche in three different ways, and suggest three somewhat different answers to the question why they are modernist. In the case of *Hunger*, the central issue is the definition of modernist presentation of consciousness and the question whether this definition should include the use of techniques such as figural narration and FID whose importance for defining modernist form is usually underestimated. These questions also figure in my discussion of *Mysteries*; but the modernist argument in regard to this novel also involves the parodical subversion of the realist narrative idiom and the question of narrative perspectivization which in *Mysteries* frees aesthetic creativity while undermining the rules of realistic verisimilitude. In the case of *Pan*, the question is whether the narrative renders Glahn's turn to nature as a romantic search for authenticity, as is usually assumed, or whether the narrative defies romantic reading by revealing its status as the product of the psychological self-deception of a mind split between private desires and the public pressures of turn-of-the-century bourgeois society.

CHAPTER 2

HUNGER: STREAMS OF CONSCIOUSNESS

> What, then, may finally be said about Joyce's stream-of-consciousness technique? First of all, it certainly does not provide an "exact reproduction" of thought or "the total contents of thought" as some critics have claimed; it *simulates* the psychological stream of consciousness.
>
> (Erwin R. Steinberg, *The Stream of Consciousness and Beyond in* Ulysses)

This chapter provides historical and theoretical arguments for my claim that the suppression of explicit narratorial voice and retrospection, together with the extensive use of figural narration and free indirect discourse for presenting consciousness in its own subjective idiom, make *Hunger* formally a modernist narrative. The first part of the chapter (2.1.) discusses Hamsun's use of figural narration in the first-person form. The second part (2.2.) provides arguments as to why the extensive presentation of consciousness in FID is typical of modernist texts. My arguments support suggestions that *Hunger* is a "stream-of-consciousness novel," but redefine the way mainstream criticism usually conceives this phenomenon. At the same time, the chapter argues against those critics who overestimate the thematic significance of the narrator's retrospective stance in *Hunger*.

More often than *Mysteries* and *Pan*, *Hunger* has been called a modernist novel. Particularly critics such Eggen, Kirkegaard, and Kittang have provided important arguments in this regard, including the themes of existential emptiness and anxiety, personality split and alienation, the decentered subject, and the uprootedness of the artist in a dehumanized modern city. While such themes do make *Hunger* a modernist novel, they do not do so alone, but in conjunction with narrative presentation. The discussion of the latter has so far been limited to observations of how the composition and the structure of motifs reflect the chaotic and unpredictable movements of the starving writer's psyche.[1]

McFarlane has suggested properly that to inquire into the modernist form of Hamsun's early novels, one should consider them in

the context of the development of stream-of-consciousness techniques ("Whisper" 592). Yet McFarlane himself has not elaborated upon his suggestion, and later attempts to apply labels such as "stream-of-consciousness" or "interior monologue" to *Hunger* have not advanced beyond brief statements about thought associations and "limited" point of view. Eggen simply claims that *Hunger* is "en indre monolog" (55) without explaining in what sense. Nettum, in contrast, seems to doubt whether McFarlane's suggestion is actually worth pursuing. While mental associations certainly play an important part in *Hunger*, Nettum claims, one cannot yet speak of stream-of-consciousness technique in pure form ("i renform" 61). He only sees a tendency that approaches it ("tilløp" 61):

> Hos metodens mestre, James Joyce og Virginia Woolf, er formålet å gi leseren illusjonen av at fortelleren eller forfatterpersonligheten er totalt fraværende; isteden er det brukt en slags "registreringsmaskin". I SULT er der en forteller og kommentator som betrakter bevissthetsstrømmen *utenfra*. Men det er noe riktig i påstanden [that *Hunger* anticipates the stream-of-consciousness technique] forsåvidt som det bærende prinsipp i fremstillingen er skildringen av en strøm av psykiske fenomener. (61)

My chapter will argue against Nettum's view, showing that it is based on several common misperceptions of the modernist presentation of consciousness which are prevalent in mainstream criticism. First, I will argue that textual evidence does not support the claim that the narrator makes retrospective comments on the stream of consciousness from the outside. Such a view seems to stem from the problematic assumption that every first-person narrator is explicitly retrospective by definition (cf. Nettum 59-61). In this view Nettum is joined by Haugan who believes that the key to the understanding of the novel lies in the narrator's retrospection (38-9), but does not explain why; and to some degree also by Musarra-Schrøder who calls *Hunger* "erindringsroman" ("Tankegengivelsen" 146, 156), overstressing slightly the role of narratorial recollection in the novel (see below).

Second, Nettum's view unfortunately reduces the question of the modernist presentation of the mind to the presence/absence of certain problematically defined narrative features of "stream of consciousness." While "stream of consciousness" has hardly ever been defined properly as a narrative technique, the critical discussions of it have produced several broadly accepted misunderstandings about the nature of modernist prose. Many consider certain features attributed to stream-of-consciousness techniques to be the distinctive signs of modernist narrative. I identify three of these biased criteria of modernism as *fragmentariness* (radical narrative disorder and fragmentation of the text on the printed page are typically modernist ways of

representing human consciousness); *linguistically defined directness* (modernist narrative characteristically presents the workings of the character's mind in the first person and the present tense); and *autonomy* (the modernist presentation of consciousness is radically independent of the narrator's discourse, i.e., it typically appears in long, separate blocks of the text, uninterrupted by the narrator's voice). These narrative features are, indeed, often found in modernist fiction. Yet their importance as indicators of modernism is often exaggerated, while other narrative features are disregarded. As I will show, the uncritical acceptance of these criteria has prevented critics such as Nettum from recognizing the presentation of consciousness in *Hunger* as modernist.

McFarlane's above suggestion significantly indicates that the central question concerning modernism in the narrative of *Hunger* may be the presentation of consciousness. I believe my further discussion will make clear why it is important not to reduce this broad question to some rigid definition of "stream-of-consciousness technique." In contrast to Nettum, I will argue that there exists no "pure form" of the stream-of-consciousness technique. Rather, we must be able to recognize that modernism uses a variety of techniques for simulating consciousness.

2.1. *Hunger* as a Modernist First-Person Narrative

2.1.1. The First-Person Novel before Modernism

First-person narration is characterized by an existential continuity between a fictional person's identities as character and as narrator. Therefore the most common critical device for the description of a first-person narrative text is the technical distinction between the "experiencing self" and the "narrating self." The term "experiencing self" refers to the narrator's past self as a character; the term "narrating self" denotes the narrator's present role as a narrator.[2] The distance between the narrator's two selves imitates the real human being's separation from its past self—"temporally, spatially and psychologically"; the distance is thus "one of the most important points of departure for the interpretation of [first-person narratives]" (Stanzel 213). Theoretically, the distance ranges between two poles: either the narrating self comes to the fore so forcefully that it entirely suppresses the experiencing self, or the other way around. In other words, the variety of first-person narratives "extends from identification to complete estrangement between the narrating and the experiencing self" (Stanzel 213). Practically, however, traditional first-person fiction is characterized by a certain balance between the two selves, corresponding roughly to the balance between indirect report and direct scenic

presentation. Indeed, Stanzel identifies in the recurrent shifts between the two selves a characteristic structural feature of first-person fiction in general (72, 225). The classical, autobiographical first-person novel, such as *David Copperfield*, corresponds to this model (210).

The reason some balance is always achieved in the traditional first-person fiction lies in the continuous presence of the narrating self and the authoritative role it plays in the classical novel. The first-person novel had traditionally been modeled on the genre of memoir or autobiography: the reader expected the narrating self to be verisimilar to a real autobiographer who would provide some retrospective illumination of the past. This role of the narrating self was reinforced by an even more general narrative convention: the classical narrator—both its first-person and authorial variants—was assumed to have the cognitive privilege over the characters' lives. This convention conformed to the Enlightenment view of humans as rational beings capable of understanding and mastering the confusions of their former, immature selves. Thus even if the experiencing self manifests itself more forcefully than the narrating self in a particular classical first-person text, it is still subordinated to the authority of the narrating self. The narrating self is the ultimate referent for the meaning and objectivity of the narrative. No matter how confused or subversive the past self may be, "the field of tension between the two selves is always resolved" (Stanzel 210), in that the narrating self has the final cognitive privilege.

It should then come as no surprise that some modernists and twentieth-century writers, in their effort to demonstrate relativism and perspectivism, avoid first-person narration altogether. If they do use it, they usually either place the cognitive authority of the narrating self in a new, relativistic framework, or they turn away from the traditional first-person model. Hamsun's was the latter way.

2.1.2. *Hunger*, a "Rare Specimen" of the First-Person Novel

Hamsun's *Hunger* represents a radical rejection of the classical model of first-person fiction in that it dispenses with the narrating self almost in its entirety. Only a very few past tense passages in *Hunger* that summarize stretches of time, come close to offering a narrating self. The narrating self, in general, cannot overtly summarize time-periods in passages that strictly concentrate on the experiencing self; similarly, the experiencing self can summarize time only for another fictional character (speech) or for himself in self-communion (thought), but not as a narrator for the reader. The experiencing self, as a fictional character, is part of the narrating self's discourse, and cannot therefore normally "speak" to the reader as a narrator. Therefore past tense passages that overtly summarize time-periods are, indeed, "intended"

for the reader: by explicitly bridging events between which weeks, or at least several days, elapsed, the narrating self conveys information to the reader in a way that the experiencing self cannot.[3]

The most pronounced case is the opening sentence of the novel: "Det var i den tid jeg gik omkring og sultet i Kristiania . . ." (7). Like the expression "once upon a time," typical of oral literature, the opening sentence is, in Jakobson's terms, a phatic signal, intended to draw the reader's attention to the narrative act itself and to situate the story in a particular time-frame. There are also other—though less overt—examples of summarizing passages in *Hunger* in which the narrating self's retrospective stance is detectable:

> En ukes tid gik i herlighet og glæde.
> Jeg var over det værste også denne gang, jeg hadde mat hver dag, mit mot steg og jeg stak det ene jærn efter det andre i ilden. Jeg hadde tre eller fire avhandlinger under arbeide som plyndret min fattige hjærne for hver gnist, for hver tanke som opstod i den, og jeg syntes at det gik bedre end før. Den siste artikkel som jeg hadde hat så meget rænd for og sat så meget håp til var allerede blit mig tilbakeleveret av redaktøren og jeg hadde tilintetgjort den straks, sint, fornærmet, uten å lese den igjennem pány. (71)

Such passages have deceived some critics into exaggerating the role retrospection plays in *Hunger.* In reality, the narrating self does not manifest itself as an overt commentator, judge, or ironist; passages such as the one above are purely *descriptive* and lack an explicit retrospective stance (see 2.1.3.). More importantly, overt retrospection is overshadowed in *Hunger* by figural narration, or what Cohn has called "consonant self-narration."

Cohn distinguishes between two major modes of narration in the first person, "dissonant" and "consonant." The terms refer to the two fundamentally different orientations in the relationship between the experiencing and the narrating selves. "Dissonant self-narration" is characterized by the "cognitive privilege of the narrating over the experiencing self" (151); the method for rendering the narrator's past self is more or less based on reflection, and "is essentially one of elucidation and interpretation" (151), or, in short, "self-analytic retrospection" (152). In "consonant self-narration," the narrating self "identifies with his earlier incarnation, renouncing all manner of cognitive privilege" (155); in other words, the narrating self is effaced.

In her excellent discussion of the novel (155-58), Cohn claims that *Hunger* is not only one of the earliest, but also one of the consummate examples of consonant self-narration. The novel focuses strictly on the experiencing self:

> Med en gang skingret en eller to høie klarinettoner op til mig fra lunden og gav min tanke et nyt støt. Mismodig over ikke kunne gjøre min artikkel istand stak jeg igjen papirene i lommen og lænet mig bakover på bænken. I dette øieblik er mit hode så klart at jeg kan tænke de fineste tanker uten å trættes. Idet jeg ligger i denne stilling og later øienene løpe nedover mit bryst og mine ben lægger jeg mærke til den sprættende bevægelse min fot gjør hver gang pulsen slår. Jeg reiser mig halvt op og ser ned på mine føtter og jeg gjennomgår i denne stund en fantastisk og fremmed stemning som jeg aldrig tidligere hadde følt; det gav et fint, vidunderlig sæt gjennem mine nerver som om det gik ilinger av lys gjennem dem. Ved å kaste øinene på mine sko var det som jeg hadde truffet en god bekjendt eller fåt en løsreven part av mig selv tilbake; en gjenkjendelsesfølelse sitrer gjennem mine sanser, tårerne komme mig i øinene, og jeg fornemmer mine sko som en sagte susende tone imot mig. Svakhetl sa jeg hårdt til mig selv og jeg knyttet hænderne og sa svakhet. (19)

In the novel's entire narrative situation, the narrating self "displays no increment in intellectual powers over his past self" (Cohn 157); the narrator "never draws attention to his hindsight: neither analyzing nor generalizing, he simply records the inner happenings, juxtaposing them in incongruous succession, without searching for causal links" (156). In its almost total effacement of the narrating self, "*Hunger* is a rare specimen, and I know of no other novel that duplicates its purity" (Cohn 158).[4]

It is no accident that Hamsun wrote the novel in this manner. His literary agenda, presented in *Fra det ubevidste Sjæleliv* and in the lectures of 1891, clearly aimed at the illumination of the workings of the mind in their rawness—still "undigested," unmediated by rational reflection or analysis; Cohn appropriately speaks of Hamsun's fascination with "psychic inchoateness" (158). The classical form of retrospective first-person narration posed a problem for such artistic intentions, since in it the narrating self had the privileged position of the final cognitive authority; the reader expected a reasonable degree of verisimilitude in the narrating self, simulating a real author of autobiography. Such a framework had traditionally hindered the possibility of presenting the narrator's past self in its unmediated and incomplete shape, and leaving it in such a state—as an unresolved, open quality, and as a relative value. The constraining effect of cognitive authority that the manifest narrating self characteristically produces, would have deprived of all authenticity any effort of Hamsun's to present the past consciousness as a chaotic entity. In this respect, Hamsun's literary program and his choice of first-person narration would have conflicted with each other. In order to accomplish his artistic intentions within the first-person genre, Hamsun rid himself of the binding framework of classical retrospective autobiography by effac-

ing the narrating self.[5] This enabled him to present the life of the experiencing self in its immediacy.

2.1.3. The Absence of Explicit Narratorial Irony

The assessment of *Hunger* as a novel in which the narrating self is largely effaced must be defended against the persistent misconception of the narrator of *Hunger* as ironist, shared for example by Nettum:

> [A]vstanden mellom det fortellende jeg og det opplevende jeg kan skape et dobbeltperspektiv som nærmer seg ironi. Forielleren ser ironisk på seg selv slik han "dengang" oppførte seg. . . . [H]an dømmer, kritiserer, reserverer seg. . . .
> (Nettum 59)

Nettum's assessment directly contradicts the claim he makes on the very same page, that the narrating and the experiencing selves in *Hunger* "er identiske." Nettum mentions (59-60) several words that are supposed to signal narratorial irony, such as "idiotisk," "fjollet," "sentimentalt."[6] Also Mørch sees such expressions as the signs of the narrator's irony:

> [In *Hunger,*] the I-narrator exposes a slightly ironic attitude towards the I-character by means of his language. This is sometimes very obvious, as for instance when the narrator says: "Jeg sat og *fablet* med disse fornemmelser en lang stund, kanskje en hel time." The Norwegian verb "fable" contains an implicit comment to the event narrated. By using this verb, Hamsun's I-narrator shows that the character's thoughts at that moment were irrational, outlandish. (38)

There is no doubt that *Hunger* abounds with irony virtually on every page. Yet to speak of irony in this novel does not necessarily mean to attribute it to the narrating self. Irony in a narrative text can have many sources, notably situational, verbal and intertextual contradictions, all of which can certainly be attributed to the author, but not necessarily to the narrator. It is therefore important to distinguish between implicit irony and explicit irony, that is, rhetorical ironizing. It is true that in a first-person text, which is constructed as a single person's enunciation, the narrator can often be held responsible for much of *implicit irony* by virtue of being the fictional creator of the narrative. Determining the narrator as ironist in this case depends heavily on the interpretation of a particular work, since mere implicit irony "leaves the narrator's stylistic neutrality intact" (Fludernik 355). Therefore it makes more sense to speak of *narratorial irony* proper only if the reader can discern an explicit distancing on the narrator's part. Nettum and Mørch equate irony in *Hunger* with this distancing.

In contrast, I will argue that such an irony is absent from *Hunger,* the expressions the two critics mention are the signs of irony which arises in the sphere of the experiencing self.[7]

In the article "Fra det ubevidste Sjæleliv," Hamsun stresses that there is a fine line between consciousness and the unconscious. He illustrates this idea in *Hunger* by creating a hypersensitive character of poor psychic integrity who is uniquely aware of the split in his personality between a rational, reflective ego and an irrational, instinctual ego.[8] He frequently acts out dialogs, or otherwise communicates, with his other self;[9] the need for self-observation and self-communication is of strong existential importance to him.[10] He often becomes aware of the existence of his irrational other and of its forces that operate alongside his rational self: "Jeg lå med åpne øine i en tilstand av fraværenhet fra mig selv, jeg følte mig deilig borte" (44); "Jeg hørte mig selv tale dette vås, men opfattet hvert ord jeg sa som om de kom fra en anden person" (81). At times, Hamsun exaggerates this paradoxical self-awareness to the point of improbability. The novel abounds with sentences indicating explicitly that the character is well-aware of behaving in an irrational way; indeed, he is often conscious of the unconscious, so to speak:

> Jeg hørte selv at jeg fantaserte, hørte det endnu mens jeg talte. Min galskap var et delirium av svakhet og utmattelse, men jeg var ikke sanseløs. . . . Jeg . . . bar mig ad som en gal. Og jeg var mig også i dette øieblik bevisst hvad jeg gjorde. (52)

> Jeg var mig stadig bevisst at jeg talte usammenhængende og jeg sa ikke et ord uten at jeg hørte og forstod det. . . . Det var som å ligge våken og tale i søvne. (54)

This interpenetration of rationality and irrationality, awareness and unawareness, provides a counterargument to Nettum and Mørch. In my view, the expressions "idiotisk," "fjollet," "sentimentalt," and "jeg fablet," do not mark overt narratorial irony. They are *descriptions* of how the experiencing self's rational ego felt—simultaneously, or immediately afterwards—about the behavior of his unconscious, instinctual half. This is obvious in the following passages, in which such expressions (see emphasis) occur in the context of the character's self-reflection:

> Jeg var mig i øieblikket fuldt bevisst at jeg begik gale streker, uten at jeg kunde gjøre noget ved det. . . . Det nyttet ikke hvor meget jeg sa til mig selv at jeg bar mig idiotisk ad, jeg gjorde *de dummeste grimaser* bak damens ryg [emphasis added]. . . . (13-14)

> Vanviddet raser mig gjennem hjærnen og jeg later det rase, jeg er fuldt bevisst at jeg ligger under for indflydelser som jeg ikke er herre over. Jeg begyndte å le, tyst og lidenskapelig, *uten spor av grund* [emphasis added]. . . . (92-93)

Rather than signaling explicit narratorial irony, the emphasized expressions describe the past self's immediate awareness that he behaves in an "idiotic" way.[11] What supports this reading is also the fact that such expressions occur in present-tense contexts (cf. the second example above) and, indeed, in present-tense sentences.[12] Yet the point is not that these expressions occur in a few particular contexts of the hero's heightened awareness of his other self. The point is that the entire novel is such a context: the themes of the character's self-observation and self-awareness are continually on the reader's horizon. The reader constantly expects the protagonist to perceive himself as being foolish, mad, or simultaneously "lying awake and talking in his sleep," yet being either unable or unwilling to do anything about it. Therefore the expressions in question should be read as the descriptions of the experiencing self's immediate self-reflection.

The fact that some critics speak of overt narratorial irony in *Hunger* is partly due to the traditional misconception of narrator as a coherent personality: the critics consider every narrator to be a person with intents and purposes that are always projected in the narrative, even in cases when the narrator is clearly just a disembodied function of the narrative text. They take the narrator to be the fully embodied creator of the narrative and, consequently, the ultimate source of all irony in the text.[13] However, most of irony in *Hunger* does not result from the narrating self's rhetorical distancing from his past self. The narrator's stylistic neutrality remains intact. This is why I have called the problematic expressions above descriptions. They may, indeed, be called ironic; but the irony arises in the sphere of the experiencing self, as the effect of verbal, situational, and intertextual contradictions, implemented by Hamsun-the-author. This irony *as a contextual effect* can exist even within the experiencing self's thoughts (presented in free indirect discourse in the examples below):

> *Det var også så meget som avhang av denne avhandling om den filosofiske erkjendelse, kanske flere menneskers lykke, ingen kunde vite det* [emphasis added]. (13)

> Bevisstheten om at jeg var ærlig steg mig til hodet, fyldte mig med en herlig følelse av å være en karakter, *et hvitt fyrtårn midt i et grumset menneskehav hvor vrak fløt om* [emphasis added]. (36)

If someone is intentionally ironical here, apart from Hamsun-the-author, it is, at most, the rational ego of the experiencing self. This is,

in fact, often confirmed explicitly: "Jeg gjorde nar av mig selv for disse latterlige følelser, hadde mig tilbedste med fuld bevissthet . . ." (19); "Og jeg gik videre fuld av ironi [sic] over mig selv" (65).

2.1.4. Simulation of the Character's Field of Perception

I have defended *Hunger* as a novel in which the narrating self is virtually effaced. This section will clarify more concretely why Hamsun and other modernists preferred this type of narration to more traditional techniques. I will, however, replace Cohn's term "consonant self-narration." Cohn's terms "consonant" and "dissonant" and their definitions reveal a certain mimetic bias. In consonant narration, according to Cohn, the narrating self is "the unobtrusive narrator who identifies with his earlier incarnation" (155); such narrators have "empathy with their younger selves" (168). Unfortunately, the words such as "consonant," "identify," and "empathy" implicate a narrator-personality of some sort, one that takes a particular stand toward his/her former self. "Dissonant" narration poses the same problem in reverse. This conception only allows for either sympathy or antipathy, but not for neutrality. The terminology obscures the historical significance of certain modern narratives such as *Hunger.* In this novel—to anticipate my concluding argument—the question of the narrator's stance toward his former self does not arise. I will therefore replace in further discussion Cohn's term "consonant self-narration" with "first-person figural narration," a term that is almost synonymous, yet more precise because neutral.[14]

In figural narration, according to Stanzel, the point of view is limited strictly to the character (i.e., "figure"), while no manifestation of the narrator's voice takes place. This narrative mode creates the illusion for the reader that s/he has a direct access to the character's perceptional field. Stanzel calls this character a "reflector." Unlike the narrator/narrating self, the reflector "mirrors events of the outer world in his consciousness, perceives, feels, registers, but always silently, because he never 'narrates' . . ." (144). In this way, figural narration can simulate the perceptional and mental field of the experiencing self:

> Jeg ligger våken på min kvist og hører en klokke nedenunder mig slå seks slag; det var allerede ganske lyst og folk begyndte å færdes op og ned i trapperne. Nede ved døren hvor mit rom var tapetseret med gamle numre av "Morgenbladet" kunde jeg så tydelig se en bekjendtgjørelse fra fyrdirektøren, og litt tilvenstre derfra et fett, bugnende avertissement fra baker Fabian Olsen om nybakt brød.
> (. . .)
> Det lysnet mere og mere og jeg gav mig til å læse på avertissementerne nede ved døren; jeg kunde endog skjælne de magre, grinende bokstaver

om "Liksvøp hos jomfru Andersen, tilhøire i porten". Det sysselsatte mig en lang stund, jeg hørte klokken slå otte nedenunder inden jeg stod op og klædte på mig.

Jeg åpnet vinduet og så ut. Der hvor jeg stod hadde jeg utsigt til en kledesnor og en åpen mark; langt ute lå gruven tilbake av en nedbrændt smie hvor nogen arbeidere var i færd med å rydde op. (7)

Some critics would presumably call this passage the narrator's retrospection. Yet the passage differs substantially, in terms of its effect on the reader, from commentary-filled, retrospective reflection. The passage clearly evokes for the reader the experiencing self's field of vision and perception, and must therefore be distinguished from explicit retrospection.

Some theorists have contended that all narrative is always narrative of the past. However, this problematic tenet may apply only in a limited sense to written fictional narratives; it seems to be derived more from the model of oral narration than from textual evidence. Fiction always simulates, rather than narrates, particular fictional worlds and discourses; it aims, more often than not, at evoking the present image of fictional reality before the reader (more on this in 2.2.). To say that narration is always narration about the past reduces all narration to retrospection; indeed, some theorists support this view by pointing out that the standard narrative tense, at least in the western narrative tradition, is the preterit.

Yet in fiction, the preterit is standard to such a degree that it often does not evoke any quality of "pastness" for the reader. This holds true, Stanzel and Fludernik note, especially for figural narratives in which no retrospection is foregrounded thematically. The narrating self effaced, the text offers the reader only a reflector-character who "thinks, feels and perceives, but does not speak to the reader like a narrator" (Stanzel 5). In figural narratives, therefore, the preterit "is no longer opposed to the present of a narrator," and therefore "becomes an unmarked index of simultaneity within a general past tense frame" (Fludernik 199).

Consequently, the evocation of "presentness" in figural narratives is often equally effective in both the past and in the present tenses. Since the reader's attention is strictly oriented toward the reflector's perceptional horizon, switching from the narrative past into the narrative present and back is often inconspicuous, quite unlike in overtly retrospective novels in which shifting tenses can be very marked. That is why Hamsun can switch tenses freely throughout *Hunger* with little or no change in the semantics or the expressivity of the text. The entire passage above could easily be narrated in the present tense, in which it, incidentally, begins (see the first sentence); indeed, many

passages in *Hunger* similar to the one above are narrated in the present tense:

Jeg går ind gjennem porten, kommer ind i en bakgård som jeg går tværs over, støter mot en dør som jeg åpner og går ind gjennem, og jeg befinder mig i en gang, et slags forværelse med to vinduer. Der står to kufferter, den ene ovenpå den andre, i den ene krok, og på langvæggen en gammel umalt sofabænk som det ligger et tæppe i. Tilhøire, i næste værelse hører jeg røster og barneskrik og ovenover mig, i anden etage, lyden av en jærnplate som det hamres på. (93)

Although a shift to the present tense in *Hunger* sometimes does enhance a sudden change (often indicated lexically by expressions such as "pludselig"), or an extraordinarily feverish action,[15] the tense Hamsun uses normally makes little or no difference.[16] Both tenses accommodate equally well expressive signals that can evoke the present quality of the character's vision/perception and that can simulate his consciousness. It is therefore more appropriate to consider the above passages to be, rather than narrative retrospection, examples of what Fludernik calls "narrated perception" (305-09).

The fact that the narrative past tense in figural narratives does not evoke any thematic "pastness" for the reader, is important in the historical perspective. Figural narration arose in the nineteenth century as a way of more radical narrative presentation of the character's subjectivity.[17] It helped emancipate the character's subjectivity from the hold of the classical narrator. As such, the technique came to its full fruition in the works of modernist novelists.

In the classical realist novel, the explicit presence of a narrator and/or the overt retrospective narration reinforce the "presentness" of the narrator's sphere and the "pastness" of the character's sphere. Figural narratives, on the other hand, succeed better in evoking for the reader the present moment of the character, and thus also his/her immediate subjectivity: figural narration is better suited for expressing time as a constant flux, and for presenting human psychology as an ever-changing whirl of perspectives. This explains why modernist novelists, in their effort to portray relativism and perspectivism, typically make use of the figural mode. Novels such as *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, *The Trial*, or *The Castle*, are exemplary in this respect.[18]

2.1.5. Conclusion: *Hunger* as a Modernist Figural Narrative

The narrator in *Hunger* is only an abstract narrative function: he does not manifest himself as a vociferous, autobiographical narrator-personality. *Hunger* does not conform to the mimetic requirement of creating a believable narrating self. In a real autobiography, a narrator-

personality naturally takes some stand toward its earlier self; so does the narrator in the first-person realist novel. In *Hunger*, on the other hand, the question of what stand the narrating self adopts toward its past self does not at all arise as a theme. The relationship between the narrating self and the experiencing self is neither negative nor positive; it is neutral(ized): it exists in the text of *Hunger* only as a technical feature of narration (the source of the information about the protagonist), not as a thematic issue. The question of "consonance" and "dissonance" between the two selves cannot be answered.[19]

For this reason, critics' attempts to apply the psychological criteria of identification vs. non-identification to the relationship between the two selves in *Hunger*, has obscured the historical novelty of this text. By eliminating the narrating self as the ultimate cognitive horizon, verisimilar to a real autobiographer-personality, Hamsun abandoned the classical form of the first-person novel, and broke away from the realistic tradition of novel writing of his time. Hamsun freed narration in *Hunger* from the constraint of realistic verisimilitude: the full concentration on the experiencing self creates no obligation for the author to fabricate a reasonable mimetic link—such as identification, criticism, explicit irony—to the narrating self. *Hunger* can be called an "autobiographical, retrospective narrative" only in a very limited, implicit sense, regarding only its most superficial, basic genre orientation as a first-person discourse. Such a label can, however, be quite misleading, because the novel lacks explicit retrospection. Rather, the narrative of *Hunger* presents the workings of the character's consciousness as if in its *present manifestation*: the protagonist moves constantly before the reader as an ever-changing entity.[20]

It is precisely this emancipation of the character's psychology from the autobiographical mimetism of the realist first-person novel which makes the narrative of *Hunger* modernist. The character's experience is free of any cognitive authority and mediating framework that the narrating self had traditionally provided. The narrative can now simulate convincingly the presentness of the immediate manifestations of the character's private world. The figural narrative situation enables the introduction of phenomena critics have labeled as "interior monologue," or "stream of consciousness," which will be the subject of section 2.2.

2.2. Modernist Presentation of Consciousness in *Hunger*

The terms "stream of consciousness" and "interior monologue" have always been the trademarks of modernist fiction. Critics usually use them rather loosely to cover various phenomena, both psychological and narrative. Although some critics have tried to define these terms

as narrative techniques,[21] it is clear that both of them imply, first of all, a psychological reality represented, rather than a particular technique. Techniques for representing stream of consciousness or interior monologue are many. I will therefore use the two terms as synonyms to denote any extended stretch of represented consciousness.

One of the most common stream-of-consciousness techniques is free indirect discourse. Yet while this fact is well-known to narrative theorists,[22] not a few critics still have a relatively vague notion of the phenomenon of FID and its functioning, not to speak of its historical significance. As I indicated at the beginning, the myth still exists that stream of consciousness proper is "direct" (in the first person and the present tense), "autonomous" (cut off from the narrator's discourse) and "fragmentary" in its graphical form on the printed page. This well-rooted "ideal" overshadows other types of stream-of-consciousness techniques, notably those in free indirect discourse. Morover, some critics have elevated the above features to one-sided norms of what modernist narrative is. I will show how this bias, combined with inattention to FID, has prevented critics from recognizing modernist aspects in the narrative presentation of consciousness in *Hunger*.[23]

A close reading of *Hunger* reveals that there are almost no pages in the novel where free indirect discourse does not occur. One may almost claim that *Hunger* is characteristically written in this mode. My thesis is that FID is the most significant narrative technique in *Hunger* in that a) it is the most important device by which the narrative is focused on the private world of the experiencing self, and b) it is a technique that repeatedly presents the protagonist's inner world as a stream of consciousness, or interior monologue.

2.2.1. Free Indirect Discourse and Modernist Narrative: A Historical Perspective

Free indirect discourse has traditionally been discussed as a linguistic-stylistic device that can present both speech and thought/consciousness, as in the following examples, respectively:

> Jeg henvendte mig straks til en konstabel og bad ham indstændig om å følge med og lukke mig ind hvis han kunde.
>
> *Hja hvis han kunde, ja! Men han kunde ikke, han hadde ingen nøkkel. Politiets nøkler var ikke her, de var i detektivavdelingen.*
>
> *Hvad skulde jeg da gjøre?*
>
> *Hja jeg fik gå til et hotel og lægge mig* [emphasis added]. (47-8)

> Jeg reiste mig og stillet mig midt på gulvet. *Alt vel overveiet kom madam Gundersens opsigelse temmelig beleilig. Dette var egentlig ikke noget værelse for mig; her var nokså simple grønne gardiner for vinduerne, og så synderlig mange spiker i væggene til å hænge sin garderobe på var her heller ikke. . . . Kortsagt, værelset var*

ikke indrettet til å sysle med åndelige ting i og jeg agtet ikke å beholde det længer. På ingen måte vilde jeg beholde det! [emphasis added] (27)

Grammatical-stylistic descriptions usually point out that FID is a hybrid between the narrator's and the character's "voices": it preserves the narrative past tense and third-person reference (unless referring to the narrator-character in first-person fiction), but it espouses the expressive and emotional signs of the character's subjectivity. Today's theorists realize more and more that this strictly linguistic-stylistic description of FID is too simplified, as well as inadequate to explain the various effects FID can have on the reader (more on this later).[24] In my discussion of *Hunger*, I will only concern myself with FID-passages that present thought/consciousness; those presenting speech are far fewer in *Hunger* and, more importantly, not directly related to my topic, the modernist presentation of consciousness.[25]

Modern narrative theory constantly returns to FID, for at least two major reasons: FID belongs to narrative phenomena that are most difficult to conceptualize, and/because it is indissolubly linked to larger—not strictly linguistic-stylistic—theoretical issues such as language representation, point of view, intertextuality and literariness (McHale 249). Unfortunately, studies of the phenomenon in a socio-historical perspective have been scarce, despite the theorists' awareness of the importance of such an enterprise.[26] Nonetheless, a general agreement reigns among critics: FID was not employed widely until the nineteenth century (and especially the second half), and it assumed central importance with the rise of the modernist narrative. I will trace this development in the following pages.

Historically, FID must be considered as part of the repertoire of narrative techniques for presenting the character's personality as if from within its own mental and perceptual horizon. In this respect, the rise of FID closely parallels that of figural narration (see 2.1.4., n17), of which FID is the most characteristic element; in fact, sometimes the line between FID and figural narration becomes blurred.[27]

Pavel's is so far the most ambitious attempt at providing a historical context for the emergence and increase in significance of FID. As a technique whose potential for presenting individuality in its own subjective idiom was recognized from very early on, FID is one of the symptoms of the "rise of modern subjectivity" (Pavel 23). From the Enlightenment era until approximately the second half of the nineteenth century, the subject in literature spoke mostly in the language of the community; even when irony, self-deception, and other signs of subjectivity were involved, the narrator—whether third-person or first-person—was assumed to be generally reliable, due to his/her apparent allegiance to

the shared construct of community values (Pavel 22). The self was understood as the "locus of strategic and moral debates closely related to action and held in a language shared by an entire community." Due to an unwritten contract between the author and the audience, "inner thoughts were taken to be as clearly articulated as public ones . . ." (25). Thus the difference between the character's inner thoughts on the one hand, and his/her outer speech and action on the other, was relatively insignificant. Fiction, like historical or legal discourse,

> focused on human action and its motivation, and, as such, [was] . . . preoccupied with the links between visible deeds and inner deliberation based on moral and strategic reasoning. Seen from outside, the "I" appeared thus analogous to a *deliberation chamber*, rather than to an absolute *origin* of solitary discourse. (25)

As doubt about the Enlightenment view of the individual as a rational being, capable of moral choices and thus responsible for his/her actions increased, the links between thought and action weakened:

> These weak links are manifested, at the level of narrative construction, by the birth of the modern antihero, who cannot control nor understand himself . . . , and by the rise of *chance*, as opposed to *reasoned strategy*, as the main plot device of the modern novel. Discursively, this weakened connection is responsible for self-deceptive or unreliable autobiography, free indirect discourse, and the growing fragmentation of represented inner speech. (25)

In this scenario, FID assumes a new position, consonant with "a new distribution of the roles within the 'I'" (26). As areas of subjectivity other than thought and action begin to be explored, the self ceases to be a well-articulated "deliberation chamber," and begins also to accommodate "sensations, memories, and diffuse desires over which the 'I' has no effective linguistic command" (26). Writers begin to employ FID for presenting these new psychological themes, a task for which earlier techniques were less suitable.

Pavel's historical assessment concurs with Pascal's book-length study of the functioning of FID in the nineteenth-century novel. Pascal argues that while the use of FID enriched the nineteenth-century narrative in that it enabled writers to present characters as if from "within their own worlds of perception and understanding," it did not mean "a radical subjectivisation of the fictional world" (137). FID as a conveyor of the character's psychology is still tied closely to the narrator who guarantees meaning and objectivity, as well as the moral design of the story (137). The narrator's grip on FID loosens only with the advent of modernism which brings the "release of the subjectivism inherent in this form" (137-38).

Indeed, modernists and some of their forerunners put FID to their own use. Stevenson argues that FID, while certainly not being a modernist invention, "does help distinguish the work of the modernists from the 'relatively stabilised' fiction of their predecessors" (34-5). The difference in use of FID is both quantitative and qualitative: Stevenson speaks of "new frequency and extent of its employment," as well as of "the particularity of its use as a register for unspoken thoughts, rather than as just another way of recording dialogue" (35)—indeed, in the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries, FID was used much more for rendering speech than for presenting consciousness.[28] In the same sense, Cohn speaks of FID as a "stylistic bridge that led from nineteenth- to twentieth-century fiction" (115). Modernists used the technique in a new way as one of their instruments of enhancing relativism and perspectivism: in modernist narrative, FID characteristically presents the subjective experience of the human mind in its immediacy, while the narratorial presence, deprived of its traditional mimetic roles, no longer exercises authority over it.

Hamsun's novel *Hunger* constitutes an important milestone precisely because in it the nineteenth-century technique was put to a modernist use: FID depicts extensively the private inner world of the protagonist, while no narratorial control takes place. In this respect, the historical significance of *Hunger* is entirely unacknowledged.

2.2.2. Free Indirect Discourse in First-Person Narratives: A Theoretical Perspective

Traditional accounts of FID were limited to third-person narratives, since the technique occurs much less frequently in first-person fiction. Some critics have even concluded that FID simply does not exist in first-person narratives. Theorists such as Cohn and Stanzel have persuasively argued against such a misconception. FID does occur in first-person texts, but its features in this environment differ in several aspects from those in the third-person realm. Some of the constraints first-person narration places upon the use of FID explain its lower frequency.

As noted above, the linguistic-stylistic descriptions take FID to be a hybrid between the narrator's and the character's voices. Purely theoretically, this assessment holds for third-person narratives, as well as for first-person texts in which the issue of "dual voice" also arises, namely between the narrating and the experiencing selves. However, this elementary descripton is simplified and often inadequate, primarily because FID frequently consists of sentences in which the elementary grammatical signs (the past tense and third person) of "dual

voice" are either not present, or are not sufficient signals of FID.[29] More importantly, the dual-voice hypothesis is frequently at odds with the reader's perception of FID passages; the theory obscures important differences between representing speech and thought (see n25), and between first- and third- person narratives. Stanzel has offered the reason FID occurs less often in first-person narratives: the duality of "voice" within represented thoughts in first-person texts "does not result in a true doubling of the perspective because the narrating self ultimately retains an existential link with his earlier, experiencing self" (221). This difference has some important consequences for the presentation of consciousness.

a) FID occurs relatively scarcely in first-person narratives as an instrument for rendering consciousness. One reason is that the first-person narrator can only use FID to render his own past inner world, since s/he does not have access to other characters' minds.[30] Longer passages of FID that render consciousness presuppose a character who is extremely introverted, egocentric, or otherwise focused strictly on his internal life. This fact posed no problem for Hamsun, since the protagonist of *Hunger* is precisely of this sort; but the technique may be limiting for other authors, whose literary intentions either do not allow for the first-person FID, or may require third-person techniques instead.

b) Another reason for the rare occurence of FID for presenting consciousness in first-person texts, is that long or frequent FID-passages presenting the experiencing self's inner world require that the narrating self be suppressed (Cohn 171, Stanzel 224). This necessity is related to the role the narrating self has traditionally played in the first-person genre. Long stretches of interior monologue cannot be presented in an authentic and credible manner if they are tied to the voice of the autobiographical narrating self whose major preoccupation is recollection, reflection, and retrospective self-analysis. The narrating self is, sooner or later, expected to put some order into the streams of consciousness of the experiencing self.[31] This limitation, once more, was no problem for Hamsun: in *Hunger*, the narrating self is effaced so that the immediate, subjective experience of the experiencing self can freely unfurl, with no *a posteriori* control. In usual first-person fiction, however, authors do create at least some retrospective links to the experiencing self, being thus unable to suppress the narrating self sufficiently; the attachment to the narrating self allows them to use FID for presenting thoughts only sporadically.[32]

c) The existential continuity between the experiencing and the narrating selves does not allow a true "dual voice" which can otherwise be of high importance in authorial narratives. The authorial narrator can use FID to adopt an ironic distance toward the characters: in

authorial texts, FID "very often distances the reader from the fictional characters, because this distance is already inherent in the dual perspective of narrator and fictional character" (Stanzel 224). Thus whereas FID in authorial texts can create *both* irony *and* empathy, FID in first-person narratives "promotes the reader's empathy with the experiencing self much more frequently than it ironizes or creates distance between the experiencing self and the narrating self" (224). This holds true even more for figural narratives such as *Hunger*: they do not allow for any ironic distance within FID because the narrating self has no explicit voice. Here the theory of "dual voice," originally created for third-person FID, turns out to be an unapplicable theoretical construct. As for the presentation of consciousness, the reader sees little or no ambiguity between the voices of the narrating and the experiencing selves: s/he ascribes the "voice" in FID to the experiencing self (cf. n27).[33]

The first-person genre is very well-suited for capturing the existential-psychological differences between a fictional person's past and present selves; even more so if this person is a reflective type. *Hunger*, with its effacement of the narrating self, is a different case. Both the narrative situation and the thematic make-up of the novel create an optimal environment for the extensive employment of FID for presenting consciousness. The main character of *Hunger* is extremely introverted: he constantly retreats into his private world from his unsuccessful interaction with the public world. Hamsun's artistic intentions were to present the protagonist's movements of the mind with no *a posteriori* reflection: therefore he used figural narration to an extent that was unique in 1890. Having thus met the conditions for the high employment of FID for presenting the experiencing self's thoughts (see a, b, c above), Hamsun made an extended use of this technique: *Hunger* is among first-person novels with the highest employment of FID for presenting consciousness. In the following sections, I will explain concretely why the extensive use of FID makes the presentation of consciousness in *Hunger* modernist, and why critics have failed to realize this.

2.2.3. Modernist Narrative and Techniques for Presenting Consciousness

Critics have often assumed that novels by writers such as Joyce and Woolf are the highlights of modernism because the interior monologues employed in them are fragmentary and disorderly, and because they, allegedly, "reproduce directly" the workings of the human mind. The critics' criterion was authenticity: the more "direct," disorderly, and fragmentary the representation of consciousness, the more

verisimilar the image of the mind was supposed to be. It is no accident that this critical preference arose during the period of the rise of modernism, whose characteristic preoccupation was perspectivism—both ideologically and in matters of narrative presentation. Ever since the theories of Henry James and of his admirer, the critic Percy Lubbock, the distinction between the direct "point of view" and the narrator's indirect discourse, have had a normative slant: "showing" is good, "telling" bad. Many scholars have adopted this sharp division rather uncritically to modernist narrative, and elevated certain techniques for presenting consciousness higher than others only because they were "less mediated" by the narrator. A favorite example of the "most accomplished" technique became the last chapter of *Ulysses* that presents Molly Bloom's stream of consciousness:

> Yes because he never did a thing like that before as ask to get his breakfast in bed with a couple of eggs since the *City Arms* hotel when he used to be pretending to be laid up with a sick voice doing his highness to make himself interesting to that old faggot Mrs Riordan that he thought he had a great leg of and she never left us a farthing all for masses for herself and her soul greatest miser ever was actually afraid to lay out 4d for her methylated spirit. . . . (738)

The chapter is an attempt at rendering Molly's mind in its autonomy: the stream of consciousness is tied neither to any overt narrator, nor to any covert narrator's past tense.[34] Moreover, Joyce presents consciousness as if in its own (dis)order: there is no punctuation, there are no paragraphs, no capital letters to indicate the beginning of sentences; the sentences themselves are incomplete, fragmentary. In this manner, the stream of consciousness is supposed to be less verbal, and more thought-like, dream-like, or image-like. Therefore some critics have claimed that such a technique reaches deep into Molly's mind, perhaps even into her unconscious. However, the typographical fragmentariness makes the image of the mind no less verbal; in fact, the verbal component is foregrounded in such a way that it almost becomes a barrier for the reader's "direct" access to Molly's mind. The question arises: is this really the most authentic representation of the human mind?

Cohn has challenged the assumption that such techniques are the "purest" ways of rendering consciousness. She argues that while psychologists do not dispute the existence of "inner speech" (also called "mentation") in the human mind, theoretical conceptions abound as to the quality of this phenomenon. Models of consciousness range from totally non-verbal to entirely verbal. The question still lingers: do we think in words, concepts, images—or something else? Consequently, there exists no ultimate norm for representing the human

mind in the arts and literature; fictional renditions of consciousness are always conventional.

Yet Cohn does make some general assumptions in this respect. Following Freud, she equates the higher mental strata with articulation, and the mind's depths with inarticulateness. She applies this well-known postulate to narrative techniques for rendering consciousness: "Most generally, one can say that the more direct the technique, the more evidently verbal the activity of the mind, and therefore the more clearly conscious the mind that is exposed" (139). This thesis challenges the uncritical acceptance of Molly's interior monologue as the most accomplished technique for rendering consciousness. Less direct techniques, such as FID, or even certain kinds of narration *about* consciousness, may in fact be better suited for representing the human mind, especially that mind's inarticulate, hidden depths. The defenders of modernism tend to consider the narrator's discourse about the character's consciousness to be the most traditional and inherently "bad" technique, because it is the least direct and thus inauthentic. In contrast, Cohn argues that indirect narration has the potential to reach deeper in the human mind. The deeper the mind, the less representable it is; the unconscious is, by definition, unrepresentable, except in a symbolic or metaphorical manner, that is, in an indirect manner. Indirect narration about the character's mental life can therefore express more appropriately the workings of the unconscious—in symbols, similes, and metaphors. Narration about the character's psyche "reaches deeper" *precisely because* it creates vague images of the mind's interior instead of reproducing the character's verbalized thoughts.[35]

Cohn's arguments imply that it may be misleading to prefer one technique for presenting consciousness to another in an *a priori* normative fashion. It is difficult, if not impossible, to decide which technique presents consciousness in a more authentic way, without taking the context into account. First-person reference, present tense, greater fragmentariness, and more sustained stretches of text, are not necessarily qualities that make the "autonomous" interior monologue deep-reaching, "better," or more modernist than others. Defining modernist narrative on the basis of such criteria, with no regard to the context and the goals particular techniques serve in the individual work, is an infelicitous formalist enterprise. Unfortunately, both certain ideological preferences of critics and certain models elaborated by narrative theorists have promoted such an approach.

2.2.4. Traditional Narrative Theories and the Presentation of Consciousness

Ever since Henry James drew the line between "telling" and "showing," twentieth-century theorists have overemphasized the divide that

separates "indirect narration" (*diegesis*) from "direct (re)presentation" (*mimesis*).[36] By applying a speech-communicational model (SPEAKER -> UTTERANCE -> HEARER) to the narrative text (NARRATOR -> THE NARRATED -> IMPLIED READER/NARRATEE), the structuralist theorists have, paradoxically enough, reinforced the traditional mimetic assumption that there is always a coherent narrator-personality behind every word of the text. While these theorists made an important contribution by replacing the "author" as the assumed narrative agent with a non-biographical "narrator," they nonetheless continued to conceive of the "narrator" as if it were a real personality. The narrator was the ubiquitous ultimate "enunciator" of every word in the narrative; in case the narrator's voice was not detectable in certain passages, the critics would still deem his/her presence to be "covert." Fludernik succinctly summarizes this problem:

> [S]ince the earlier . . . tendency to identify the non-personalized narrator with the (historical) author has become untenable in the wake of the Modernist aesthetic, the responsibility for the telling has now been transferred to the (covert) narrator, or the implied author, and that even in narratological circles. The persistence of this preconceived notion that *somebody* (hence a human agent) must be telling the story . . . derives directly from the frame conception of storytelling [i.e., real-life oral enunciation] rather than from any necessary textual evidence. (448)

This conception of narrator has had a problematic consequence: everything that exists in a narrative text must either be "narrated" (indirect discourse, diegesis) or "quoted" (direct discourse, mimesis) by the narrator; FID has the privilege of being a "mixed" form in this model. As a heuristic device for approaching the problems of the narrative text, this tripartite communicational model seems, to a degree, indispensable. Yet it cannot provide the only adequate instrument of narrative analysis, since it has a few serious drawbacks.

First, recent theory shows that the boundaries between direct, indirect and free indirect discourse are less strict than previously thought: many examples show that the distinction is often difficult to make. The following example from *Hunger* illustrates how thin the line is between diegesis, mimesis, and FID: "Forresten var mit navn det og det, pastor den og den" (77). In the context of the paragraph, this sentence is the character's speech in FID. However, since the corresponding utterance in direct discourse would most likely include a real name, rather than the phrase "such and such," a more predictable (more "standard") form of this FID would be: "Forresten var mit navn [for example] Ibsen, pastor Henrik Ibsen." Which of the two types of FID is more direct, more mimetic? The answer is not easy. First, we cannot really ascertain whether the protagonist used a name, or said,

literally, "my name is such and such." Second, even if we assume that he did use a name, the phrase "such and such" is less direct only in the sense "replacing a real name," not in the sense "crossing over into FID from indirect discourse." The indirectness cannot be conceptualized as "diegetic," since the phrase is inherently "mimetic" (in the Genettean sense of mimesis): it normally occurs in direct discourse. It can enter indirect discourse, but only as a foreign element, i.e., as the direct expression of the speaker (Cf. a speaker who says, "She said that her name was such and such.") which cannot give the discourse the flavor of pure report as a real name can. This inherently direct quality of the expression is, ultimately, why Hamsun's sentence actually creates the mimetic effect of speech quite successfully.

Whereas earlier critics considered similar kinds of mixing to be stylistically inconsistent, or, in better cases, anomalous, recent critics have pointed out that narratives abound with such "inconsistencies." Particularly in modernist experiments such as *Ulysses*, subverting the boundaries between mimesis and diegesis is often deliberate. Yet this makes the mimetically "impure" techniques in *Ulysses* neither less modernist nor less appropriate for rendering speech or consciousness, as Fludernik points out:

> [T]he stylistic and cognitive shape of the narrator's description of a character's psychological make-up frequently exceeds the mimetically verisimilar construct of that character's linguistic and notional capabilities; at the same time such descriptions of consciousness are, however, geared precisely towards evoking a perspective of the world from within the character's mind. (325)

This quote indicates the second drawback the tripartite model has: the criterion of directness/indirectness (purity/impurity) is misleading as an *a priori* value judgment. Fludernik has argued most emphatically that all narrative representation is a linguistic convention. Pure narrative mimesis "is a conventional ideal rather than an indubitable empirical reality"; therefore even direct speech itself "is unmediated only in terms of the conventions of its interpretation; *it is meant to be read* as mimetic . . . [emphasis added]" (459). Neither indirect narration nor direct "reproduction" can, properly speaking, be said to faithfully represent speech or thought. The reader only has access to the text, not to any hypothetical "original" utterance or thought-process:[37]

> Reproduction of language in the medium of language is never an *actual, complete* reproduction but only the reproduction of an *ideal type*. . . . Linguistic reproduction of language in direct discourse should therefore not be characterized as mimicry or imitation . . . ; on the contrary, reproduction is a process of evocation. . . . (Fludernik 17)

Fludernik concludes that direct discourse and FID are, in principle, "*equally direct* evocations of consciousness [emphasis added]" and that "even indirect discourse can evoke subjectivity . . ." (432) by means of textual constructions and expressive signals.

The fact that techniques for presenting consciousness are narrative conventions whose effect ultimately depends on the context in which they occur, reveals the third drawback communicational models have: the plurality of forces/voices within a narrative text cannot be reduced to the tripartite scheme because the reader's experience often overrides such a narrow theoretical framework.[38] The reader's perception of a text resembles only to a very limited degree the narratologist's analysis of a text in terms of the speaker-utterance-hearer model. There exists another channel of communication, namely between the reader and the *text itself*. Here the communicaton is, in a sense, always direct. The author's "manipulation of expressive signals" of the character's subjectivity (Fludernik 429) can variously cut across the speech-communicational model. While certain techniques for presenting consciousness may not be direct and pure "in terms of mimetic *viewpoint*," they may be so "in terms of *mimetic effect*" (Fludernik 327). Indeed, while some theorists may speak of the "dual voice" and the signs of the narrator's mediation in certain FID-passages, the reader may perceive the very same passages unambiguously as representing only one "voice" and point of view, pertaining to the character. Critics must go beyond the traditional models of narrative mimesis and "point of view," and start asking themselves how certain techniques evoke the character's experience *for the reader*.

To summarize, traditional narrative theories are based on the unidirectional speech-communicational models that have produced the tripartite division DIEGESIS — FID — MIMESIS. This model can sometimes be "hopelessly inadequate to the empirical textual evidence" (Fludernik 315).[39] The above discussion has shown that the traditional measures of "purity," "autonomy," and "fragmentariness," are inadequate and misleading as the defining criteria of modernist narrative. In addition, they are chosen rather exclusively: they apply only to a limited number of techniques in certain canonical chapters or passages; yet even these techniques are but linguistic conventions. The great modernist experiments such as *Ulysses* overflow with diverse techniques for presenting consciousness; some of them may be deemed linguistically "indirect" or "impure," yet they are just as effective in representing the human mind as the "direct" and "pure" ones. Scholars have already started rethinking these problems: the long celebrated Joycean "reproduction" of consciousness is being discussed increasingly as "simulation"; and the mimetic "purity" of certain techniques

for presenting consciousness is being questioned, as critics begin to realize that the borderline between "indirect narration" and "direct (re)presentation" is more fluid than previously thought.[40]

2.2.5. Conclusion: The Modernist Presentation of Consciousness in *Hunger* by Means of Free Indirect Discourse

The above discussion helps explain the persistent uncertainty among Hamsun critics as to what is modernist about the presentation of consciousness in *Hunger*. This is the place to reexamine Nettum's skeptical stance toward the question of "stream of consciousness" in *Hunger* mentioned at the beginning of this chapter. Nettum claims that one cannot speak of any stream-of-consciousness technique in pure form ("i renform" 61) in *Hunger*, because

> [h]os metodens mestre, James Joyce og Virginia Woolf, er formålet å gi leseren illusjonen av at fortelleren eller forfatterpersonligheten er totalt fraværende; isteden er det brukt en slags "registreringsmaskin". I SULT er der en forteller og kommentator som betrakter bevissthetsstrømmen *utenfra.* (61)

This assessment reveals all the traditional biases discussed above: the criteria of "directness," "autonomy," and "fragmentariness" as signs of "purer," and therefore more modernist, techniques for presenting consciousness. The criteria are fallacious, since there exists no "pure form" of stream-of-consciousness technique. In addition, Nettum disregards the fact that even if one applies the label of "purity" to one particular technique (Molly's stream of consciousness?), it hardly applies to modernist techniques for presenting the mind in general. The criteria of "renform" and "registreringsmaskin" cannot be used as the distinguishing marks of the modernist narrative presentation of consciousness. Most techniques for representing the human mind in modernist novels are less direct and less autonomous than the one used in the last chapter of *Ulysses*. One of these more common techniques is FID, a characteristic element not only in such canonical modernist texts as Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, Kafka's *The Trial* and *The Castle*, or Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway*, but also in *Hunger*.

The assertion that in *Hunger* a "commentator" observes consciousness from the outside is likewise erroneous. The claim has little basis in the narrative itself; the narrating self does not make comments and judgments, because it is effaced. Nettum's "commentator fallacy," together with Musarra-Schrøder's and Haugan's overstressing of *Hunger* as "erindringsroman," stem partly from the mimetic conception of first-person novel as a fictional autobiography, partly from the use of the speech-communicational model. The above critics appar-

ently cannot conceive of a first-person narrative without a narrative agent that resembles a real-life person. Consequently, the assumed "speaker/enunciator" of the whole narrative cannot but be always on the outside of the experiencing self's consciousness. Consciousness in *Hunger* has, for these critics, the status of an object (the narrated) that the subject (narrator) presents to the reader.[41] Thus consciousness is never presented directly, but only narrated indirectly: hence the idea of a "kommentator som betrakter bevissthetsstrømmen *utenfra.*"

Such a theoretical construct is often irrelevant to the reader's perception. The narrator's "voice" in a narrative is not always identical with the "point of view" presented.[42] Therefore the reader's perception of the fictional world is relatively independent of the narrative agent's constitutive authority.[43] Indeed, one can even speak of many texts and passages as "narratorless" narrative, "if the term is defined precisely as the absence of linguistic signals that might have resulted in the projection of a speaker" (Fludernik 453). The reason no "communication breakdown" occurs between text and reader once the signs of the narrator's voice disappear, is that the reader does not read through the speaker-message-hearer model, but approaches directly the simulated fictional reality in the *text itself.* The narrative of *Hunger*, from which the narrating self's "voice" is mostly absent, also does frequently let the reader perceive the experiencing self's consciousness more or less "directly" by means of FID:

> Hvorfor skulde jeg ta hatten av for sådanne mennesker? Jeg brydde mig ikke længer om hende, aldeles ikke; hun var ikke det allerringeste vakker mere, hun hadde tapt sig, fy fan, hvor hun var falmet! Det kunde jo gjærne være at det bare var mig hun hadde set på; det forundret mig ikke; det var kanske angeren som begyndte å slå hende. Men derfor behøvet ikke jeg å falde til fote og hilse som en nar, specielt når hun altså var blit så betænkelig falmet på det siste. "Hertugen" kunde gjærne beholde hende, velbekomme! Det kunde komme en dag da jeg fik i sinde å gå hende stolt forbi uten å se til den kant hvor hun befandt sig. Det kunde hænde at jeg tillot mig å gjøre dette selv om hun så stivt på mig og atpå kjøpet gik i blodrød kjole. Det kunde godt hænde! Hehe, det vilde bli en triumf! Kjendte jeg mig selv ret så var jeg istand til å gjøre mit drama færdig i løpet av natten og inden otte dager skulde jeg da ha bøiet frøkenen i knæ. Med samt hendes yndigheter, hehe, med samt alle hendes yndigheter. . .(123)

Using this technique for presenting the character's mind, Hamsun achieves precisely that which Nettum denies him, but grants to Joyce and Woolf: he "gi[r] leseren illusjonen av at fortelleren eller forfatterpersonligheten er totalt fraværende." Critics such as Nettum do not see such passages as examples of modernist stream of consciousness because they are not in the present tense. But what else is this FID-passage if not a "stream of consciousness" or "interior monologue"?[44]

The fact that the passage is not in the present tense (*the criterion of linguistic directness*) and that it is not graphically disordered (*the criterion of fragmentariness*), does not make the presentation of consciousness less modernist. Neither does the fact that the past tense narration (see emphasis below) often permeates the blocks of FID presenting consciousness (*the criterion of autonomy*):

> *Bevisstheten om at jeg var ærlig steg mig til hodet, fyldte mig med en herlig følelse av å være en karakter*, et hvitt fyrtårn midt i et grumset menneskehav hvor vrak fløt om. Pantsætte en andens eiendom for et måltid mat, æte og drikke sig selv til doms, kalde sig kjæltring op i sit eget ansigt og slå øinene ned for sig selv — aldrig! Aldrig! Det hadde ikke for alvor været i min tanke, det hadde næsten ikke faldt mig ind engang: løse jagende strøtanker kunde man virkelig ikke svare for, især når man hadde en gruelig hodepine og slæpte sig næsten ihjæl på et sengetæppe som tilhørte en anden mand.
>
> Det vilde ganske sikkert bli en utvei til hjælp allikevel når tiden kom! Der var nu kjøpmanden på Grønlandsleret, hadde jeg overhængt ham hver time på dagen siden jeg sendte ham ansøkningen? ringet på sent og tidlig og blit avvist? Jeg hadde ikke sågodtsom mældt mig til ham og fåt svar. Det behøvet ikke å være et aldeles forgjæves forsøk, jeg hadde kanske hat lykken med mig denne gang; lykken hadde ofte en så underlig slynget vei. *Og jeg begav mig ut til Grønlangsleret.*
>
> *Den siste rystelse som gik gjennem mit hode hadde gjort mig litt mat og jeg gik ytterst langsomt og tænkte på hvad jeg vilde si til kjøpmanden.* Han var kanske en god sjæl; stak det lune ham gav han mig gjærne en krone i forskudd på arbeidet uten at jeg bad ham derom; slike folk kunde ha det med ganske fortræffelige påfund nu og da [emphasis added]. (36)

What does make FID in *Hunger* modernist is its extensive use for the purpose of presenting consciousness. Pages on which FID does not appear, are practically nonexistent. The ratio was certainly unusually high in 1890; in fact, it still is for a first-person novel. By employing FID extensively throughout the novel, Hamsun succeeded in simulating his hypersensitive protagonist's private world in its own subjective idiom.

2.3. Conclusion

Hunger is a strictly figural first-person narrative (2.1.) with an extensive employment of free indirect discourse for presenting consciousness (2.2.). Both these features make *Hunger* formally a modernist narrative: it dispenses with the models of classical realist fiction, in which the narrator had the privilege of cognitive authority over the character's subjectivity. Figural narration emancipates the character's psychology from the governing power of the narrator and opens space for the narrative simulation of the character's perception; it also provides optimal conditions for the presentation of the character's mind

in FID. Joyce's *Portrait*, Kafka's *The Trial* and *The Castle*, and Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway* are the most obvious examples of how modernists characteristically employed figural narration and FID as instruments of focusing on the character's private world. Hamsun does so in *Hunger* to such a degree that one can speak of the novel as a modernist milestone in Scandinavian, if not world, literature. *Hunger* can, after all, be called a "stream-of-consciousness novel": the character's streams of consciousness are conveyed in FID throughout the novel. Such passages are rarely longer than one page, since they are often interrupted by indirect discourse; yet FID constantly reemerges and continues to render the protagonist's mind in its own chaotic and dynamic unfolding. The fact that consciousness in *Hunger* is seldom presented in direct discourse[45] does not make the novel less modernist. In principle, direct discourse and FID are equally conventional devices for presenting consciousness.