

Inner and Outer Time

Time is a river which sweeps me along, but I am the river.
(Borges 1964: 187)

The previous chapters open a set of questions about the relationship between time and self-consciousness, an axis which has received too little attention within literary studies.¹ This neglect is all the more surprising since the idea of self-consciousness itself has played such a central role in the characterisation not only of contemporary fiction but of the more general social and discursive condition of the contemporary world. In prolepsis, we find on one hand a kind of temporal self-distance – a form of reflection which involves looking back on the present, from one’s own point of view or that of another – and on the other hand a kind of reversed causation, in which this future retrospect causes the event it looks back on. But can this really be thought of as reversed causation or backwards time? The purpose of this chapter is to explore this question alongside a consideration of the relationship between time, consciousness and self-consciousness.

To begin, we might revisit the question of Derridean supplementarity, formulated in *Speech and Phenomena* as a temporal structure in which ‘a possibility produces that to which it is said to be added on’ and which in *Archive Fever* takes the form ‘the archive produces the event as much as it records it’. In both cases, the word ‘produces’ indicates causality, so that the later possibility or the recording archive are assigned the status of cause in spite of their posteriority. And yet this posterior cause need not be viewed with any real surprise, since the posteriority of the cause is imagined and not real: it is a protention or anticipation of the future that causes the event, and not any reversal of the expansion of the universe. Hence, the case of an archive producing the news event cannot be seen as the future causing the present, but only as a possibility – a possible or envisaged future – which takes place in the present as a kind of

psychological cause. This kind of structure of supplementarity is in fact no more surprising than the idea of an intention, a fear or a hope as the motivating force of an action. There are cases, in Derrida, where the claim seems to be a little stronger or more surprising than this, such as the much vaunted argument that writing precedes speech. But again that argument in *Of Grammatology* does not claim the objective posteriority of speech to writing, and amounts to little more than an admission that speech precedes writing coupled to a claim that, just because it precedes it in clock time, it ought not to be accorded any conceptual priority. In the case of speech and writing, the possibility which produces that to which it is said to be added on, the possibility of writing, is not some psychologically envisaged future, but rather a logical possibility, which, on analysis, turns out to display all the essential conditions upon which significance depends. Again, it would be a mistake to think that the second law of thermodynamics was in any way at stake in this. We might say, as we did in the previous chapter, that what is really at stake here is phenomenological rather than cosmological time, or a certain slippage between the two which gives deconstruction some of its more melodramatic formulations. We might say, with Ricoeur, that it is the very nature of narrative, especially in its fictional form, to explore the interaction of phenomenological and cosmological time, and therefore between Husserlian protentions and actual futures.

There are many simple ways of illustrating the difference between subjective and objective time. The first is the example of the person who sits on a drawing pin, and who jumps up in response to a sudden jab of pain.² In phenomenological terms, the sequence of this experience is 'pain' followed by 'pin', in the sense that the pain comes first and the discovery of the pin follows from it. But this is clearly not the same as saying that the pain caused the pin, and the rational response to this experience is to reorder the experiential sequence pain/pin into a causal one – pin/pain. Interestingly, when Jonathan Culler uses this example in *On Deconstruction*, he does so in order to claim that causation itself is at stake in the disjunction between the temporal sequence of the experience and that of the story we tell about it, and in order to demonstrate that the deconstruction of causation relies on the notion of cause: 'the experience of pain, it is claimed, causes us to discover the pin and thus causes the production of a cause' (1983: 87). Ricoeur, on the other hand, would view narrative as a place in which the objective and subjective aspects of this situation might be reconciled with each other, so that narrative is seen as a place in which the tension between the two sequences, and therefore the interaction of a subject with the cosmos, can be most adequately explored. The first view seems to suggest that scientific causality

is mere storytelling, while the second seems to view the two models of temporality as a kind of *aporia* for which narrative offers a potential resolution. Another way of approaching this problem is through the idea of psychological duration. A lecture which lasts for one hour may seem to take much longer if it fails to interest a particular member of the audience: in psychological time there is a sense of greater duration which is contradicted by the clock. Just as the pin/pain example tends to view the experiential sequence as an illusion and the causal sequence as reality, so too in the example of psychological duration, the clock is the measurement of real time whereas the mind is the place of illusion and appearance. This distinction places us in the middle of a set of problems well known in philosophy and the philosophy of science about the nature of reason. We might begin with Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*, which cannot countenance the idea that we have access to things in themselves, or *noumena*, and assembles its account of speculative reason on the premise that we can deal only with things as they appear to the senses, or *phenomena*. In terms of the nature of time, we must ask how the notion of scientific causality has acquired the status of a *noumenology* of time, while philosophy has confined itself to a *phenomenology* of time, as if science deals with the universe and philosophy with the mind. A reading of Stephen Hawking's *A Brief History of Time* suggests that this division of labour is predicated on complete disinterest in, and perhaps an irrational fear of, the philosophy of time, but we ought not to judge theoretical physics as a whole in this way. Nor would we want to uphold the oppositions of subjective and objective time, psychological and clock time, or phenomenological and cosmological time too rigidly after Einstein.

It is clear that Derridean supplementarity has its roots in phenomenology, but it may also have more in common with the Modernist novel than it does with Husserl and Heidegger. Derrida's *différance* emerges from the view borrowed from Husserl of the present as a crossed structure of protentions and retentions, the view that the present is always divided between the past and the future, even in its apparently most extreme forms, such as the moment of an origin. We might link this idea with the structuralist conception of the sign, which proposes that the content of a sign is not only enabled by but actually constituted by its relations with other signs with which it forms a system. The present, like meaning in general, and for Derrida they amount to the same thing, is nothing in itself, but is actually constituted by its relations to past and future. The value here of the analogy with the linguistic sign is that it begins to point to the way that supplementarity, for all its phenomenological rooting, should not be thought as a mere preference for the mind

over the world. It is exactly the impossibility of separating the mind from the world, or language from the world, that gives supplementarity its character as a way of thinking about phenomenological and cosmological time together. From this point of view, Derrida and Ricoeur seem close together on the question of the reality of time, and perhaps this makes some sense of the claim that Derrida's approach is as close to the Modernist novel as to philosophical phenomenology: both may view narrative fiction as a kind of discourse in which the objective and subjective dimensions of time can find their most unified treatments. This is a proposition that I will return to throughout the study. For the moment it is worth highlighting its consequences for the idea incumbent on the logic of supplementarity that an effect might be anterior to a cause.

Time cannot go backwards. If the logic of supplementarity claims otherwise it cannot be saying anything meaningful about the cosmos or the clock. Protentions must not be confused with actual futures. Protentions are mere mental orientations towards the future, and it is banal to say that they produce events in the present. The forward direction of time is enshrined in the second law of thermodynamics, which states that time is asymmetrical because heat will flow from a warmer region to a cooler one but not vice versa. Light travels away from its sources and not towards them. The one-directionality of time is part of the physical fact of an expanding universe. And none of us is getting any younger. How feeble the interventions of the postmodern novelist, the poststructuralist philosopher and the cultural theorist appear in the face of these brute realities.

To continue for a moment with this blatantly rhetorical prolepsis, the only purpose of which can be to preclude the objections it assembles, even though to do so I might have to reverse the expansion of the universe, it may be worth identifying some further propositions about time which for all their influence in contemporary thought, appear feeble in their response to the authority of cosmological time. It is apparently a widely held view, for example, that the one-directional linearity of time is placed in question by the narrative of *Mrs Dalloway* since the order of narrated events follows the digressions of Clarissa's interiority in contrast to the clock time which chimes throughout the day. This can only be viewed as a misunderstanding. Even in the case of a fictional narrative dominated by what Genette calls anachronies, it would be difficult to claim that the forward movement of time was in any way in question. Genette simply refers us in such cases to the discrepancy between story order and text order, or the way that events are assumed to have occurred chronologically and the order in which they are presented in the text.

Mrs Dalloway, however, is not anachronous in this way. It adheres to a strict linearity in its narration of Clarissa's thoughts and those of other characters, and therefore demonstrates one of the problems outlined in the previous chapter: that when analepsis functions in the mode of memory, it needn't be viewed as an anachrony at all, since the memory itself is an event in the fictional present. The more sophisticated version of the claim for the statement that *Mrs Dalloway* makes about time is that it is a detailed examination of the way that we experience time, and since our experience of a phenomenon is the only possible access we can have to it, we must view time not in terms of the clock but as a combination of phenomenological experience and cosmological laws. From this point of view, the novel is a scaled up version of the pin/pain problem and presents the issue of the authority of objective time in relation to the experience of time as it takes place in the minds of several characters. This is the basis of Ricoeur's claim for the novel: that the complex embedded structure of memory, and of the reverberation of one character's solitary experience within another solitary experience produces a kind of network of temporal experience. This network, in turn, 'confronts' what he calls monumental time, the audible experience of which is the striking of clocks throughout the narrative. This more complex point is part of Ricoeur's larger exploration of narrative and its dealings with the aporias of cosmological and phenomenological time. But to claim as Ricoeur does that these aspects of time must be thought about in combination is not to offer any challenge to the asymmetry or the one-directionality of time. The subjective and the objective aspects of time represented in this, and indeed any other novel, may in some ways seem incompatible or, with Ricoeur, aporetic, but not in such a way that the forward direction of time is placed in question. In phenomenological terms, in which the present is a crossed structure of protentions and retentions, there is no limit to the potential anachronies of a sequence of experiences, but they are only anachronous in relation to an objective or external conception of time. What we have to move away from, as Ricoeur constantly reminds us, is a simplistic opposition between clock time and internal time. Nor should we, as I suggested above, view cosmological time as a kind of noumenon which lies outside our experience of it. It is a mistake to align phenomenological time with the life of the mind and cosmological time with the outside world. If, with Hegel in *Phenomenology of Spirit*, we abandon the idea of the noumenon, of things in themselves to which we have no access, on the grounds that we have no access to them, we are left with a kind of cosmological time conceived and perceived from within human experience and so the mind. From this point of view, the aporia of cosmological and phenomenological time is not the same

thing as the difference between actual time and the experience of time. Properly speaking, both cosmological and phenomenological time are experiences which are available to the consciousness. What Ricoeur shows so well is that these two experiences of time are distinguished as parts of the consciousness in *Mrs Dalloway* mainly through the authority invested in the notion of clock time, an authority similar to that I ascribed earlier to the causal account of the pin/pain relationship. What Ricoeur demonstrates less well, since he works in search of the aporia, is the co-dependence, if not absolute cooperation between these two facets of time-consciousness. From this point of view, the anachronous arrangement of past events in Clarissa's memory does nothing less than confirm perpetually the chronological order of events from which they digress, and in such a way that the intelligibility of remembered events depends on the reconstruction of their chronological order. The representation of memory, in short, does nothing to question the forward movement of time.

Similar examples of the apparent tension between the 'experience' of time and the true nature of time litter contemporary cultural theory. Once again, it is not a question of belittling the importance of the experience of time in the face of some incontrovertible fact of the cosmos, but rather expanding the notion of experience to encompass the more regulative scientific aspects of time which cultural theorists often banish to some outside space. We might ask, for example, what exactly David Harvey (1989) is asking us to accept about the nature of time when he offers an account of time-space compression. This phenomenon, which in one form or another has been influential on thought about the condition of the contemporary world, is based fundamentally on the increased speed of global communication. Let us look at this argument, which we encountered briefly in Chapter 2, in more detail. While Harvey's account stresses the actual increase in average travel speeds from the age of the horse and the ship to that of jet propelled aviation, others have focused on the virtual and infinite speeds of telecommunications. Harvey's argument describes a process of global contraction in relation to travel speeds, and the significant psychological change that it brings about. If Australia used to be distant in both spatial and temporal terms from Great Britain, the invention of the jet engine has narrowed this temporal distance considerably while leaving spatial distance unchanged. In a similar sense, the spatial distance between Europe and Australia is traversed at infinite speed by the telephone, so that places once months apart are perceived as a simultaneity. These processes are of course enhanced by other developments in technology, and in particular the view of earth from outer space, which encourages

a perception of the planet as a whole as a temporal simultaneity. These are very simple arguments, but they have to be taken seriously for their impact on popular experiences of time. It is always possible to follow them into more complex areas. Deleuze, Guattari and Jameson, for example, have linked the condition of time–space compression to the condition of schizophrenia, where the latter is understood in a Lacanian sense, as the collapse of temporal order into simultaneity. For Lacan, schizophrenia is fundamentally a linguistic disorder, in which meanings are no longer strung out in time, but are co-present, and in collision with each other. The world, like the sentence, has therefore begun to obey a different temporality in which the controlled admission of differences once ensured by geographical distance is abolished to create a babble of different and co-existing places and cultures. This babble finds its analogy in the co-existence of different moods or mental states experienced in the schizophrenic mind, so that schizophrenia describes a collapse in linear temporality.

Like the threat to the forward motion of time apparently posed by the phenomenon of memory, this set of ideas about time–space compression requires a little more thought. In the first place, it looks as if the phrase itself lacks accuracy, since the compression seems to apply to time and not to space: the number of miles between Britain and Australia is unaltered while the number of minutes is greatly reduced. The phrase is perhaps best understood as amounting to a claim, derived from Einstein’s time–space continuum and therefore borrowing from the scientific authority of theoretical physics, that time and space are inseparable. And yet the world is no smaller than it was in 1650, and its contraction must be viewed either in a metaphorical light (the world is like a village), or in relative terms (that it seems small in relation to other scales or to the past). What we have here is another version of the problem of memory’s relationship to time, or of the experience of time to actual time. Is the claim that the world is smaller, or is it that the world seems smaller? And to complicate the matter in the way that we did with the last example, we must also ask on what grounds we distinguish between ‘is’ and ‘seems’. This provides a very simple way of describing one of the unreliable tendencies of the so-called ‘theory’ of postmodernism: that it tends to involve a slippage between the ‘seems’ and the ‘is’ without resort to the vast body of theory on this issue that finds its way from Plato through Kant and into phenomenology: the body of theory that we call philosophy.

A good example of an account of the postmodern experience of time, which also takes account of contemporary developments in physics, can be found in the first chapter of Ursula Heise’s *Chronoschisms*, ‘Narrative and the Postmodern Experience of Time’. This is a survey of ideas about

time alongside a set of developments in technology and knowledge that contribute to an altered culture of time, and an account of the postmodern novel as an aesthetic response to that new culture. In addition to Harvey's 'time-space compression' and its dependence on developments in transportation and telecommunications, Heise explores the relevance of television, the computer, the nanosecond as a new unit of time alongside ideas concerned with the end of history, the crisis of historicity that can be found in the new historicisms, the development of subjective time in art and the novel, and the impact of relativity in physics. Some of these subjects receive a more detailed and sustained analytical attention elsewhere, but this is one of the most impressive general surveys of issues relevant to time across the boundaries of science, technology and art. Heise's book also provides a stimulating account of the contemporary novel to complement that offered by Linda Hutcheon, whose notion of 'historiographic metafiction' has acquired so much influence in the theory of the postmodern novel. For my purposes here I want to make a simple observation: that Heise considers a huge range of factors which affect the 'experience of time', and encompasses a range of ideas about time and history, but the philosophy of time is simply missing. It is not that an engagement with the philosophy of time is obligatory for a literary critic, but its absence hinders the discussion and limits the scope of its insights into narrative time. Just as Stephen Hawking desperately needs a first-year university course in metaphysics, if only to be able to state his position on the relationship of the mind to the universe, so too one hears the philosophical coordinates of Heise's discussion calling out to her constantly as she accounts for the relationship between this new culture of time and its encodification in narrative. To put the case simply, it doesn't matter how time behaves in fiction, nor how technology has altered the postmodern experience of time, unless either the representation of time or the experience of time can be related logically, perhaps we should say theoretically, to the nature of time. In the humanities, there is often an untheorised assumption that the nature of time is as described in phenomenology. In Heise's account, the phrase 'postmodern experience of time' operates in two ways. First, it operates phenomenologically in the sense that it locates time not in the universe, but in the universe as it is present to human consciousness; and second, it operates as a kind of collective consciousness, in which the experience of time can be altered by shared conditions such as technological innovation. This is paradigmatic in the humanities, in the sense that there is often an assumption of the constructed nature of the world, of the naivety of the notion of a real world, of reality, or of the fallacy of any position of analytical neutrality which might exist outside the mind, textuality or ideology. From this

point of view, the experience of something and the nature of something are inseparable. There is therefore no time other than that experienced in and constructed by the new culture of time, and the efforts of theoretical physics are internal to that culture.

The theoretical basis for this kind of phenomenological presupposition is often farmed out to the theorists of the humanities, such as its philosophers, in much the same way that the philosophical basis of scientific investigation is rarely undertaken by scientists themselves. It has often been noticed that philosophers of science, such as Kuhn (1962) and Popper (2002), advance the most modest accounts of the scientist's access to reality, accounts which do not differ significantly in their presuppositions from the paradigm sketched above: which is to say that they offer a constructivist view of scientific investigation. Kuhn, for example, invests scientific investigation with no greater authority than that of consensus among the those considered to be scientists, a model which was so commensurate with the view of the nature of things in literary theory that it was imported wholesale from the philosophy of science as a theory of methodological revolution for the humanities. In the work of both Kuhn and Popper there is an emphasis on whether scientific analysis works, whether it meets interpretive requirements or whether the knowledge that it yields is falsifiable, but in the work of theoretical physics there is a more strident confidence that the method of investigation is directly related to the physical laws of the universe, which is being discovered and not invented by the analysis. Not even the most preposterous metaphors such as wormholes and black holes will alert the theoretical physicist to the shaping roles of language in general or narrative in particular in relation to these physical laws. The universe has a beginning, a middle and an end, and time is the product of its growth, or expansion, between the big bang and the big crunch.

The question of whether time really exists, and whether it really goes forward, is a little more complicated than the question of whether a physical object exists, but only a little. An approach to this problem will require a brief summary of the question of objects, from transcendental idealism to phenomenology and deconstruction. If we return to the Kantian idea that things in themselves, or noumena, are simply unavailable to human consciousness, and therefore beyond the scope of speculation, we might say the same thing about time: that its actual nature is irrelevant to us, and that we can deal with it only as a phenomenon (in its technical sense, as an experience of an object, or an object for consciousness). The complication is that time is not an object in the same way as a tree, or rather, that it is an object, but it is also a condition from within which we understand objects. For Husserl (1970) and Heidegger

(1962), time and consciousness are categorically inseparable in the sense that we cannot escape the temporal flow of consciousness to reflect upon objects outside of that temporal flow, and least of all on time itself. Kant's bracketing off of the noumenon, or the thing in itself, is a gesture which is repeated throughout modern phenomenology and has come to be known, especially by its critics, as the phenomenological reduction. In Kant's terms, this is the problem of transcendence, and the solution is what he calls, confusingly, the transcendental. If we turn to Husserl, we find him returning to Kant's problem of the transcendent, or the idea of objects as things in themselves which exist outside of the temporal flow of consciousness. Husserl is concerned to show in *Logical Investigations* that the inaccessibility of the outside of consciousness is not catastrophic for the notion of objectivity itself, and that we need only relocate it inside. He does this by developing the concept of intentionality, which he describes as the directedness of consciousness towards an object of which it is conscious, in other words as the internal experience of the outside object. What Kant called the transcendent object, to which we have access only as appearance, is therefore being seen here not as transcendent but as immanent, or inside the consciousness. In the case of a tree, the phenomenological reduction involves the bracketing of the tree, as well as the question of the tree's outside being, to reflect only on the experience of the tree as lived. In the case of time, the phenomenological reduction involves the bracketing of time in itself, as well as the question of the external being and nature of time, to reflect on the experience of time as lived. The immanence of time is a little more complicated than the immanence of a tree because time, understood as the temporal flow of consciousness, is both the subject and the object of reflection, both the consciousness itself and the intention of that consciousness. Husserl tries to get out of this tautological relation of the inside and the outside via the notion of signitive intention. If intention is the directedness of consciousness towards an object, signitive intention is the way that this directedness operates when the object is not present to consciousness; intuition, on the other hand is the kind of intention that is fulfilled by the presence of the object. Here again we have the subject/object distinction located immanently, or within the consciousness, and the distinction allows Husserl to discriminate between a thought about an object, which can take place in the absence of the object, and the direct cognition of the object, or its presence as an intuition in consciousness. What then of the distinction we were working with earlier between phenomenological and cosmological time? It no longer looks adequate to say that a phenomenological approach to time is one which brackets cosmological time to focus on inner consciousness. The phenomenological approach is

rather a relocation of cosmological time within the consciousness, as the object intuited by the signitively intended time.

Seen in this light, the tension between the 'seems' and the 'is' which characterises postmodern theory looks rather more interesting. Instead of saying that while the world seems to have shrunk it is in fact the same size, and therefore that appearance has misrepresented reality, we now have to look at the tension not as one between the inner world of mind and the outer world of reality, but as a tension between the sense-making intention of thought (meaning) and the intuition of evidence of the object, both of which are internal to consciousness. In relation to time, then, we have one empty or symbolic notion of time which waits on truth, in the form of evidence of the object, or the intuition of time as an external object or force. Meaning, says Husserl, waits on truth, as intentions of objects wait on the knowledge that fulfils them in the intuition of the presence of the object. The 'seems' of appearance is not indifferent to the evidence or to the objectivity of the object. We might agree with phenomenology that we have access to the reality of time only as an appearance, or an inner lived experience, but in doing so we are not abandoning the ideas of objectivity or evidence. Both the appearance of, and the experience of time are crucially linked to its reality in the same way that the appearance or experience of an object are crucially linked to the transcendent object, but in each case the transcendent object can only be intuited by the 'sense', or made into meaning by the intending consciousness. But the reality of time is a slightly different issue for Husserl as for Kant, from the reality of an object since, in Kant's words 'time is nothing other than the form of inner sense itself' and the 'a priori condition of all appearances'. In other words time is not an object, but it inheres in all objects as they appear to the senses: he therefore maintains the 'empirical reality of time, that is, its objective validity in respect of all objects which allow of ever being given to our senses' while denying to time 'all claim to absolute reality; that is to say, we deny that it belongs to things absolutely, as their condition or property, independent of any reference to the form of our sensible intuition' (Kant 2003: 78). In short, time is all in the mind, as part of the inner form of sense and meaning, but no less real than a tree for it.

Derrida's reading of Husserl is an exciting intervention into this discussion of the inside and the outside of consciousness (Derrida 1973). It does take us away slightly from the question of the reality of time, and yet it also explains how the notion of supplementarity can operate with such apparent disdain for its so-called 'forward' direction. We might begin here with a small sample of Derrida's approach, in general terms, to the relations between inside and outside as spatial metaphors in the

discourse of philosophy. One of the recurring schematics in Derridean deconstruction is that of an internal space which is in some way outside its own boundaries. Speaking of Husserl's account of the sign, with its division between indication and expression, Derrida identifies a perplexing logic based on the spatial trope of inside and outside:

Ex-expression is exteriorization. It imports to a certain outside a sense which is first found on the inside. We suggested above that this outside and this inside were absolutely primordial: the outside is neither nature, nor the world, nor a real exterior relative to consciousness. We can now be more precise. The meaning (*bedeuten*) intends an outside which is that of an ideal object. This outside is then ex-pressed and goes forth beyond itself into another outside, which is always 'in' consciousness. (1973: 32)

If sense is Husserl's way of making the distinction between the outside and the inside an immanent one, in the sense of being within consciousness, what Derrida claims here is that the outside, paradoxically and yet also obviously, has been reintroduced on the inside. But this is really only the beginning of the confusion, since the idea of expression is based in an intended outside (or an outside which is within consciousness) which must be sent out beyond itself to another outside, which is still not the outside. Speaking of Plato, Kant, Husserl and Saussure together in *Of Grammatology*, he writes: 'The outside bears with the inside a relationship that is, as usual, anything but simple exteriority. The meaning of the outside was always present within the inside, imprisoned outside the outside and vice versa' (1974: 35). This second example is also part of a discussion of writing conceived as exteriority of consciousness, and this tells us something important about the deconstruction of time. In Derrida's discussions the debate about whether time exists inside of consciousness or outside in the cosmos, or both, or neither, has been recast in such a way that the whole issue of consciousness, with all of its metaphysical baggage, and indeed its very dependence on the idea of interiority (inner consciousness) has been abandoned. In this context, the assertion that *il n'y a pas de hors-texte* must be seen as one that steers us away from consciousness as the realm of immanence in which phenomenological and cosmological time find their existence.

There is something wrong then with a question about the reality of time which is phrased in terms of the inside and the outside of consciousness. This is what Ricoeur has already reminded us, in his caution about the simplistic opposition of internal and clock time. And it may be that it is not simply the category of consciousness that is the problem, but the appeal to spatial objectivity of inside and outside itself. Consider, for example, the relations of inside and outside at work in Derrida's

phrase from 'The Law of Genre', 'an internal pocket larger than the whole' (1992: 228). Whereas the general reference of inside and outside depend upon the laws of physics for their meaning, this phrase conveys an impossible object in which the dimensions of an internal space exceed its external dimensions. We might say it serves Kant and Husserl right that the invention of this kind of impossible object can be used as a critique of their adherence to an inside/outside model. It serves them right because the very possibility of creating such an object is the founding gesture of Husserl's account of expression: that the stratum of meaning is analytically separate from the stratum of object intuition. As Derrida loves to point out, in Husserl's analysis it is perfectly possible for a meaning not to wait upon truth, or for its fulfilment in the presence of an external object, and in fact it is the very essence of meaning that it can function in the absence of the object. It is this possibility that leads Derrida to shift from a phenomenology to a grammatology, or an analysis which replaces the whole category of consciousness with that of writing, since writing is meaning which functions in the absence of both the signitive intention (the origin in consciousness) and the intuition of an object (the telos or fulfilment of an intended object). Derrida thus points out that Husserl's system allows perfectly for expression for which no actual or even possible object could be found, such as the expression 'the circle is square'. It is this kind of expression, which makes perfect grammatical sense but for which there can be no outside referent, that deconstructs the teleological account of meaning as object intuition.

The impossible object, and even the impossible world, is of course the very possibility of fiction. Derrida's 'internal pocket larger than the whole' for example, has many fictional equivalents, such as the house in Mark Z. Danielewski's *House of Leaves*, which defies the laws of physics by having internal dimensions which exceed its external dimensions. This is also a useful way of describing the fictional representation of time, since fiction is capable of temporal distortion which cannot be reproduced in lived experience, unless, of course, reading itself can be viewed as lived experience. Though we will, we do not have to turn to fiction to find the impossible. It is central to Derridean deconstruction that this kind of impossibility is a part of the text of philosophy, and the two kinds of impossibility we have been exploring here, of the outside inside and the effect that causes its cause, are actually conditions of its possibility in the same way that we might say that the impossible object or world is the very possibility of fiction. Ricoeur, as we have seen, views the importance of narrative as a kind of discourse in which the intersubjective network of inner time-consciousnesses can be brought into contact with outside forms of time such as cosmological and monumental time, and

in which the various aporias that take place between them can find a resolution. My own argument has been that there is a hermeneutic circle between presentification and depresentification that makes us live life as if it weren't present and read fictional narrative as if it were. But here, in Derrida's deconstruction of Husserl, there is a third possibility that might make us look at time in a different way: that fiction, like deconstruction, can present the unpresentable, and can be the impossible, and it is this possibility that gives it a power to subvert Husserl's account that sense waits upon truth in the form of an object present to consciousness.

Derrida's impossible object – the internal pocket which is larger than the whole – offers a model for the relationship between subjective time and objective time in general, as well as a framework for the relationship between the fictional theme of time and the temporal logic of storytelling. If the traditional understanding of subject and object would posit time as divided between the inside and the outside, the time of the mind and the time of the universe, phenomenology, as we have seen, insists that this distinction be relocated on the inside, within consciousness. Time is both the thing that you experience and the way that you experience it. Similarly, in the novel, time is both a matter of content and a matter of form: it is a theme of the novel and it is the logic of storytelling itself. It is to this relationship as it is forged in narrative fiction that the discussion will now turn.

Notes

1. There is a notable exception here in relation to Proust, in which the relations of time and self-consciousness have been the subject of many analyses. But this does not mean that the theoretical or philosophical relations have been established in general, and in a way applicable to other novels. It is at the level of the operations of fiction in general that the neglect is most apparent.
2. This is Nietzsche's example in *The Will to Power*.