Modernism and Film——Cinematic Moment in Some Works of Faulkner

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1.

Much has been told about the relation between modernism and film, specifically how the modernist writers adopted such cinematic technique, most notably, as montage into their works. As David Trotter quotes, Elaine Showalter's comment, in the introduction of *Mrs Dalloway,* that "Woolf makes use of such devices as montage, close-ups, flashbacks, tracking shots, and rapid cuts in constructing a three-dimensional story"[i] sounds familiar to us as a typical example of cinematic influence in the modernistic writing.

Trotter however does not agree with Showalter's (or Winifred Holtby's[ii]) argument about the relation between cinema and Woolf's writing; in Trotter's words, it "is an argument by analogy" whose "basic proposition is that some works of literature are structured like a film."(Trotter, 159) Such a view, according to Trotter, seems wrong since it "pursue(s) analogies between literary and cinematic form, and to identify one as cause and the other as effect."(160) Instead, Trotter continues, "it is more likely to be the case that there was, for a period during the mid-1920's, a fund of shared preoccupation; and that Woolf drew on this fund in developing a particular emphasis in her novels." That emphasis is "an emphasis on the 'common life' as the 'real life.'" Quoting Gillian Beer's comment on the topic, "living in the same time, sometimes in the same place—whether or not you ever meet," Trotter suggests that Woolf was interested in "coexistence, or co-observation," and in the way "movement (and in particular casual movement) defines space" which she "shared with some film-makers of the period."

Examining Woolf's comments on documentary film, Trotter says that she found in the newsreels that the "events are not more beautiful, but more real, or, rather, 'real with a different reality.'" (168) Such a view "celebrates the common life as the real life, but it does so by imagining what that life looks like when we are not there to see it." And this kind of approach to reality was, according to Trotter, necessary in developing "Clarissa Dalloway's meditation on being-in-the-world, and at the same time to take a risk she did not take." Trotter summarizes:

> [In] cinema, unlike the theatre, actors and audience never coincide; for one party to be present, the other must be absent. Encounterlessness within the mutually acknowledged relationship of viewer and viewed was the medium's founding principle.(168)

In other words, cinema forces us to realize that "the event began without us that it does not need us," and such realization "opens our minds wider to beauty than any sense of command, of being throughout fully present and correct, ever could."(169)

Trotter's point that influence of film, a then new technological medium in describing life, on Woolf, a typical modernist writer, is more conceptional rather than technical nor analogical, sounds noteworthy in examining how modernist writers struggled in their own way to represent time and space in their novels. He does not include Faulkner in his book, but it is most likely that the younger American novelist who published his early novels in the mid-1920's[iii] also drew on "a fund of shared preoccupation" with Woolf and other modernist writers. What Faulkner obtained from "a fund" may, of course, be unique; in the following discussion, we will see how cinematic concept and cinematic technique are adopted in some of his short stories and novels.

2. "Dry September" (1931)

It is not very common to find a scene in a movie theatre in Faulkner's works. Such a rare occasion could be found in "Dry September" in which Miss Minnie Cooper's psychological drama is depicted. In section 4 of this short story, Minnie goes to a movie theatre with her female friends, and gets into a panic:

> [Minnie and her friends] reached the picture show. It was like a miniature fairyland with its lighted lobby and colored lithographs of life caught in its terrible and beautiful mutations. Her lips began to tingle. In the dark, when the picture began, it would be all right; she could hold back the laughing….
>
> The lights flicked away; the screen glowed silver, and soon life began to unfold, beautiful and passionate and sad, while still the young men and girls entered, scented and sibilant in the half dark, their paired backs in silhouette delicate and sleek, their slim, quick bodies awkward, divinely young, while beyond them the silver dream accumulated, inevitably on and on. She began to laugh. In trying to suppress it, it made more noise than ever, heads began to turn. Still laughing, her friends raised her and led her out, and she stood at the curb, laughing on a high, sustained note, until the taxi came up and they helped her in. [iv]

Structured in a contrapuntal manner, the short story consists of five sections in which one episode, in sections 1, 3, and 5, focuses on the men at the barber shop and the

other, in sections 2 and 4, focuses on Minnie, a woman of "thirty-eight or thirty-nine." (173) The short story begins with a scene in a barber shop, in section 1, where some men gathered and talked about "the rumor, the story," which concerns "Miss Minnie Cooper and a Negro"; she was "[attacked,] insulted, frightened" but "none of them, gathered in the barber shop on that Saturday evening…knew exactly what had happened." (169) However, the men, except the barber, kill an innocent black man, being incited to lynching by Percy Grimm-like McLendon, who urges them by saying, "are you going to sit there and let a black son rape a white woman on the streets of Jefferson?" (171).

In section 2, the tone changes and we are told, in an objective, detached narrative, what kind of woman Minnie Cooper was and is: she was "of comfortable people—not the best in Jefferson, but good people enough."(174) But she is on the decline, being a single woman at her age: when she walked outside the soda fountain in downtown in a new dress, "the sitting and lounging men did not even follow her with their eyes any more." (175)

In this manner, the two episodes, one about the men who participate in lynching and the other about the woman who caused it, go side by side without intersecting: though the two episodes develop from the same "rumor" and the incident, respectively, occurs "on that Saturday evening," in Jefferson, people in the odd sections never meet the ones in the even sections. In addition, the different narrative mode characterizes the atmosphere of the two episodes: the lynching episode consists mainly of conversation which contribute to making a frantic and frenzied mood and to describing how men were driven to insane act of lynching; and the other is told in a narrative which calmly describes Minnie Cooper in a manner which reminds us of "A Rose for Emily."

At this point, we may wonder why Minnie's hysterical laughter takes place in a movie theatre. It could be any public place where many people gather, such as the Square. But, on second thought, we realize that the movie theatre epitomizes Minnie's horror, the recognition that she is old and her life is vacant and meaningless, which causes her panic: it is "a miniature fairyland with its lighted lobby and colored lithographs of life caught in its terrible and beautiful mutations" ; it is the place where she sits among the young men and girls, "scented and sibilant in the half dark, their paired backs in silhouette delicate and sleek, their slim, quick bodies awkward, divinely young"; it is the place where "the screen glowed silver, and soon life began to unfold, beautiful and passionate and sad, and while beyond them the silver dream accumulated, inevitably on and on."

Such may be one reasonable account why her panic takes place in a movie theatre, but we might also claim, thanks to Trotter's argument, that the structure of "Dry September" itself called for the specific place: since in "cinema, unlike the theatre, actors and audience never coincide; for one party to be present, the other must be absent." Not only because Minnie is a viewer watching the actors in the screen, she is absent from the scene where lynching takes place and, vice versa, the men at the scene of the crime is absent from the theatre. That is to say, interestingly enough, not only "actors and audience" of film in the theatre—Minnie and the actors in the film she watches—but also another pair of parties—the episode of the men at the barbershop and the episode of the woman at the movie theatre—never coincide. They are not, of course, viewer and viewed as the one in the movie theatre but they are in "the mutually acknowledged relationship" since the one is the cause and the other the effect of one single crime. If we paraphrase Trotter's remark that "[e]ncounterlessness within the mutually acknowledged relationship of viewer and viewed was the medium's founding principle," we may say that, in somewhat devious way, Faulkner tried to represent time and space in a cinematic manner in "Dry September."

3. "A Rose for Emily"(1930)

There are interesting similarities between the characterization and the description of Minnie Cooper and Emily Grierson but there is no direct reference to a movie theatre or a movie in "A Rose for Emily." We can, however, surmise that cinematic technique as well as cinematic concept are implicitly employed in this short story.

Most notably, the story is told by an unidentifiable "narrator" who seems to represent the townspeople by using the pronoun "we" as against Miss Emily and the people around her. Told by the first-person narrator, all information about Miss Emily and what is happening around her is given to the reader through the narrator's mouth. So, like a viewer of a movie, the reader sits back to watch developments. What is interesting to note is that the narrator uses the same expression when Miss Emily's cousins visited her after she became a target of scandal with Homer Barron: "So she had blood-kin under her roof again and we sat back to watch developments."(127) What is happening here is that the narrator—and the townspeople— watches Miss Emily's life as if they watch a movie, something that develops before their eyes, and we, the reader, "watch" the scenes we create in our imagination by reading what the narrator tells us. It is as if we, the reader, watch "a movie," the short story "A Rose for Emily," in which the narrator watches "a movie" of life and death of Miss Emily Grierson. Some people, of

course, know Emily directly, but there is nothing to show that the narrator does.

Compared to "Dry September," the two groups, the townspeople and Miss Emily, do not belong to different spheres; the one is not absent when the other is present. But at the same time, the role of viewer and viewed never changes: the narrator and the townspeople watch Miss Emily while she does not watch them. Having said that, I must hastily correct the comment. There is one scene in which we are told that Miss Emily "probably" watched the men when they, the four members of the Board of Aldermen, intruded her premises and sprinkled lime in order to remove the odor:

> As they recrossed the lawn, a window that had been dark was lighted and Miss Emily sat in it, the light behind her, and her upright torso motionless as that of an idol. They crept quietly across the lawn and into the shadow of the locusts that lined the street. (123):

Also, there is another scene which shows a possibility that she becomes a viewer:

> Now and then we would see her in one of the downstairs windows—she had evidently shut up the top floor of the house—like the carven torso of an idol in a niche, looking or not looking at us, we could never tell which. (128)

In both cases, however, whether she watches or not is left ambiguous and therefore it is impossible to define her position as either a viewer or a viewed. But at the same time, we should take notice of the fact that in both cases when she appears to be watching the people, she is framed by a window, with "the light behind her, and her upright torso motionless as that of an idol," or "like the carven torso of an idol in a niche." Also, we now that the townspeople "had long thought of [Emily and her father] as a tableau, Miss Emily a slender figure in white" and "her father a spraddled silhouette…framed by the back-flung front door."(123) So when her role as a viewed become blurred, she becomes like a character of a monochrome silent film, framed either by a window or a door. Without making any reference to film, then, a movie-theatre-like situation is presented in these scenes.

There is one more scene which remind us of a movie theatre. When some members of the city authorities visited her about the tax, they are led to the parlor where, when they sat on a sofa and when the black servant opened the blinds of one window, "a faint dust rose sluggishly about their thighs, spinning with slow motes in the single sun-ray."(120) It is as if they sit in a dark movie theatre where a single beam is

shot from the projector room onto the screen and the audience can see “motes” spin in the light.

There are also close-up-like descriptions. When Emily enters the parlor to meet the guests, the narrator, like a camera-eye, focuses on her body parts one by one :

> Her skeleton was small and spare…. She looked bloated, like a body long submerged in motionless water, and of that pallid hue. Her eyes, lost in the fatty ridges of her face, looked like two small pieces of coal pressed into a lump of dough as they moved from one face to another while the visitors stated their errand.(121)

The most impressive scene with a similar technique is, needless to say, the end scene where the people find the corps of Homer Barron:

> A thin, acrid pall as of the tomb seemed to lie everywhere upon this room decked and furnished as for a bridal: upon the valance curtains of faded rose color, upon the rose-shaded lights, upon the dressing table, upon the delicate array of crystal and the man’s toilet things backed with tarnished silver, silver so tarnished that the monogram was obscured. Among them lay a collar and tie, as if they had just been removed, which, lifted, left upon the surface a pale crescent in the dust. Upon a chair hung the suit, carefully folded; beneath it the two mute shoes and the discarded socks.
>
> The man himself lay in the bed. (129-130)

As if watching a film, we enter the room and closely follow one item after another the camera shows us. It is as if we actually move with the camera from the entrance into the depths of the room and finally see the bed. The experience of reading this part is more like watching than reading; we could say that this is an excellent example of presenting time and space in words.

Having examined “A Rose for Emily,” we demonstrated that closed rooms and windows contribute to making a movie-theatre like environment or a movie-like situation. We will see how a similar situation with closed rooms and windows is effectively used in *Absalom, Absalom!*

4. *Absalom, Absalom!*–a virtual movie theatre

A reader finds oneself inside of a room when she starts reading *Absalom, Absalom!* It is “a dim hot airless room with the blinds all closed … which (as the sun shone fuller

and fuller on that side of the house) became latticed with yellow slashes full of dust motes…." [v] Such a closed, dark room with sun rays shining through the blinds, like the inside of a dark movie theatre, is familiar to the reader of "A Rose for Emily" as we have seen previously. Unlike Miss Emily's parlor, however, the room which Miss Rosa "still called the office because her father had called it that" becomes something more like a "virtual movie theatre" where Quentin "seemed to watch" a scene :

> Out of quiet thunderclap he would abrupt (man-horse-demon) upon a scene peaceful and decorous as a schoolprize water color, faint sulphur-reek still in hair clothes and beard, with grouped behind him his band of wild niggers like beasts half tamed to walk upright like men…. Then in the long unamaze Quentin seemed to watch them overrun suddenly the hundred square miles of tranquil and astonished earth and drag house and formal gardens violently out of the soundless Nothing …creating the Sutpen's Hundred, the *Be Sutpen's Hundred* like the oldentime *Be Light*. (4)

Quentin, at first, is only listening to Rosa who keeps talking "in eternal black which she had worn for forty-three years," (3) but he changes from a listener to a spectator when "at last listening would renege and hearing-sense self-confound" and watches the above scene. In this way, he, and the novel with him, starts a psychological adventure, a quest into the heart of darkness, a doomed journey in search of sins of the fathers, which literally "frames" —both in the meaning of enveloping and constructing—the Sutpen story. The novel ends with a similar situation, in a dark, closed room, not in a hot late-summer in Mississippi but in an iron-cold winter in Massachusetts, in which Quentin, again, listens to the other, Shreve this time, talking.

In the latter half of the novel, from chapter 6 to 8, Quentin listens to Shreve in a lighted dormitory room. In the beginning of chapter 6, Quentin sits at a table on which "the white oblong of an envelope," his father's letter sent from Mississippi telling Miss Rosa's death, lies "on the open text book beneath the lamp."(141) Quentin still sits, in the beginning of chapter 7, "facing the table, his hands lying on either side of the open text book on which the letter rested: the rectangle of paper folded across the middle and now open, three quarters open…lying at such an angle that he could not possibly have read it, deciphered it."(176) He continues sitting in the beginning of chapter 8, but this time, he "sat hunched in his chair, his hands thrust into his pockets as if he were trying to hug himself warm between his arms, looking somehow fragile and even wan in the lamplight."(235-236) Unbearable cold forces Quentin and Shreve into the dark

bedroom in the beginning of chapter 9 where they keep talking, lying in bed.

What is significant in this last chapter is that Quentin serves a function similar to that of a spectator of film as he did in the beginning of the first chapter in Miss Rosa's room. As in the darkness of a movie theatre, Quentin "lay watching the rectangle of window," which "became visible against the faintly unearthly glow of the outer snow as, forced by the weight of the darkness, the blood surged and ran warmer, warmer."(288) What he, or his mind's eye, sees in this virtual theatre is the scenes of his visit with Miss Rosa, on that September evening, to the Sutpen House where he met with the dying Henry in a closed room. The experience was so shocking that even after he returned, "even inside the dark familiar house," he ran "up the stairs and into his room"(297) and "lying on the bed, naked…sweating still, panting." (298) It was as if he had been asleep, that he had dreamed it: "it was all the same, there was no difference: waking or sleeping he walked down …toward the faint light which fell outward from the last door…entered the bare stale room whose shutters were closed too." The shutters of the room were closed as in Miss Emily's parlor or in Miss Rosa's office and Quentin entered the room, a movie-theatre-like space where the border between reality and fantasy became obscure as in a dream.

Remembering the dream-like experience and listening to Shreve, Quentin keeps staring at the window of the dark bedroom:

> "And so it was the Aunt Rosa that came back to town inside the ambulance," Shreve said. Quentin did not answer; he did not even say *Miss Rosa*. He just lay there staring at the window without even blinking, breathing the chill heady pure snowgleamed darkness. "And …there was nothing left now, nothing out there now but that idiot boy…. And so she died." Quentin did not answer, staring at the window; then he could not tell if it was the actual window or the window's pale rectangle upon his eyelids, though after a moment it began to emerge. It began to take shape in its same curious, light, gravity-defying attitude—the once-folded sheet out of the wisteria Mississippi summer, the cigar smell, the random blowing of the fireflies….It was becoming quite distinct; he would be able to decipher the words, soon, in a moment; even almost now, now, now. …Now he(Quentin) could read it, could finish it—the sloped whimsical ironic hand out of Mississippi attenuated, into the iron snow: (301)

A reader may wonder, reading the above quotation, what is becoming to distinct, what would be the words he is going to decipher, or why, in the first place, he has to

decipher, as if he is a detective solving a mystery. There are no answers to these questions in the text; what follows is the latter part of his father's letter, which Quentin started reading in chapter 6—though in an abstract style, it only tells about Miss Rosa's burial. There seems, therefore, nothing so mysterious about the letter and what is mysterious, rather, is Quentin's attitude. As we have seen, Quentin sits at a table with the letter before him in chapters 6 to 8, and he watches a window pane in chapter 9. Of course, we can surmise why Quentin seems obsessed with the letter; it concludes the fall of the Sutpens and that fact overwhelms Quentin who cries finally, "I don't hate [the South]."

What is interesting to note here is a transformation of a window pane into a letter; as Quentin lies in the dark watching the window, "he could not tell if it was the actual window or the window's pale rectangle upon his eyelids," and then it "began to take shape in its same curious, light, gravity-defying attitude—the once-folded sheet," his father's letter. As if a white sheet of the letter and a pale rectangle of a window pane were a virtual screen, Quentin watches it, though it does not project a scene like the building of Sutpen's Hundred this time. Reference to film may sound far-fetched but if we recollect Trotter's argument that "[e]ncounterlessness within the mutually acknowledged relationship of viewer and viewed was the medium's founding principle," we may say that *Absalom, Absalom!* is built like a cinema, or a movie-theatre, where a viewer watches the viewed in the screen; Quentin and Shreve as viewer and the Sutpen family as the viewed.

Of course, there are some exceptions: unlike the relation between a real spectator and the cinema, Quentin meets Rosa, Henry and Clytie, the characters who belong to the "projected world," so to speak. Moreover, Rosa, crossing over the line between the "projected world" of the Sutpen story in the past and the present, plays a role of an intermediary between the viewer and the viewed as well as a character in the drama. These exceptions are necessary factors which make the novel incomparably complicated. But what is gained from this elaboration, from the scenes and settings of Quentin's visions, evoked by Miss Rosa's and his father's-talking-via-Shreve's talking in a dark, closed room, is something similar to what Trotter said examining Woolf that cinema shows the events "more real, or, rather, 'real with a different reality,'" and "opens our minds wider to beauty than any sense of command, of being throughout fully present and correct, ever could."

5. *Light in August*—Motion and Speed

As Stephen Kern describes in the following quotation, technological innovation

introduced in the early 20th Century contributed greatly to the transformation of concept of time and space and consequently of motion and speed:

> Scientific management, the motion studies of Muybridge and Marey, early cinematography, Cubism, and Futurism reflect aspects of each other across the cultural spectrum like images in a house of mirrors. (…) Cinema was the technical link: Muybridge and Marey were searching for a way to make moving pictures; Gibreth used the motion picture camera to make chronocyclegraphs; the term for a film's composition—"montage"—is the French word for the assembly of a product from component parts; around 1912 the Cubists began to experiment with "Cubist Cinema"; and the Futurists were inspired by its suggestion of new possibilities for a kinetic visual art.(…) With creative editing action could move as fast as it did in Griffith's last-minute rescues or at a more leisurely pace in cuts between widely separate places. The story could change settings as rapidly as the interval between frames, and since in the early movies the picture was taken at 16 frames per second and projected at 24, the actors themselves seemed to hurry across the flickering screen. [vi]

In this atmosphere, Kern continues, "a 'new aesthetic of speed,' first announced by Marinetti" (119) was introduced. How it celebrates a metamorphosis of human being into a mechanical superman, transcending the limit of man's physical condition, is clear in the Futurist idea of superhuman represented by Umberto Boccioni's sculpture, "Unique Forms of Continuity in Space,"(1913) as Kern explains in the following quotation; [such a man will be] "built to withstand an omnipresent speed… He will be endowed with unexpected organs adapted to the exigencies of continuous shocks… [There will be] a prow-like development of the projections of the breastbone which will increase in size as the future man becomes a better flyer."(122-123) A similar idea of mechanization of human body is presented in Luigi Pirandello's character in his novel, *Shoot: The Notebooks of Serafino Gubbio, Cinematogrash Operator* (1915), in which, Kern describes, "[the] identification with his occupation becomes so complete that Gubbio finally loses his identity to the camera."(119)

Such a new combination of man, speed, and machine is not something alien to Faulkner. In his review of Jimmy Collins's *Test Pilot*(1935), Faulkner writes as follows:

> I had hoped to find a kind of embryo, a still formless forerunner or symptom of a folklore of speed, the high speed of today which I believe stands a good deal nearer to the end of the limits which human beings and material were capable of when man first dug iron, than to the beginning of those limits as they stood ten or twelve years ago when man first began to go really fast..... Perhaps they will contrive to create a kind of species or race, as they used to create and nurture races of singers and eunuchs, like Mussolini's Agello who flies more than four hundred miles an hour....
>
> But it was not of the folklore that I was thinking..... It would be a folklore not of the age of speed nor of the men who perform it, but of the speed itself, peopled not by anything human or even mortal but by the clever willful machines themselves carrying nothing that was born and will have to die or which can even suffer pain, moving without comprehensible purpose toward no discernible destination, producing a literature innocent of either love or hate and of course of pity or terror, and which would be the story of the final disappearance of life from the earth.[vii]

The review, which appeared in November issue of *American Mercury*, 1935[viii]., reminds us, though in a curiously cynical way, of Faulknerian idea of "man [who] will not merely endure [but] will prevail,"[ix] presented in *A Fable*(1954) or "Address upon Receiving the Nobel Prize for Literature." (1950) However, a similar combination of man, machine, and speed could be found in *Light in August* , published three years earlier than the review, in 1932.

In *Light in August*, many characters such as Joe, Brown, Byron, Grimm, or even Joe's stepfather ,McEachern, run or gallop off in a full speed. To be more exact, what should be noted here is that a man or a horse runs seemingly at a full speed but in reality they move as if in a dream, as if they are projected in a silent, slow motion film in which speed is bizarrely suspended. A typical example is McEachern when, having found out that young Joe had slipped out of the house to join his girlfriend at a dance party, he "saddled his big, old, strong white horse," and "turned into the road at that slow and ponderous gallop, the two of them, man and beast, leaning a little stiffly forward as though in some juggernautish simulation of terrific speed though the actual speed itself was absent." [x] Another example follows the above scene when Joe, after he had knocked his stepfather down with a chair and returned home, chases his girlfriend in his stepfather's old horse:

> Though the horse was still going through the motion of galloping, it was not moving much faster than a man could walk. The stick rose and fell with the same spent and terrific slowness, the youth on the horse's back leaning forward as if he did not know that the horse had flagged, or as though to lift forward and onward the failing beast whose slow hooves rang with a measured hollow sound though the empty and moondappled street. It—the horse and the rider—had *a strange, dreamy effect, like a moving picture in slow motion* as it galloped steady and flagging up the street and toward the old corner where he used to wait, less urgent perhaps but not less eager, and more young. (emphasis added, 210)

What these examples, especially the second one, illustrate is that speed and cessation, movement and suspension, life and death, are congealed, so to speak, in one moment. It is as if Joe and the horse "might have been an equestrian statue strayed from its pedestal and come to rest in an attitude of ultimate exhaustion in a quiet and empty street." Their statue-like figure is emphasized by the posture that "the spent beast and the youth, facing one another, their heads quite near, as if carved in an attitude of listening or of prayer or of consultation."(211) Such a critical moment, freezing motion and suspension in a solid form, may be compared to Boccioni's " Forms of Continuity in Space" in which, Stephen Kern remarks, the "artist will render not a fixed moment but the dynamic sensation of movement itself,"(Kern, 120) since "Boccioni believed that the artist could find a single form of continuous movement that would suggest the immediate past and future of the action and the interpenetration of object and environment that is generated by it."[xi] (Kern, 122) There is, however, another scene in *Light in August* in which a similar crash of speed and suspension, more like a collision of two machine-like, [xii] robot-like figures, is frozen in a most memorable and cinematic moment.

Chasing after Joe on a bicycle, Grimm "was going fast too, silent, with the delicate swiftness of an apparition, the implacable undeviation of Juggernaut or Fate." (460) Grimm finds Joe Christmas from "a barren knoll" and the two men, running, experience a pivotal, frozen moment:

> Then he saw Christmas…. As Grim watched he saw the fugitive's hands glint once like the flash of a heliograph as the sun struck the handcuffs, and it seemed to him that even from here he could hear the panting and desperate breath of a man who even now was not free. Then the tiny figure ran again and vanished

beyond the nearest negro cabin.

Grimm ran too now. He ran swiftly, yet there was no haste about him, no effort. …Christmas saw that, himself. Because for an instant they looked at one another almost face to face. *That was when Grimm, running, was in the act of passing beyond the corner of the cabin. At that instant Christmas leaped from the rear window of it, with an effect as of magic, his manacled hands high and now glinting as if they were on fire. For an instant they glared at one another, the one stopped in the act of crouching from the leap, the other in midstride of running, before Grimm's momentum carried him past the corner*. (emphasis added, 461)

In *Light in August*, such words as apparition, dream, or magic seem to appear more frequently and they contribute to making an environment in which man is at the mercy of Fate, God, or Player, which is totally unconcerned with man's feelings or thinking. If we recollect that a movie theatre was likened to a dream in "Dry September," and that a movie is some kind of apparition, a magic, a virtually created phantasmagoria, we may say that a similar cinematic effects are represented in this novel too. Player or Fate is indifferent to man as movie camera or machine is indifferent to the object it operates; people acting in the film are supervised by the director and they cannot escape from the mechanical eye of the camera. In the like manner, Joe Christmas and other characters in *Light in August* appear to be under the control of a mechanical power.

In addition, if we return to David Trotter's comment that in "cinema, unlike the theatre, actors and audience never coincide; for one party to be present, the other must be absent," we realize that *Light in August* is structured like film; Joe, Lena, and Hightower stayed in Jefferson—"living in the same time, sometimes in the same place"—but never had a chance of meeting. As if adapting cinema's "founding principle," that the viewer and viewed would never encounter, Faulkner put Joe and Lena, and Joe and Hightower, in the setting so that they would never be present on the same stage.

The examples discussed in this paper show that Faulkner also drew on "a fund of shared preoccupation" with Woolf and other modernist writers, applying the concept and technique of cinema. It may not be too much to say, then, that Faulkner could never have created his important works without the influence of cinema.

[i] Quoted in David Trotter, *Cinema and Modernism* (London: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2007), p. 159.
[ii] Trotter discusses the topic quoting from Holtby's *Virginia Woolf*(1932).
[iii] Woolf's novels published in the 1920s are *Mrs Dalloway*(1925), *To the Lighthouse*(1927), *Orlando*(1928); Faulkner's novels published in the 20's are *Solders' Pay*(1926), *Mosquitoes* (1927) ,*Sartoris*(1929), *The Sound and the Fury* (1929).
[iv] *Collected Stories of William Faulkner,* (New York: Random House, 1950),p.181.
[v] William Faulkner, *Absalom, Absalom!* (New York: Vintage International, 1986), p.3
[vi] Stephen Kern, *The Culture of Time and Space 1880-1918* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1983), p.117.
[vii]James B. Meriwether ed., *William Faulkner: Essays, Speeches, and Public Letters* (New York: Random House, 1965),pp.191-92.
[viii] It is also in March of the same year that *Pylon*, which describes, through the eyes of the Reporter, a group of stunt flyers who seem to live like machines, was published and in November, 10, Faulkner lost his beloved youngest brother Dean by an air show accident.

[ix] *Essays, Speeches, and Public Letters,*p.120.
[x] William Faulkner, *Light in August* (New York: Vintage International, 1985), p.203.
[xi] Such a frozen moment which includes a past in a present is familiar to Faulkner's readers; he said famously that "[there] is no such thing as was because the past is." Frederick Gwynn and Joseph Blotner eds., *Faulkner in the University* (New York: Vintage, 1959),p.84.
[xii] Joe's grandparents are described in a similar manner: "They enter not with diffidence, but with something puppetlike about them, as if they were operated by clumsy springwork. The woman appeared to be the more assured, or at least the more conscious, of the two of them. It is as though, for all her frozen and mechanically moved inertia, she had come for some definite purpose or at least with some vague hope." (369)