

RECONCILING NARRATIVE SPACES: CONCEPTUAL BLENDING IN SAINT-
EXUPÉRY'S THE LITTLE PRINCE AND CALVINO'S INVISIBLE CITIES

by

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ABSTRACT

Narratologists define narrative as a chronological series of events, and thus focus on temporality in their definitions of narrative form, neglecting the crucial role that space and spatiality may play in some narratives. In this project, I use cognitive linguists Fauconnier and Turner's theory of conceptual blending to analyze two very different pieces of literature, Antoine de Saint-Exupéry's The Little Prince and Italo Calvino's Invisible Cities, the former a children's story and the latter a postmodern experimental work of fiction. While many narratologists and literary theorists focus on the destabilizing aspects of postmodern fiction and claim that it is "anti-narrative" because it resists assumptions about temporal linearity, conceptual blending analysis reveals that some such texts may be dependent for a feeling of coherence or "storiness" on the very cognitive frames and spatial structures that they deconstruct. The affinity between Saint-Exupéry's and Calvino's works suggests that there may be a particular corpus of texts, which I term "spatialized narratives," that maintain in the mind of the reader their own kind of coherence despite their ostensible non-referentiality or fragmentation – a kind of coherence that lies more in spatiality than in temporality.

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DEDICATION

Love and thanks go to my family and friends for their infinite patience and support in helping me get through the insanity, and to my dear Toki, for telling me to go for it.

Chapter One: Introducing Conceptual Blending and Narrative Space¹

1.1 Introduction: Tracing Time and Space in (Anti) Narrative Texts

Spatial beings who occupy a place in the cosmos, we negotiate our bodies through the physical environment, and as we move we move through time – change and the dynamics of morning and night, birth and death, revealing to us that other order around which molecules and bodies shift. However, while space and time each holds its own coherence as a fundamental organizing structure and capacity of the human mind, when it comes to literary and everyday discussions of narrative, we tend to privilege time as the controlling entity and sense-making device around which a story operates. Conversely, theorists often describe postmodern and experimental fiction, since it does not often adhere to chronological logic, as anti-narrative, defining it as such because it relies on deconstructionist paradigms such as fragmentation and difference, and emphasizing its frustration of readerly expectations and deconstruction of structural or referential frameworks. However, I would argue that in many cases such texts, while they may resist coherence in an ideological sense, do not resist coherence in a practical one, since they still depend for their functioning on some degree of stability in the mind of the reader.

Cognitive linguists have shown that it is space, not time, that is our most fundamental way of ordering and understanding the world and, in fact, we are really only able to conceptualize time itself in terms of spatial existents: numbers, clocks, horizontal lines, seasonal change. In this project, I will use conceptual integration, or blending, theory to

¹ A version of some sections of this thesis may be submitted for publication.

examine the ways in which two very different texts – one a children’s story and the other a piece of postmodern experimental fiction – both depend on notions of space and spatiality for their coherence and sense of storiness. The affinity of the two texts suggests that some postmodern experimental texts depend on the same basic mental structures and cognitive frameworks as more ostensibly simple stories, but, rather than allowing such mental operations to remain unconscious, postmodern texts manipulate them more extensively and self-reflexively so that the reader becomes aware of his or her own ways of knowing. First, I will analyze Antoine de Saint-Exupéry’s children’s story The Little Prince to reveal the reliance of the narrative on spatial manipulation as a didactic technique that makes the story and its lessons accessible to children and readers of all levels on a fundamental unconscious level. I will then examine a more ostensibly complex and sophisticated work, Italo Calvino’s Invisible Cities, to show that this text uses the same cognitively basic and accessible techniques as the former, bringing what is essentially an unconscious mental process into consciousness in order to instruct the reader on his or her own mental faculties, both in their dangerous limitations *and* in their possibilities for extension and renewal. The result is not so much anti-narrative as a new kind of story based on spatial collocation and simultaneity rather than temporal linearity, a subversive revitalization of narrative that allows for notions of openness, uncertainty, absence, and the instability of meaning extended by poststructuralist thought. As such, we will observe that blending theory creates a bridge between narratological and poststructuralist conceptions of narrative because it allows us to show specifically how some texts open narrative up to deconstructive play and multiplicity while still maintaining a sense of cohesion in the reader and an intuitive feeling of "storiness."

1.2 Narratological and Postmodern Considerations of Space

Any discussion of space in narrative must first address its partner: time. While narratologists discuss various roles of space in narrative to a greater or lesser degree, they define story as more essentially temporal than spatial, suggesting that narrative is most fundamentally the manifestation of the human understanding of temporality. Cognitive linguists also assert that narrative is an integral and universal component of thought and focus on its manifestation as a form of temporal thought in particular. In The Literary Mind, Mark Turner asserts that narrative, metaphoric, and literary thinking are ubiquitous, the central ways in which we frame, navigate and order our experiences and interactions in the world. For Herman, this sense-making is grounded in a need to organize, in particular, the temporality of our experiences, as “narrative prototypically roots itself in causal-chronological relations – in sequences of happenings” (175), and it is this temporal nature of the discourse that classical and cognitive narratologists such as Genette, Chatman, Rimmon-Kenan, and Margolin agree to be the single defining feature of the form. Such theorists are careful to distinguish the *story*, or the sequence of events that make up a narrative, from other narrative elements such as *discourse*², the way in which a story is told including temporal manipulation and aspects of spatiality. Nonetheless, they tend to agree that the former is what is most necessary for a narrative to be called a narrative, maintaining that it is the temporal sequence of events that makes it so. Similarly, narrative linguist Toolan, in his summaries of the work of seminal structural narratologists, particularly of the Russian formalist school, reveals the narratological focus on temporal elements such as trajectory

² Although narratologists make this distinction in variety of ways, Chatman’s terms *story* and *discourse* seem to be the most widely recognized, so I refer to them here.

(development and resolution), temporal displacement and transformation, plot and temporal sequencing. Further, Gerald Prince, in his Narratology, defines narrative “as the representation of real or fictive events and situations in a time sequence” (1), and even Roland Barthes, in his move from structuralism towards a more open tracing of writerly dissemination of codes and difference in his important textual analysis, S/Z, focuses primarily on the temporal in the form of the hermeneutic code, or the role of readerly expectations and suspense, and the proairetic code of actions (which imply the temporality of movement through time or event-status), delegating instances of place to one of the semes, or narrative units, that can be traced but to which he gives a limited role.

Perhaps one hesitation that narratologists have about space is that the ubiquity of real world physical space, in the first place, and the frequency of spatial metaphors in language, thought, and theory, in the second, leads one to wonder how he or she might practically consider space in literature without falling into the depths of philosophical meanderings. As Kirby writes, “the language of space is everywhere in theory today” (1). Punday notes the consequences of such spatial omnipresence in his Narrative after Deconstruction, suggesting that theorists of space in narrative must negotiate slippery terrain, in particular due to the “tensions between the concrete and the conceptual” (31) in spatial paradigms. To consider story space is to consider many and all things: proportion and dimension, shapes and distances, physical locations and conceptual relationships, here and there, inner and outer, presence and absence, the land, the universe, the setting, and the very state of being itself – depending on the particular theoretical discourse with which we are working. Perhaps due to the ubiquity of space in its physical and conceptual manifestations, structural narratologists have tended to delegate it to the realm of the background: of the *obvious*.

Because of its tautological ontology, since it is necessarily the element of which all aspects of all worlds – narrative, story, and actual – are composed, concrete physical space does not come across in most formulations of narrative as a defining element, but rather as one that is always implicitly *there* – not, as such, a particularly stimulating part of the discussion about narrative form. While this may seem to be true of time as well, as itself a ubiquitous ontological entity, the inevitable linearity of time – however a particular writer may attempt to manipulate or deconstruct it – that arises in the telling, or retelling, of a story, seems to grant it its status as the controlling element.

Although they do focus on temporality as the defining element of narrative, cognitive linguists nonetheless seem to recognize, perhaps more than literary narratologists, the active role that concrete, physical space may play in a story and the potentiality of spatial dimensions in the guidance of narrative interpretation. In his articles “Toward a Transmedial Narratology” and “Spatial Reference in Narrative Domains,” David Herman discusses cognitive mapping and deictic shift in conversational natural narrative, as well as the role of cognitive maps in the formulations of the storyworlds (mental representations of the story space to which readers shift) of more literary narratives. In “Transmedial Narratology,” Herman explains how the reader must cognitively manage the physical space of textual representation in order to make sense of a narrative, whether spoken or written, using verbs of motion, vantage point, distal-proximal axis, and deictic reference to “situate[e] participants and other entities in emergent networks of foreground-background relationships as well as map...the trajectories of individuals and objects as they move or are moved along narratively salient paths” (64). While spoken narrative is more constrained by contextual factors, literary narratives, in particular, have for Herman the unique capability of being “free to

exploit modes of spatial reference” (64). Similarly, in her article on “Cognitive Maps and the Construction of Narrative Space,” Marie-Laure Ryan discusses cognitive maps of spatial relations as integral to narrative, revealing the hermeneutic importance of spatial arrangement in the interpretation of literary texts; results of her study show that in efforts at cartographic representation of texts, readers tend to centralize important locations and juxtapose those that are thematically connected, achieving holistic representation as soon as possible and using this image as a guide for the interpretation of the text.

Narratologists also recognize three manifestations of space as having varying degrees of importance to narrative: physical place, in the sense of existent or setting; description, as a representation of physical space; and point of view or focalization. In the first place, some such theorists point to the neglect of physical place or setting in narratological theory and the need for its greater appreciation and examination. Although Chatman insists that a segment of discourse “is not narrative if it is not chrono-logic – not keyed, that is, to the ongoing march of story events” (37), he concedes that, “however one formulates the questions of the functions of setting and its relation to character[,] it seems clear that the notion of existent is no less critical than that of event, and that narrative theory cannot neglect it” (145).

Similarly, Bal recognizes that “together with character, few concepts deriving from the theory of narrative texts are as self-evident and have yet remained so vague as the concept of space. Only a few theoretical publications have been devoted to it” (132). In particular, Bal emphasizes that, although in some cases it may be the relatively inconsequential “frame” of a story, physical place – in terms of “the physical, mathematically measurable shape of spatial dimensions” (133) – may in other cases be *thematized* as essential to the narrative core: “it becomes an object of presentation itself, for its own sake. Space thus becomes an ‘acting

place' rather than the place of action. It influences the fabula, and the fabula becomes subordinate to the presentation of space" (136). Thus Bal recognizes the crucial role that spatial aspects, including specific topographical dimensions including location and distal-proximal relations, may play in some narratives as a necessary component of the fabula, or the series of events.

Genette's lengthy examinations of the ways in which the discourse of a text manipulates the temporality of the story – the descriptive pause as well as ellipses and iterative and repetitive frequency – also allow a more vital role for notions of place, space and description. For example, in his discussion of the descriptive pause, Genette explains that the description of state or physical place is a discursive element that stops the movement of the story proper, a point in the narrative where "some section of narrative discourse corresponds to a nonexistent diegetic duration" (93-94); while the discourse nonetheless propels forward in the time of reading and writing, no time progresses in the story space as the text clusters around spatial details and takes over, in a sense, the temporality of the narrative, lending it a more paradigmatic structure. In Coming to Terms, Chatman also discusses the role description plays in the discourse function of the text but argues against "Genette's assimilation of Description to Narration [that] reflects a prejudice of long historical standing" (22). In his discussion of the description of physical space or setting, Chatman begins to bring spatial representation into the fore by discussing the important role of description and its refusal to be a "handmaiden" (22) to narrative discourse. Chatman reminds his reader that, although description is not necessarily spatial, much description contains spatial existents, as it "render[s] the properties of things – typically, though not necessarily, objects visible to or imaginable by the senses" (9). He goes on to stress the

significance of description, emphasizing that it is not useful to uphold the status of a text as narrative as opposed to descriptive, since description “has a logic of its own, and it is unreasonable to belittle it because it does not resemble the chrono-logic of Narration” (24). As we will see in our analyses of blending in The Little Prince and Invisible Cities, spatial description does indeed have its own kind of logic, and a text may depend to a significant extent on the ways in which spatial interconnectivity guides the reader’s cognitive assemblage of its form and content.

Beyond the recognition of concrete spatial content in narrative such as place, setting, and description, theorists recognize the significance of a more conceptual kind of space in the form of narration, or point of view, and focalization. Narratologists including Genette, Chatman, Bal, Toolan, O’Neill, and Rimmon-Kenan define narrative, aside from being a temporal phenomenon, as necessarily *narrated by someone*, and the spatial positioning of this narrator becomes important when discussing aspects such as the bird’s-eye view of omniscience or the limited narrative vision of the first-person narrator. Rimmon-Kenan discusses the role of space in focalization: “translated into spatial terms the external/internal position of the focalizer takes the form of a bird’s-eye view v. that of a limited observer” (78). These narratologists develop notions of narrative as conceptually spatial by including in their formulations of narration, or discourse, elements that foreground notions of distance and closeness, or proximity, in point of view and focalization. For example, Rimmon-Kenan sheds light on this connection when she discusses Genette’s levels of narration – extradiegetic, intradiegetic and diegetic – using phrases such as “highest level,” “superior,” and “subordinate” (92). That narratologists draw attention to the physicality and localization of point of view suggests there may be a stronger connection – one that goes beyond the

analogous – than heretofore acknowledged between concrete and conceptual spaces in the construction of narrative form and meaning.

As we will see, one may use blending to explore the interrelationships and tensions between concrete place or locale and the more conceptual spaces of narrative levels. In her explanation of focalization and the narrative frames postulated by theorists such as Barthes and Culler, Rimmon-Kenan relates a structural interaction between narrative levels that looks forward to our discussion of cognitive models: “making sense of a text requires an integration of its elements with each other, an integration which involves an appeal to various familiar models of coherence” (124). Similarly, the aforementioned spatial frames, or diegetic levels, are an important part of the work of cognitive linguists, and it is here that we can begin to develop some hypotheses about the relationship between concrete space as *represented* in the content of a narrative, and conceptual spaces as *representing* narrative worlds. In Experiencing Narrative Worlds, Richard J. Gerrig uses a spatial metaphor when he discusses the reader’s movement from one narrative or diegetic level to another as *transportation* from one location to the next. Similarly, Manfred Jahn distinguishes between the internal stories of recollection, imagination, and dream, and external stories as they are narrated between individuals, emphasizing the cyclical structure of, and interactive relationship between, production, as it originates in the mind of the thinker or creator, and its reception. Both cognitive analyses of narrative levels gesture towards Chatman’s differentiation between the inner, or homodiegetic, narrator, of first-person point of view and the external, or heterodiegetic, one at the third-person level of discourse. Werth notes that “typical text worlds have to do with states of affairs which are deictically remote” (86); therefore, although narrative levels are not necessarily related to the physical spaces that they

may represent, their existence does presuppose distal-proximal relationships between the world of the reader, the world of the narrator, the world of the narrated, and so on, as being physically *elsewhere* or *distant* from the others.

In their discussions of description, physical existents, and points of view, narratologists gesture towards the need for a more systematic study of the role of space in narrative, but they remain vague in their dialogue and provide no means of examining precisely how space may play a cohesive role in at least some manifestations of narrative form. Bal's discussion of spatial *structure* in narrative parallels cognitive formulations of the structural spatiality of thought by cognitive linguists such as Herman, Fauconnier, and Turner: "if spatial thinking is indeed a general human tendency, it is not surprising that spatial elements play an important role in fabulas....The subdivision of locations into groups [such as inside and outside] is a manner of gaining insight into the relations between elements" (215). Bal evokes considerations of spatially contingent, but non-reductive, components of narrative structure that may provide a way of looking at and talking about physical place in the text, but she does not herself go very far in examining how such structures might operate. Chatman also implies that it may be useful to find a more systematic way of talking about space in narrative when he argues that what is important for discussions of narrative form is that "our minds inadvertently seek structure, and they will provide it if necessary" (45). His focus here on structure and connectivity suggests that it is our need to make events or narrative kernels cohere cognitively in *some way*, rather than the temporal nature of the events themselves, that is essential to an understanding of narrative. One might consider then the role that cognitive linguistics may play in determining more specifically how spatial, rather than temporal, connectivity may lend a text such coherence.

Although the logic of space is not linear, one could regard it as providing its own kind of coherence, a coherence that relies on juxtaposition and simultaneity rather than linearity. While narratologists recognize the role of space in narrative, they nevertheless neglect its power as a cohesive force around which narrative may be structured, ignoring its accessibility and didactic functioning and making it seem abstract and indeterminate.

In line with the conventional view of narrative as a series of events, there seems to be a strong negative correlation between the spatiality of a fictional text and its ability to qualify as a narrative; insofar as writers move towards space, spatiality, and deconstructive tasks, fiction arguably moves further away from narrative form. The difficulty of identifying an advancing series of events in a fragmented text such as Joyce's *Ulysses* or Cortázar's short story "Blow-Up" leads many a narratologist and a postmodernist to the conclusion that such texts are "anti-narratives" that staunchly resist narrative coherence. Although it is true that such postmodern or experimental texts resist the dominance of referential meaning by sidestepping naïve notions about the linear series of events on which narrative is usually based, some narratologists seem to jump to conclusions by assuming that in so moving from syntagmatic to paradigmatic connectivity the narrative *effect* is necessarily lost. For Bal, "with postmodernism, the question of narrative rhythm loses its meaning altogether [and] it is by disrupting the correlation between fabula and story in this respect that the novel achieves its postmodern 'feel'" (110). Similarly, Chatman begins to explore the importance of spatial existents only in terms of the possibilities of subverting narrative form: "if the classical narrative is a network (or "enchainment") of kernels affording avenues of choice only one of which is possible, the *antistory* may be defined as an attack on this convention which treats all choices as equally valid" (56). Classical narratologists, then, usually discuss texts that

prevent the reader from identifying a temporally-ordered story – and as such are more paradigmatic in nature – as existing outside the realm of narrative.

Similarly, postmodern discourse brings space into focus, but tends to do so only in terms of its potential for fragmentation and frustration of the temporal coherence of postmodern texts, propagating narratological discourse by suggesting that postmodern texts, as anti-temporal, are essentially anti-narrative. The frequency of spatial metaphors within deconstructive discourse and poststructuralist thought – concepts such as lack and absence (Lacan), difference (Derrida), centre and periphery (postcolonial studies), fragmentation, dispersal, and diaspora, and self and other (as the ‘here’ and ‘there’ of subjectivity) – reveals spatiality to be very much at the fore of literary and philosophical concerns, as does preoccupation with issues such as textuality, materiality, hyperreality, and postmodern spaces of replication and multiplicity. As Soja suggests, “a distinctively postmodern and critical human geography is taking shape, brashly reasserting the interpretive significance of space in the historically privileged confines of contemporary critical thought” (11). However, it is my contention that postmodern discourse focuses on the fragmentation and destabilization of spatial constructs – rightly emphasizing their potential for undermining the hegemonic core – without attending to their more positive or holistic cognitive potentialities. Soja quotes from Foucault that

the space in which we live, which draws us out of ourselves, in which the erosion of our lives, our time and our history occurs, the space that claws and gnaws at us, is also, in itself, a heterogeneous space...we live inside a set of relations that delineates sites which are irreducible to one another and absolutely not superimposable on one another. (as cited in Soja 17)

While postmodern and poststructuralist discourse gives space a more crucial role in the organization of a text, these theorists do not seem to recognize space as a cohesive or unifying force but instead uphold it as a fragmentary and often dichotomous one, leaving discussions of space in postmodern texts negatively oriented around a kind of anti-time. The postmodern use of space to deconstruct and undermine centralizing forces (in a Derridian sense) is an important task, but it may be useful to consider the extent to which writers who initiate this kind of destabilization may only be able to do so by manipulating preexisting cognitive frameworks in specific, identifiable ways. Deconstructive texts depend for their very fragmentation on the unifying properties of the very structures that they seek to overthrow.

Although cognitive linguists have developed discussions of the role of spatial existents and orientation in narrative, it is only recently that they have begun to go beyond traditional, conversational, or chronologically-ordered narratives in an attempt to develop a more specific way of looking at experimental or postmodern works that seem to defy narrative coherence. Cognitive narratologists such as Fludernik and Margolin initiate an important discussion of the particular ways in which these less referential texts may operate; however, they remain mired in the uncertainty of postmodern discourse about space, continuing to assert that experimental texts frustrate particular cognitive and narrative frameworks, without exploring how postmodern writers might actually be utilizing such frameworks to new ends. In a defense of her natural narratology, Fludernik discusses the tendency of (post)modern texts to manipulate cognitive frames and frustrate readerly expectations, resisting narrativization despite the reader's impulse to synthesize inconsistencies. Similarly, in his essay on cognition and narrative defamiliarization,

Margolin describes the ways in which an author, to make an epistemic stance, may manipulate the schemas, or cognitive frames, of a reader and frustrate his or her assumptions about the world, “*prevent[ing] (block[ing]) the reader from activating his or her pertinent categories of world or literary knowledge*” (277) so that the breakdown or failure of cognitive mechanisms makes us more aware of them. This conclusion is important because it nonetheless implies that postmodern experimental texts depend on – and seek to remind the readers of – such frames rather than simply undermining or confounding them. Margolin and Fludernik are correct and insightful in their arguments that the postmodern or experimental text destabilizes cognitive frames in order to frustrate the ease and cognitive efficiency with which the reader makes sense of the textual world, but the felicity with which writers such as Italo Calvino manipulate such frames to successfully guide the reader toward new systems of thought suggests that some postmodern texts utilize mental constructs in more specific ways than simply frustrating and destabilizing them.

With the theory of spatial form posited in his seminal 1945 essay on “Spatial Form in Modern Literature,” Joseph Frank began to explore the ways in which narrative may be realigned by both writers and readers on the *y* rather than the *x* axis, suggesting that spatiality may give narrative its own kind of coherence even as it defies the more conservative temporal linearity of the form. In his discussion of the relevance of Frank’s ideas to more contemporary narrative theory, Jeffrey S. Smitten describes the spatial form narrative as one in which

the conventional causal/temporal syntax of the novel is disrupted and the reader must work out a new one by considering the novel as a whole in a moment of time. That is, the reader must map out in his mind the system of internal references and relationships to

understand the meaning of any single event, because that event is no longer part of a conventional causal/temporal sequence. One organizing schema must replace another that is no longer applicable. (20)

In their discussions of the ways in which spatial form may be applied to contemporary postmodern and self-reflexive fiction, Jerome Klinkowitz and Michael Spencer both suggest that although such texts struggle against overriding presumptions about narrative temporality, they may nonetheless utilize spatial configurations as governing principles that maintain an order of their own, while at the same time allowing for more play and freedom of movement than more temporally conservative texts. Klinkowitz argues that for authors of these self-reflexively spatial texts the “problem is the illusion of predisposed narrative succession, which forces the reader to absorb a work in only one way, with attention to the sequence of developments distracting from compositional act” (39). Spatial form narratives, then, open the text up to multiplicity in a way that more linear temporal forms cannot; as Spencer notes, “spatial form = subversion of linearity by techniques of juxtaposition = postmodernism” (183), and the subversion of temporality that postmodern or experimental texts enact often depends on the utilization of the multiple potentialities of space, as well as our abilities to cognitively maneuver spatial constructs.

Similarly, in his discussion of the role of narrative after deconstruction, Punday argues that the spatial is central and suggests that, rather than being detrimental to textual analyses, the slipperiness between concrete and conceptual spaces is utilized by both postmodern theory and fiction in order to foreground issues of subjectivity and contextualization, materiality, and the text’s interaction with the world (or as he terms it, the worldly text). For Punday, narrative occupies a unique position between deconstruction and

the post-deconstructive desire for a return to meaning, and spatial multiplicity and manipulation is a fundamental part of this, since “space is ontologically ambiguous [and] it mediates between text and world” (33), its tensions “open[ing] the work up, rather than clos[ing] it down”(60). In Punday’s conceptualization of the post-deconstructive narrative, narrative spatiality fosters a program that “seems to accept both textual indeterminacy and totality while bringing this conflict to the surface and – most importantly – suggesting that these two might be resolved productively” (7). Thus Punday discusses notions of spatialization as one way past deconstruction that allows for more useful “work” to be done without returning to the authoritative or decontextualized kinds of readings that deconstruction seeks to reject. The theory of conceptual blending may provide the more systematic, yet non-reductive, type of analysis that spatial form theorists and post-deconstructive narratologists may be looking for because, despite the way it “maps” the text and posits possible meanings, blending can be used to deconstructive ends, allowing us to trace the interactions between various types of spatial phenomena within the texts and chart possible ways that the text allows for multiplicity as a result of spatial ambiguity, a kind of flexibility that is nonetheless dependent on cognitive frameworks in order to function.

1.3 Space as a Cohesive Narrative Force: Spatial Metaphor and Blending

When we *get into* a story, where do we go? As we progress *through* a narrative, where are we moving? When we *grasp* the meaning, to what do we cling? When we speak of space in narrative, of what do we speak? As we have noted above, narratologists recognize that narrative is ubiquitous in thought, and that it is one way in which we get a handle on the passing of time, but they tend to neglect spatiality in narrative despite what cognitive linguists maintain to be the pervasiveness of physicality and spatial metaphor in

thought and language. In The Literary Mind, Mark Turner writes: “the basic stories we know best are small stories of events in space” (13). For Turner, as well as other scholars whose work he summarizes, including Leonard Talmy, Eve Sweetser, George Lakoff, Mark Johnson, and Jane Espenson, language is saturated with spatial metaphors, and in everyday thought we project what Turner calls spatial stories onto a plethora of nonspatial events, actions, and abstract concepts such as time. Spatial metaphor is frequently based on the application of image schemas, or concrete spatial images or frameworks such as, for example, “motion along a path” or “containers,” to numerous conceptions and linguistic phenomena. For example, we use the “motion along a path” frame when we say something like “the story is moving along” and the “container” frame when we say of an accomplishment, “it’s in the bag!” Werth suggests two more important examples when he informs his reader that “mental processes of various kinds are expressed in terms of simple physical actions [such as] grasping [and] seeing” (14); we say “I see!” to mean “I understand” and “I can’t grasp the concept” when we want to say “I don’t understand the concept.” Turner reveals some of the mental dynamics behind such conceptualizations by introducing his reader to the theory of conceptual blending and demonstrating how we map these spatial stories onto other concepts.

In order to understand how blending works, consider an example from Fauconnier and Turner’s The Way We Think: the riddle of the Buddhist Monk, an example that is particularly useful for the current project because it is spatial in nature. One day, a Buddhist Monk decides to climb up to the top of a mountain to meditate. He begins his trip at dawn, walks all day, and reaches the top of the mountain just as the sun begins to set. At dawn a few mornings later, after spending some time meditating under a tree at the top of the

mountain, the monk begins the trip back down the trail, arriving at the foot of the mountain at sunset. Making no assumptions about his speed or the number of rests he might take, answer this question: is there a particular point on the path that the monk passes at the same time of day on each of his separate journeys?

Counterintuitive as it might seem, Brouwer's fixed point theorem mathematically proves that there must be such a point on the path.³ However, as Fauconnier and Turner point out, the solution to this riddle is by no means obvious; if you imagine the monk going up the path and then strolling back down a few days later, it may be difficult to conclude that he would necessarily pass one particular point at the exact same time on both days. For example, one may argue that the solution depends on how fast the monk walks, how many breaks he might take, and so on. Nevertheless, Fauconnier and Turner describe blending as an automatic, unconscious process that, once initiated, allows us to conceptualize how the monk must occupy the same point on the path at the exact same time on both days. The prompt for such blending is simply the suggestion that, rather than envisioning one monk traveling on two different days, you combine the trip up the mountain with the descent down, so that you imagine two monks, one starting from the top and one starting from the bottom at dawn *on the same day*. Once we blend the two days of travel using the generic image-schematic frame "motion along a path," it is much easier to see that – regardless of the pace he takes or the number of stops along the way – the monk will undoubtedly meet himself somewhere along the path at one particular moment, and this is the point he will occupy at the same time on both days. It makes no difference whatsoever if this is one monk or two

³ See http://www.marginalrevolution.com/marginalrevolution/2004/08/kakutani_is_at_.html. I am indebted to Deanna Kreisel for drawing my attention to this reference.

monks in reality, or how his speed may vary along the way; if you conceptualize the blend, you can see that there must be a place where the two monks would meet, and this image may be projected back to the original input spaces with the single monk traveling on separate days to lead us to conclude logically that there must be a particular point that he will occupy at the same time on both days⁴.

As we may see from the monk example, the theory of conceptual integration posits the existence of discrete *mental spaces* in the human mind that, when called up and prompted to do so, blend in dynamic networks of *compressions* and *decompressions* to create *integration networks* that allow the reader *global insight* into the world around him or her and facilitate the understanding of even the most creative representations and arduous narrative structures. A *mental space* is a packet of information that contains our understanding of an idea or situation we conceptually construct at a given point in the discourse, including its relevant components. This packet may be as simple as a particular word and its connotations, such as “work” or “play,” or a basic image schema such as the aforementioned “container” or “motion along a path,” or it may be a more elaborate narrative framework such as “lost at sea” or “unrequited love.” Although a mental space may contain previously constructed schemas or packets of information with which we are already familiar as in the above example, new mental spaces – say, for example, information about a new character created by an author – may be prompted by a particular text or segment of discourse. According to Fauconnier and Turner, in order to cognitively piece together new ideas, we instantaneously, effortlessly, and subconsciously create an *integration network* by

⁴ Keep in mind that this is a *riddle* and by nature may exclude a number of factors; overthinking may lead to confusion!

combining two or more of these mental spaces – called *input spaces* – to elicit a new mental space, or *blend*. A *generic space* contains the elements that the input spaces have in common, and it is only by virtue of these commonalities that the input spaces emerge and may be linked together. In the Buddhist Monk example, the first input space includes the simple spatial story of the monk going up the mountain, and this is a basic image schema of motion along a path, since the monk is a point moving upward along the path that is the mountainside. The second input space is composed of the same picture, but in this case the monk is moving down a path. The generic space contains elements that the two input spaces have in common, such as motion along a path, a point on a path, a day of travel, and so on. We then connect corresponding elements of the input spaces by *cross-space mapping*, thus establishing counterpart relations. Certain elements of the input spaces are then projected to the blend. It is important to note that blending theory allows for *selective projection*, meaning that only certain elements of the input spaces may be projected to the blend while others (which may not be so relevant to the task at hand) are not recruited to the blend. Elements of the input spaces become counterparts by virtue of *vital relations* between them, conceptual relationships such as space, time, similarity, analogy, disanalogy, part-whole relations, cause and effect, representation, property, and intentionality.

In the Buddhist Monk example, the mountain, the moving individual, the path, and the day of travel are connected across inputs by virtue of their similarity and, as a result, these elements are projected to the blend. However, irrelevant aspects of the story such as the monk's mood, or what the weather may have been like, are not projected to the blend. Counterpart elements from the input spaces are often fused in the blend and this is called *compression*; in our example, the mountain, the path, and the day are projected to the blend

and fused into a single path on a single mountain in a single day. At the same time, the monk in each of the input spaces is projected to the blended space and is *not* fused with the other; instead, the single monk is *decompressed* into two separate monks in the input spaces and remains this way when projected to the blend, so that in the blend we are able to have these two monks traveling on the same day – one going up and one going down – and these monks are able to meet each other, the blend creating the image that helps us to understand the solution to the riddle more comprehensively.

The most important part of an integration network is not the blend itself, however, but its *emergent structure*. *Running the blend* involves *composition* of the blended space and its network, as well as *completion* and *elaboration*. In the Buddhist Monk network, *composition* involves the recruitment of elements from the input spaces into the blend: for example, the blend, but neither of the input spaces, contains two monks. *Completion* involves filling in the blanks; once we recruit the two paths, which are fused into one, and the two monks to the blend, we have access to the familiar frame structure of two people walking along a path at the same time, one beginning at one end and one at the other. Finally, running the blend leads to *elaboration*; in other words, creating the blended space allows information from that space to project back to the input spaces and, as a result, we are able to make inferences and add elements that may not have been included in these spaces until the blend was run. It is only once we run the blend and imaginatively project the movement of the two monks so that they are able to meet each other do we visualize the answer to the riddle, which becomes the emergent structure. As a result, the *emergent meaning*, which is the result of the elaboration, or running, of the blend, elicits new information that did not exist in any of the inputs or in the blend itself. In the Buddhist Monk example, this emergent meaning is rather simple: we

understand more intuitively Brouwer's mathematical conclusion that the monk must at some point occupy the same position at the same time on each day.

It is important to remember that blending theory does not prescribe necessary integration networks or their meanings, but instead posits *possible* networks and how they may yield *possible* meanings in the minds of potential readers. Similarly, networks are dynamic and complex; select elements are recruited to the blended space by virtue of vital relations, but, as mentioned above, cross-space mapping is not necessarily based on one-to-one connections and not all elements are always projected to the blend; such projections may manifest themselves in a variety of ways. It is also crucial to remember that not only the blended space, but the entire topology of the network may be maintained for spontaneous retrieval, such that any element of the network may be accessed at any time. As a result, integration networks are not static formal representations, but dynamic relationships that are constantly open to change and renewal. Finally, blends are maximized as elements are more tightly compressed until the thinker achieves *global insight* into abstract or creative concepts. *Global insight* is a term that refers to the access blending gives the thinker to simplified versions of complex ideas that may be difficult to comprehend without the blend. In the Buddhist Monk example, the blend gives us global insight into what at first may have seemed to be a difficult problem of logic and thus prompts us to arrive at the solution to the riddle. Global insight is the aha! feeling when we think "why, of course the monk will meet himself along the way!". Finally, one must keep in mind that blends can blend with other blends to create *megablends*, and this is crucial for the understanding of conceptual integration and its role in more sophisticated works of art and literary pieces.

Why is conceptual blending theory useful in the understanding of the role of *space* in narrative in particular? As we have seen, any of the spaces in the conceptual integration network, including the generic space, the input spaces, and the blend, may be structured according to organizing frames – entrenched blends around which knowledge tends to be structured – and these include image schemas such as “motion along a path.” We use this image schema in the Buddhist monk riddle, which is a relatively simple conceptual example that reveals blending to be an automatic and unconscious cognitive process. Although at first the riddle may seem complex and difficult to solve – requiring a great deal of mental exertion – once one is prompted to merge the two paths and initiate the blend, the solution is instantaneous (for many at least). As in this example, although blends may be more or less complicated and involve a variety of vital relations in complex networks of compressions and decompressions, they very frequently compress over space. This compression leads to the spatialization of abstract concepts such as time, as the ubiquity of spatial metaphor in everyday thought confirms.

We may use blending to examine the crucial role that space may play in the structural and thematic coherence of ostensibly simple narrative forms such as a children’s story. In his parable The Little Prince, Antoine de Saint-Exupéry manipulates spatial dimensions in descriptions of the fabulous home planet of an extraordinary little boy, and the relative simplicity of the tale reveals the accessibility of spatial manipulation in language at all levels, beginning with the mind of a child. The tale teaches lessons of love, loneliness, responsibility, and loss, and an analysis of blending in the story reveals the crucial role of space in its narrative and thematic cohesion, allowing the theorist to observe the ways in which the spatial form and content – both conceptual and concrete – of the narrative may be

perhaps more important for the didactic purposes of the story than the chronology of events in the fabula.

1.4 Blending and Spatial Manipulation in the Postmodern Experimental Text

At the same time that an analysis of The Little Prince will show the ways in which some traditional narratives may depend to a greater degree on space than on time, blending theory also tells the story of how thinkers depend on the same basic mental functions in order to understand even the most creative, abstract, absurd, or complex works of art. According to Fauconnier and Turner, the problem with the work of other linguists, narratologists, and cognitive psychologists is that most “tend to focus on the entrenched cases, which are already built and usually easy to activate[, and] have often incorrectly excluded inventive, figurative, creative, and literary examples from their domain of inquiry” (168). By entrenched cases, Fauconnier and Turner are referring to stable narrative and cognitive frameworks, such as, for example, the traditional story structure with a beginning, middle, and end, on which much structuralist work has been dependent. As mentioned above, although Margolin and Fludernik begin to move away from these entrenched cases into the more complicated terrain of literary experimentalism, they focus on the ways in which such forms destabilize cognitive structures without investigating how such texts might make their point by utilizing such cognitive frames. For the inventors of blending theory, “the power of thought – whether rational or whimsical, emotional or practical – lies in the same basic mental operations” (168), and these operations are employed by the reader of any creative form in very specific ways.

Conceptual blending theory is extremely useful in the study of literature because it allows us to examine how a writer can create new images, stories, and meanings from old

ones. In the wake of postmodernism, many theorists question whether the original has been lost – or has ever been here in the first place. Arguably, much of literary scholarship involves mapping the ways in which authors reuse and revitalize what has come before, and the study of literature involves looking at elements including literary allusion, parody and satire, genre and generic conventions, stereotypes and caricatures, codes or signs, and linguistic or narrative patterns. Theories of the copy or the hyperreal – from the Derridian subversion of the centre or point of origin to Baudrillard's simulacra and the loss of the original—trace the proliferation of signifiers, as literary theorists recognize how often texts are composed of what has already been told, and the question of the extent to which we can actually create anything new is paramount in theoretical and creative discussions. Blending provides one way to deal with this uncertainty by showing precisely and in cognitive terms how we are able to combine familiar words, images, frame stories, and packages of meaning in order to compose works that *yield new meanings despite their dependence on the old*. According to blending theory, new creations are only possible by virtue of what we already know, since we are cognitively dependent on antecedent concepts, schemas, and frames; however, these novel formulations are not simply combinations of the old schemas, but the results of complex and dynamic blends that yield new meanings which may not have existed in any of the previous elements of which they were composed. As a result, blending analysis may be used to study facets of literary novelty, including the ways in which authors may manipulate and renew narrative form.

As mentioned above, one level at which concrete and conceptual notions of space interact is that of viewpoint, or what I will term narrative or diegetic level. Blending reveals how the reader makes sense of frame narratives, or successive diegetic levels, as the

storyworld is further and further removed from the real space of reading, and we will see that this blending of narrative levels is relevant to an understanding of both the children's parable The Little Prince and the postmodern experimental text Invisible Cities, and spatial manipulation is in truth a crucial point at which the two texts meet. Sanders and Redeker begin to gesture towards conceptual blending in their essay on focalization and narrative embedding, arguing that perspective and diegetic levels are distinct mental spaces:

In a narrative text, the reality of the narrator (the implied author) is the basic mental space. This *base space* is the starting point of the discourse representation...Linguistic markers [space builders], such as indicators of quotation and focalization, create new spaces within the narrator's reality...Each time the narrator lets characters speak or presents their thoughts, an embedded mental space...is created within the base space (295).

As we will see in chapter two, Rohrer and Oakley also show how authors may use framing techniques to set up blended spaces; one diegetic level may be set up as an input space that may be blended with other diegetic levels that make up their own discrete input spaces, and the result may be what Oakley calls a *metablend*. Along similar lines, as Barbara Dancygier discusses in her articles on the works of Jonathan Raban and Margaret Atwood, an author may prompt viewpoint compression or decompression and in so doing guide the reader towards insight into the relevance of crucial narrative points by virtue of a particular character's or narrator's point of view. This viewpoint compression may yield crucial emergent structure to the narrative, resulting in emergent meanings to which the reader may not have had access in any of the inputs, or even in the blend itself, without the activation of the entire network. Such spatial metablends are extremely relevant to both simpler and more

complex stories; as we will see, an analysis of diegetic levels in both The Little Prince and Invisible Cities reveals that what may seem to be a complicated metafictional technique enacted by the latter text is also used by the former and, as such, is easily negotiated even at the most basic level of readership. This reveals the dependence of both texts on spatiality for coherence, while the latter postmodern experimental text makes its reader more acutely aware of the cognitive blending required in order to negotiate it.

In Invisible Cities, Italo Calvino stretches the limits of language to create fantastic cities that operate according to their own intrinsic ontological rules. In chapter three, I will use blending to demonstrate that, despite the complexity of his work, Italo Calvino prompts the reader to use the same basic cognitive structures of spatial thinking on which The Little Prince also depends. Rather than focusing primarily on this postmodern experimental work as fragmentary or frustratingly incomprehensible due to its lack of temporal linearity, we may conclude that Calvino's manipulation and destabilization of spatial frames works to more positive ends in order to elicit in the reader a kind of cognitive restructuring, making one more aware of his or her own ways of knowing. As such, blending allows us to map the ways in which narrative construction may be spatial, and how narrative coherence for the reader may lie, in some *spatialized narratives*, in spatial connectivity and collocation rather than temporally linear progression of events; we may conclude that it is the spatial coherence rather than the temporal progression of some narratives that allows the reader to make holistic sense of their stories *at the very same time* that the texts shift, fracture, or destabilize. The result is a kind of postmodern subversion of traditional narrative, a renewal of narrative form in the multiplicity and possibility of space.

Chapter Two: Blending Place and Space in The Little Prince

2.1 Introducing Spatial Representation in The Little Prince

“A voyageur among fictional worlds must learn to leap, land, and adjust with all the aptitude of the Little Prince” (216) – Rawdon Wilson

In “Crosswriting Child and Adult in France,” Sandra L. Beckett expresses the wide appreciation of both children and adults for Antoine de Saint-Exupéry’s The Little Prince. The tale has a simple yet sophisticated form and whimsical didactic style that makes its narrative accessible not only to readers of all ages, but to international audiences as well. Although published literary studies in English of the novel appear to be relatively scarce, The Little Prince, according to Wikipedia online, is one of the top fifty international bestsellers and has been translated into 160 languages. The novella’s mediatory position between the child and the adult reader, as well as its huge popularity and the abundance of references to it in pop culture, reveals the cognitive accessibility of its narrative form, even as Saint-Exupéry utilizes relatively sophisticated metafictional and framing techniques. While Calvino may seem to initiate a more radical spatialization in Invisible Cities, which some might argue subverts narrative form altogether, Saint-Exupéry’s utilization of space is similar in ways that reveal the inherent appeal of such spatialization at a more fundamental level. In the following pages, I will apply conceptual blending analysis to The Little Prince in order to explore the ways in which the author of this endearing fairy tale connects directly with the reader or listener in the real space of reading and, in so doing, instructs children on loss, intimacy, and personal responsibility by prompting them to create elaborate integration networks at a cognitively unconscious level.

Although much of the spatialization in the novella is symbolic, figurative, or allegorical in nature, the text is as much concretely spatial as it is conceptually. The title of The Little Prince at once reveals its author's interest in size and scale, and the story also centres on concepts of distance. Written by the French pilot Saint-Exupéry while in the United States during World War II and first published in the U.S. in English in 1943, The Little Prince at its very genesis is a tale that spans a distance from here to far, from home to away; in fact, the narrator of the story refers to France as a "distant place" (25). Saint-Exupéry's tale is chock full of spatial images from the very beginning, and the author insistently calls the reader's attention to spatial dimensions through the visual manipulation of such images in his drawings. Saint-Exupéry's narrator is a pilot who crash lands in the African desert (as the author himself did), and he tells the story of his meeting there with a boy from another planet – a "most extraordinarily small person" (10) or "little man" (14) – a picture of whom the narrator draws and includes in the text. The narrator goes on to recount the tale of "the little prince's planet, his departure from it, [and] his journey" (19), focusing more on the places than the journey between them. Perhaps most interestingly, the little prince's home asteroid, Asteroid B-612, is the size of a house, and this idiosyncrasy of scale has startling implications, one of which is that The little prince is able to watch the sun set forty-four times each day. The little prince visits a series of other planets that are similarly fantastical, each inhabited by a single adult character whose dominating power and size seem to engulf the world; one of these planets is inhabited by a businessman who counts the stars as if they were dollars, and another by a geographer who "knows the location of all the seas" (52). The little prince finally travels to earth, where he "walk[s] for a long time through sand, and rocks, and snow" (62), eventually returning to the exact place in the desert from

whence he came in order to return to his home planet, which Saint-Exupéry depicts in his drawings as a single star above the desert landscape.

Spatial images play a vital role in Saint-Exupéry's text, and conceptual blending allows one to analyze the ways in which both the spatial content and the form of the narrative give it the thematic and structural coherence that makes it accessible to readers and provides them with a sense of emotional connection and urgency. While there is no doubt that The Little Prince contains a story that is composed of a series of events, the location of these events plays a significant role in the development of the narrative itself, and Saint-Exupéry's descriptions and drawings of place insist on its centrality to the story. Saint-Exupéry experiments with spatial dimensions, scale, and distal-proximal relations, and the spatial configuration of his tale develops its themes, specifically those of the dialectic of home and elsewhere, estrangement and intimacy.

Although this is a journey narrative, the little prince's voyages are not linear since, as the little prince says, "'straight ahead of him, nobody can go very far'" (16). Blending analysis, with which I will proceed below, reveals the ways in which location provides an image-schematic structure around which much of the tale is organized, resulting in a cohesion that is more vertically spatial than horizontally progressive or temporal. Mitchell notes that Saint-Exupéry "provides numerous practical and chronological details [and] the episodes of the strange journey are kept in a careful sequence" (457), but he also suggests that "it is plainly ideas rather than plots which really matter" (454). The little prince's journey from one planet to another consists of his visit to each planet with no description whatsoever of how he reaches them or his journey from one to the next, except for a conjecture by the narrator: "I believe that for his escape he took advantage of a migration of a

flock of wild birds” (32). In The Little Prince, the narrator does not narrate the voyage between places as a series of events so much as he describes the places, each successive description acting as a cohering node in the text that is spatially more than temporally important.

2.2 Manipulation of Scale in Narrative: Asteroid B-612 and the Pacific Islet

Saint-Exupéry calls his reader’s attention to assumptions that there is a positive correlation between physical size, or scale, and importance or significance. For example, the narrator describes small asteroids as not being important enough to have names: “there are also hundreds of other [stars], some of which are so small that one has a hard time seeing them through the telescope. When an astronomer discovers one of these he does not give it a name, but only a number” (16). In the case of the asteroids that the little prince visits, these small stars are completely engulfed by the adults who inhabit them, adults who “imagine that they fill a great deal of space. They fancy themselves as important as the baobabs” (57). In his illustrations of the planets which the little prince visits, Saint-Exupéry depicts the spherical bodies themselves as very small while juxtaposing them with drawings of the adults who inhabit them as large caricatures that overwhelm the field of vision. The result is a pictorial blend that combines the conceptual largeness with which a child views an adult and applies the ratio of child to adult to the ratio of planet to adult, the planet itself becoming insignificant in size and subject to physical and metaphorical domination as a result.

Consider the phrase “a big idea.” This phrase reveals a common spatial metaphor in thought that betrays our conceptual bias towards an understanding of the positive correlation between size and significance as a cognitive frame. Saint-Exupéry deconstructs this assumption in the Asteroid B-612 blend, an intradiegetic blend prompted by the description

of the little prince's home planet. Here, Saint-Exupéry uses concrete physical space, including notions of size, scale, proportion, and distance, in a kind of game of the imagination, or thought experiment, that allows the child or adult reader, listener, or viewer to gain global insight into the vastness of both physical and conceptual space: the interplanetary realm as well as the more local realms of the child's immediate domestic space, bounded by the space of the imagination. By manipulating children's cognitive capacities to conceptualize the world in spatial terms, Saint-Exupéry guides them toward the conceptual management of the immense – and tiny – spaces that make up their worlds and an intuitive understanding of their importance in them.

Let us take a look at how a conceptual blend might operate here. The generic space includes a generic notion of a “spot” or a centralized place or location, including spatial notions of surface and depth, containment, and motion along a path. It also includes inhabitants, relations to other places and objects, such as the sun, a sense of here, or home, and a sense of what is far away or distant, as well as temporality.

Input one is the planet, or earth, space, and this space contains elements of the standard “planet” frame and image schema. These include the size of a planet – which is conceptually “big” or, say, about the size of the earth – and the notion of inhabitants (people, setting aside the possibility of aliens for now) and objects such as the sun or other heavenly bodies around it. The shape of the planet is a circle, and it spins around itself and its sun; therefore the sun sets once per rotation (or day). When the sun is rising in one place, it is setting in another place that is very far away from the first, the distance from point A to point B being impossible to traverse in a short time, especially by an individual who is walking. A boy on this planet is very, very small – insignificant in size let's say – but the planet, the

earth, is nonetheless his home. This planet earth includes geological landmarks such as volcanoes and trees, both of which are substantially larger than a boy but much smaller than the entire planet.

The second input space is the house space; Saint-Exupéry prompts the reader to set up this input space when his narrator tells us that “the planet the little prince came from was scarcely any larger than a house” (16). In this space, we call up the embedded frame “house,” which contains the notion of a standard house size, with, say, a number of rooms through which its inhabitant – a little boy for example – may move a number of times in a day, and which is just the tiniest of dots on the vast planet earth on which it sits. Distance from point A in the house to point B is quite short. From the house, one may (if facing the right direction and under favorable weather conditions) watch the sunset once every day. The house shares the earth with objects including large baobab trees and volcanoes, but these objects are located outside of the house (presumably far away) and are much larger in scale. The house, being home, is near in proximity, or here, and it contains domestic objects such as furniture, stoves, and things to sweep.

Elements from the two input spaces are matched by virtue of vital relations such as space and time, part-whole relations, and analogy. Planet and house become counterparts in the blend by virtue of category (they are both places where we live), and some, but not all, features of both the planet and the house are projected to the blend. The size of the house is projected to the blend such that the length of the path from point A to point B can be easily traversed by the inhabitant (the boy) in a short time (many times in one day). At the same time, the size of the boy is maintained along with the circular shape of the planet and its motion around the sun, so that the boy is able to move from one point to the other and watch

the sun set 44 times in one day: “on your tiny planet, my little prince, all you need do is move your chair a few steps. You can see the day end and the twilight falling whenever you like” (25). The result is spatial as well as temporal compression. Other qualities of a planet, such as the day being much shorter by virtue of the planet’s small size, are *not* projected to the blend, however. (This contrasts with the lamplighter planet the little prince visits, on which one minute is equal to one day by virtue of its small size (48)). In the blend, volcanoes become counterparts with household items such as stoves so that the boy is able to cook on the volcanoes and clean them out: “On the morning of his departure he put his planet in perfect order. He carefully cleaned out all his volcanoes. He possessed two active volcanoes, and they were very convenient for heating his breakfast in the morning” (32). Similarly, the size of the baobab tree in the planet space and the house space is the same, but when the baobab tree is projected to the blend retaining its large size, the baobab tree overcomes the house and threatens to engulf and destroy it: “if the planet is too small, and the baobabs are too many, they split it in pieces” (21). The resulting blend for identity and uniqueness⁵ constitutes the identity of the unique planet on which the little prince lives, the planet that is the size of a house.

Running the blend results in complex emergent meaning that does not exist in any of the inputs or the blend itself, and the blend may then be blended recursively with the metablend, or the structure of the narrative as a whole. As we will see in the next section, Saint-Exupéry leads the reader to call up an image schema which conflates and overturns concepts of distance and closeness; similarly, the Asteroid B-612 blend problematizes

⁵ Identity and Uniqueness are vital relations to which many elements are often compressed in the blend. After compression, we often have a unique individual entity in the blend. See Fauconnier and Turner (2002) for further explanation of Identity and Uniqueness vital relations.

notions of scale, inverting bigness and smallness. The ability of *The Little Prince* to take care of his volcanoes, and the control he has over the number of times he may observe the sunset in one day, may lead the child reader (or listener) to feel an empowered sense of responsibility and capability, despite his or her ostensibly small “size” and insignificance. In the emergent meaning, the child plays a vital role in the maintenance and health of his or her space, which becomes both the planet earth, as a whole, and the domestic space of the house or home. Further, as we will see in the next section, the planet is also symbolic of the distant or unknown spaces of dreams, wishes, or the imagination, and by manipulating the child’s relationship to his or her planet through physical proportions and scale, Saint-Exupéry gives the reader direct cognitive access, through the conceptual integration network, to vast possible realities – global insight and a sense of interconnectivity with and responsibility for the space around one.

As we have seen in the above example, Saint-Exupéry manipulates scale in order to create novel spatial images that allow him to instruct his readers on the relativity of size and, as such, the importance and responsibility of the child for the environment around him or her. In order to empathize with the little prince and his young readers about the vanity of adults who “fancy themselves as important as the baobabs” (57) and remind us of the relative insignificance of the human individual, Saint-Exupéry gives us the following image:

Men occupy a very small space upon the Earth. If the two billion inhabitants who people its surface were all to stand upright and somewhat crowded together, as they do for some public assembly, they could easily be put into one public square twenty miles long and twenty miles wide. All humanity could be piled up on a small Pacific islet. (57)

As we will see in the next chapter, Saint-Exupéry's manipulation of scale in this image is very similar to images that Calvino creates in Invisible Cities, particularly in Marco Polo's description of a city called Laudomia. Both authors use spatial dimensions of scale in order to help their readers more easily conceptualize the world and their places in it.

Although Saint-Exupéry's image of the two billion people crammed onto the Pacific islet may give the reader a sense of smallness, the image simultaneously suggests closeness and intimacy, as well as the relative insignificance of the "big" adult person. In the integration network, the first input space contains the concept of the earth, a vast place, populated by two billion inhabitants spread across it and as such relatively distant from each other. In the second input, the elements include a public square that is four-hundred square miles large and crowded with an unknown quantity of people. The world and market spaces, as well as the inhabitants, establish counterpart relations by virtue of category; in each case, we have a space and a quantity of people who inhabit that space. The four-hundred square mile public square becomes a Pacific islet in an additional blend, and the Pacific islet is projected to the blend space along with the two billion inhabitants of earth, but the vast earth space is not projected to the blend. As a result of this selective projection, we have a single-scope blend in which the Pacific islet is the controlling frame of the blend, and it contains two billion people squished together.

When we run the blend, two interesting – and seemingly paradoxical – emergent meanings may result. The blended space projects back to the world space so that the reader may conceptualize the small size of a human being relative to the whole world. This elaboration of the blend may remind the reader that he or she is insignificant in size, but it also reminds the reader that he or she is not alone – the adults, too, insignificant in the larger

scheme of things. Also, the blend itself is maintained such that the reader feels a sense of closeness to his or her fellow human beings – closeness and intimacy, but also perhaps a claustrophobic kind of suffocation. Either way, by creating the blend, Saint-Exupéry gives the reader a real sense of physical space and of himself or herself as an occupant in such space, revealing his or her connection with this space and, by implication, his or her responsibility for it – just as the little prince must “see to it that [he] pull[s] up regularly all the baobabs” (21) and remember his responsibility for protecting his planet against the encroachment of the giant trees.

2.3 A Distant Place: The Land-Star Image Schema

Before I proceed with this chapter, I would like to conduct a small experiment with you, the reader. After reading this sentence, I would like you to – if you please – close your eyes and imagine this: wishing on a star.

What do you see?

Although I can hardly read your mind, it is my supposition that your image contains three elements arranged in a very basic schematic structure: yourself positioned low in the frame of reference (standing on the ground, looking up let’s say), a single star (or if a group of stars, one that stands out) high above you, and a kind of invisible line – your line of vision – extending from a low point to a high point. Regardless of what specific memories, associations, or other elements you may have included in your image, doubtless these three characteristics were part of it (in the mind of a western reader at least, if it is too daring to make assumptions about universality). This image is what I will call the land-star image schema, and it is this basic image schema that I will suggest structures much of the reader’s cognizance of The Little Prince.

Saint-Exupéry includes a number of illustrations in his book, the most significant of which is an image of the landscape of the African desert and a single star in the sky above it, an image which invokes this basic image schema of the faraway star of dreams, wishes, desire, and the imagination – the quintessential image of “a distant place.” Saint-Exupéry reinforces this image schema by placing his drawing of the land-star image once next to the final page of the narrative, as the little prince falls to the ground, and again on the following page, this time an empty space after the little prince has gone. In a striking addendum to the narrative – in the small print of an Author’s Note – Saint-Exupéry writes of this image: “this is, to me, the loveliest and saddest landscape in the world. It is the same as that on the preceding page, but I have drawn it again to impress it on your memory. It is here that the little prince appeared on Earth, and disappeared” (93). Notably, not only does Saint-Exupéry emphatically remind his readers of the importance of this spatial image, but he also includes a number of similar images throughout his book: images of a place (the surface of a planet, or the desert landscape) with a single star in the sky above it (pages 15, 22, 28, 49, 55, 60, 88). By including and repeating these images, I would argue, Saint-Exupéry confirms the significance of this spatial image-schema to his tale: the generic image of a place with a distant point – in this case a star – far above it.

This image-schema prompts the reader to call up the embedded cognitive frame of “a distant place,” a place that is paradoxically here (because it is within the same scene or frame) and not here, or there – far above: elsewhere. This space is itself already an entrenched blend that allows the image to represent the space of wishes, dreams, and the imagination, as well as, with such desires, loss. As I have discussed in chapter one, we often use spatial metaphors of distal-proximal relations to express abstract concepts. Werth,

Lakoff, and Lakoff and Johnson discuss spatial metaphors such as “knowing is seeing” and “grasping is understanding.” Although such examples of metaphor may not initially appear spatial, both seeing and grasping contain necessary elements of closeness; in most instances, something must be close enough spatially in order to be seen or grasped (and thus, by implication, understood). We use the same kind of spatial metaphor when we conceptualize familiarity and emotional intimacy as closeness; we say, for example, that we are “close” to someone for whom we care deeply. Saint-Exupéry suggests this relationship between distance and loss, and closeness and intimacy, when he describes the fox that the little prince “tames” by “sit[ting] a little closer to [him], every day...” (67). Similarly, the narrator uses a spatial metaphor of loss when he speaks of the time “since [his] friend went away from [him]” (19), and of sadness as an unknown or faraway place: “[i]t is such a secret place, the land of tears” (28). Saint-Exupéry further utilizes the reader’s understanding of such spatial metaphors when he refers to the childhood imagination as one of distant places: “primeval forests [and] stars” (9). In the same way, he suggests this relationship between distance and the mystery of the unknown when his narrator says: “You can imagine how my curiosity was aroused by this half-confidence about the ‘other planets’” (14). Saint-Exupéry prompts his reader to call up a mental space for this spatial metaphor of the mystery and possibility of the distant place by setting it up as counterfactual space; the faraway place signifies absence and, as such an empty space, the reader or viewer is able to project his or her wishes and desires onto it: “It is enough to make him happy just to look at the stars. He can say to himself: ‘Somewhere, my flower is there...’” (28); “Look up at the sky. Ask yourselves: Is it yes or no? Has the sheep eaten the flower? And you will see how everything changes...” (91).

So Saint-Exupéry's narrative is structured to a large extent not only on the progression of events contained within it, but on this generic notion of placeness, and the land-star image is a central one that invokes the central concepts of distance and closeness. This picture of land and star, here and there, home and away, calls up in the reader's mind a very basic image schema that, along with other spatial images, guides the interpretation of the story as a whole, by prompting the reader to use it as an organizing frame that asserts the importance of distance and its metaphorical counterparts (dreams, imagination, mystery) to the structural and thematic coherence of the narrative. One might extend the implications of such metaphors of distance and observe that while the land below the star in the image may be considered the space of telling – the “here” space – it is also a faraway place. The central narrative in which the pilot narrator befriends and converses with the little prince occurs in the African desert, and the narrator further emphasizes the importance of this sense of distance when he repeatedly describes the desert as “a thousand miles from any human habitation” (9). We may conclude then that both the both the star and the desert signify a distant place that may reflect a feelings of desire, longing, or loss.

Saint-Exupéry's drawings are not merely frills that are added to attract the attention of the child reader; they are narrative anchors (from Dancygier) that prompt for crucial blends and as such are central to the understanding of the emergent meaning of the tale. As I have discussed above, Saint-Exupéry includes quite a few illustrations that are variations of the final land-star image, prompting the reader to call up the image schema multiple times throughout the story. One significant manifestation of this image schema is a kind of reversal that prompts for a central spatial blend that sheds light on the emergent meaning of the story – the impact of loneliness and loss, and the comforts of home and friendship. Saint-

Exupéry's repetition of the star-land image schema allows it to become a generic space that may prompt for this blend, which is actually a very sophisticated poststructuralist deconstruction of distance that one might argue is nonetheless available unconsciously and automatically to the mind of a child. One must first remember that the narrator calls his reader's attention to the importance of home and the spatiality of house as home: "The thing about the box you have given me is that at night he can use it as his house" (14). In the images at the end of the novel, the land is representative of this idea of "home," as it is earth, and the star represents the far away planet, or the "elsewhere" of the imaginary or the unknown. However, Saint-Exupéry also includes mirror images in which the land of "home" is the home planet of the prince that itself has a star above it, or an "other" far away place (see pages 15, 22, 28, and 33).

In the first input space, the earth is here, or home, and the other planet is the far away star. In the second input space, the little prince's planet is his home – the "here" space – and the star above it is a faraway place. In the blend, the prince's planet of "here" is cross-space mapped with the far away planet in the first input space and the "here" of earth in the first input space becomes a counterpart with the far away "other" place in input two. In the emergent meaning, distance and closeness is conflated and what is "here" becomes "there" and what is "there" becomes "here". The result is an emergent sense of intimacy and the interconnectivity of living beings as points in space that are multiple and contiguous in a moment of time, a sense of comfort in the face of loss. This blend, and the sense of intimacy and comfort, would not be possible without the very spatial distance – and the image of distal-proximal relations – that it subverts.

By reiterating the land-star image-schema both visually and verbally, Saint-Exupéry indicates the importance of a generic idea of “placeness” which is represented most fundamentally in this image. The author suggests the importance of this generic placeness and, when the little prince vaguely mentions his home, the narrator asks him: “What is this ‘where I live,’ of which you speak?” (14). In a similar manner, the little prince emphasizes the exact spot in the desert on which he arrives on earth: when he meets the narrator, the little prince is “on [his] way back to the place where [he] landed” (80), and his “star, then, can be found right above the place where [he] came to the Earth” (84). This idea of placeness prompts for a counterfactual blend in the image at the end of the tale, the image of the empty space that the little prince once occupied. The image of the empty landscape automatically prompts the reader to call up the entire story; this is the place where the story happened. Thus this simple image by its very emptiness contains all that happened in this place. In this blend, the first input space consists of the previous image in which the little prince falls to the ground, and the second input space contains that from which he has gone. In the blend, the empty space is enough to call up in the mind of the reader or viewer the entire story of the little prince as it is contained in that image. This blend reinforces both the sense of loss and the sense of comfort on which the themes of the story hinge. The little prince is gone, and this is sad, but the spatial image that contains the locations of the story – both the distant landscape and the star above it that is the little prince’s planet – make the story and the boy of which it tells nevertheless present in the mind of the reader. This presence by virtue of absence creates the poignancy of the tale.

2.4 Diegetic Levels and the Accessibility of the Metablend

Saint-Exupéry uses metafictional techniques to prompt for the blending of the extradiegetic level of the real space of the reader with the intradiegetic level in which the little prince presents his world. The first interesting observation one might make is that Saint-Exupéry prompts for the blend of the real reader with the little prince by using the second person pronoun “you.” One might fairly assume that this real reader may be a child who is listening to the tale as it is read to him or her. Throughout much of the tale, the narrator reports his dialogue with the little prince in direct presentation, speaking to his friend as “you”: ““The sheep you asked for is inside”” (12); ““But why do you want the sheep to eat the little baobabs?”” (20). Significantly, the narrator also uses the second person within his narration *even though he is not speaking directly to* the little prince: “Oh, little prince! Bit by bit I came to understand the secrets of your sad little life...” (24). Of course, to a child who may be listening to the story, he or she is “you” and, as such, the narrator (conflated with the reader or speaker) speaks to him or her; therefore, the “you” who is the little prince and the “you” who is the listening child become conflated, and the result is an intense sense of intimacy and closeness; the child *becomes* the little prince. The first input space is the diegetic space; in this space, the narrator speaks to the little prince as “you”. In the second input space, the adult reader (in some cases) reads The Little Prince to a child and the child is “you,” as in everyday speech. The two second person pronouns become counterparts and are projected to the blend so that, in the blend, the real child listener is “you” and, as such, the little prince. In the emergent meaning, the child listener may feel a sense of connection with the little prince as an extraordinary extraterrestrial being and, although an accompanying

feeling of sadness and loneliness perhaps, an overriding sense of identification, wonder, and self-efficacy.

In order to understand how this blending works, we must first examine the structure of the narrative as itself a network of input spaces. In The Way We Think, Fauconnier and Turner describe a particular type of blend that they call the XYZ construction. This is essentially a blend for the prepositional “of” clause for part-whole relationships: X is the Y of Z. Let us consider an example that is relevant for this study: Saint-Exupéry is the author of The Little Prince. This simple construction, according to Fauconnier and Turner, is a blend of two input spaces: the first input space contains the roles of author and book, and the second input space contains the values, or specific proper nouns that assume the roles, of Saint-Exupéry and The Little Prince. One element of the input is what Fauconnier and Turner term an open-ended connector; this element is a kind of blank that the reader must fill in cognitively. More specifically, in this sentence we must infer that The Little Prince is a book (since the word “book” is not included in the XYZ clause), and we make this inference by using the cognitively embedded frame “author-book”. Significantly for this discussion, Fauconnier and Turner make the crucial point that XYZ constructions may be extended and iteratively embedded such that it is possible to have X is the Y of Z¹ or Z² of Z³ and so on, just as it is possible to say something like “he is a friend of a friend of a friend of a friend...”. Each successive noun clause creates a new input to the blend that is iteratively embedded in the last, creating a megablend that includes each level compressed with the next. We might say, in the case of our example of The Little Prince, that “Saint-Exupéry’s book is the story of the narrator’s telling of the little prince’s telling of his experiences...” or “The reader reads Saint-Exupéry’s book of the narrator’s story of the little prince’s telling of his home

planet and his journey in which x events happen.” This blend works in the same way as the XYZ construction.

In his article, “Mimesis, Artistic Inspiration, and the Blends We Live By,” Tim Rohrer models what he terms an art-life blend in which successive diegetic levels are iteratively embedded such that the real space of reading or writing may be blended with the represented, or embedded, spaces. Using the example of Vargas Llosa’s epigraph from Salvador Elizondo – “I saw myself writing that I was writing and that I was writing that I was writing that I was writing” (as cited in Rohrer 1690) – Rohrer shows how blending may be used to map this mise-en-abyme technique in the same way that Fauconnier and Turner map the XYZ construction. In The Little Prince, one may map the diegetic levels of the text to reveal that they too are iteratively embedded as an art-life metablend. The spatiality of such levels and their distal-proximal relations elicits the sense of withinness or containment as well as that of distance that may be a crucial part of the spatiality of telling, reading, representation, and narrative. Mitchell gestures toward the importance of diegetic levels in The Little Prince when he writes of minor characters such as the fox who act as teachers to the protagonist and “whose imaginatively expressed lessons to the hero are transmitted to the narrator and thence to the reader” (455). Saint-Exupéry’s narrative contains the tellings of the narrator who tells about the tellings of the little prince who tells about his dialogue with other characters and describes other places in the story proper; as such, it is possible to imagine Rohrer’s iteratively embedded art-life blend as a possible model of the metablend of diegetic levels in The Little Prince.

In the first input, or life, space, the reader is aware of his or her self as a discrete entity in the real world, a world that contains him or herself as reader and Saint-Exupéry as

author. This is blended with input 2, the book space containing the book titled The Little Prince, so that in the first art-life blend, the reader is cognizant of reading Saint-Exupéry's book. This blend becomes a new input space that is blended with input 3, the narration space in which the narrator tells the story of his meeting with the little prince. This is the diegetic level of the story proper, and in this next blend, the narrator tells the story of his meeting with the little prince to the reader of Saint-Exupéry's book: "Thus you can imagine my amazement, at sunrise, when I was awakened by an odd little voice" (9). This blend in turn becomes a further input which is blended with the next input space, the telling space in which the little prince describes his home planet and his journey away from it. In this blend, the narrator tells the reader or listener of the little prince's tale and his descriptions of his home planet and the other places he visits: "it was in this way that I heard, on the third day, about the catastrophe of the baobabs" (19); "On the fifth day – again, as always, it was thanks to the sheep – the secret of the little prince's life was revealed to me" (25); "He found himself in the neighborhood of the asteroids 325, 326, 327, 328, 329, and 330" (35).

While The Little Prince may seem to be a simple fairy tale, we can see that in fact Saint-Exupéry sets up a complex multidiegetic narrative that the reader is nonetheless able to negotiate instantaneously and effortlessly through cognitive blending. Since the viewpoints of the little prince and the other characters are told by the narrator, viewpoint compression occurs as the narrator brings them together. At this level, the narrator's drawings come into play as another mediated spatial representation of the little prince's story through the narrator's artistic vision. Once the blend is run and the narrative levels are compressed, the intradiegetic level, or the distant space of the little prince's planet that he describes to the narrator, is cognitively near or accessible to the reader because it is tightly compressed within

the blend, contained within the highest level, which is the reader's experience of reading. This conflation of narrative levels once the blend is run is what gives the tale its sense of emotional immediacy and the reader a sense of intimacy and connection to the magical existence of little prince and the interstellar adventures on which he embarks.

The metablend also operates according to the organizing frames of the "knowing is seeing" and "understanding is grasping" spatial metaphors; the planet represents the far away place of dreams, wish, the imagination, or the unknowable, just as the telling or intradiegetic level of the little prince's reported speech is the far away place of the imagination or the fantastic or wondrous. Thus when the blend is run, just as the intradiegetic level is conflated with the extratextual space of the real reader and thus becomes cognitively accessible to him or her, the planet as the far away story place of the wish, the unknowable, and the imagination becomes "home" – a place that, however magical, is within reach of the mind of the child.

As we have seen in the aforementioned metablend, cognitive blending allows one to observe how ostensibly complicated metafictional techniques prompt what are in fact basic unconscious cognitive processes. The narrator's inclusion of his drawings and his direct metafictional references to his creation of them, including discussions of his inspiration for them and evaluations of them, also bring the reader closer in to the text: "Here you may see the best portrait that, later, I was able to make of him. But my drawing is certainly very much less charming than its model" (10); "I make some errors, too, in the little prince's height: in one place he is too tall and in another too short" (19); "When I made the drawing of the baobabs I was carried beyond myself by the inspiring force of urgent necessity" (24). This self-reflexivity draws our attention to the importance of spatiality in the narrative since

the drawings, as spatial representations, play such a crucial role. However, the narrator's continual reminders of the spatial deficiencies in his drawings – their lack of accuracy or correctness – suggests that it is not the quantifiability of space that is important to the narrative but, rather, the relativity of this space and the necessity of representing the very relativity of this space nonetheless – representing physical reality in a new way and manipulating form to open up the mind to new possibilities.

There is no doubt that The Little Prince, a children's tale, would most likely be summarized by readers in the traditional narrative form – as a temporally ordered series of events. However, to define the narrative in such terms would be severely limiting. A journey narrative, The Little Prince develops in plot only by virtue of the elliptical movement of the characters – the narrator and the little prince – from one spatial position to the next, and it is the spatial relationship between these places that blending shows us yields insight into the connection between plot points, more than the order of those nodes in time. Saint-Exupéry presents his readers with what is essentially a series of descriptions of particular locales: the African desert that prompts for the generic space of placeness; Asteroid B-612, where we observe the manipulation of scale; the planets of the king (35), the conceited man (40), the tippler (42), the businessman (43), the lamplighter (47), and the geographer (51); the earth and the rose garden (62), the railway (71) and the well (76). An analysis of the way conceptual blending works in this text reveals the complex relationship between concrete (in the sense of the representation of physical places) and conceptual spaces whose integration at the levels of both form and content yield crucial new information that allows us to track the development of the reader's sense of intimate contact with the little prince and his world

despite – and in fact because of – its imaginary dimensions and distance from the real space of reading.

This analysis of The Little Prince reveals how an author may manipulate concrete physical concepts to prompt the reader's understanding of spatial metaphors such as those for distance (what is far away is strange, foreign, unknown, impossible) and those for size (what is small is insignificant, and what is large is more important), organizing the narrative around such spatial concepts and metaphors so that the crux of the story lies in spatial connectivity and relativity. Ironically, one of the central lessons of The Little Prince is that essential truth ultimately defies space: "It is only with the heart that one can see rightly; what is essential is invisible to the eye" (70). However, Saint-Exupéry utilizes imagery and spatial relationships in order to undermine them, knowing that – as cognitive linguists such as Turner argue – as spatial beings we cannot help but make sense of the world spatially. The popularity of The Little Prince amongst children and adults reveals that what seem to be complex spatial manipulations, including subversion of distal-proximal relationships and interactions between multiple diegetic levels, are in fact based on commonly understood conceptual frameworks and spatial metaphors. Interestingly, more ostensibly complicated postmodern experimental texts such as Italo Calvino's Invisible Cities enact similar formal manipulations of space that call upon such entrenched frames.

Chapter Three: Conceptual Blending in Invisible Cities

3.1 Reconstructing Invisible Cities

In his essay, “Levels of Reality in Literature,” the Italian postmodernist Italo Calvino comes uncannily close to a description of cognitive blending in his explication of the functioning of narrative spaces and the fruitfulness of their manipulation: “in a work of literature, various levels of reality may meet while remaining distinct and separate, or else they may melt and mingle and knit together, achieving a harmony among their contradictions or else forming an explosive mixture” (101). In his experimental magic realist novel Invisible Cities, Calvino manipulates the cognitive capacities of his reader to deconstruct, reconstruct, and revolutionize the notion of the city, creating highly fantastic and impossible spaces that seem completely logical and tangentially possible. In its use of magic realism, formal experimentation, temporal manipulation and anachronism, ostensibly incessant deferral of meaning, and resistance to closure, Calvino’s text is fully deconstructionist and begs poststructuralist analysis. Further, as Markey suggests, Calvino’s text is fully deconstructionist in its purpose, enacting “a rejection of the utilitarian, material world with its firm sense of History...an impatient striving on the author’s part to liberate himself from the shackles of time and place” (89). However, Calvino’s narrative techniques are clearly cognitive and constructivist in their very abilities to deconstruct, and an analysis of blending in his text reveals the ways in which Calvino prompts the compression, decompression, and integration of mental spaces. Just as The Little Prince could be construed as postmodern for its self-reflexivity and its subversion of binary spatial oppositions such as nearness and distance, one could argue that Invisible Cities has the same basic spatial and narrative

qualities of The Little Prince. Calvino uses cognitively embedded spatial frames of concepts such as the city to manipulate the reader's cognitive assemblage, breakdown, and reformulation of such concepts. In Invisible Cities, Calvino rewrites the centre in multiplicity by composing a series of vignettes, each one describing a particular city that tests the limits of his reader's imagination by manipulating concepts of space and time and reformulating them in the text's own cognitive and epistemological game. Calvino makes the significance of such spatial manipulation explicit when he writes that each time his intradiegetic narrator, Marco Polo, describes a city to Kublai Khan, the narratee, "the Great Khan's mind set[s] out on its own, and after dismantling the city piece by piece, he reconstruct[s] it in other ways, substituting components, shifting them, inverting them" (43, italics removed).

As Carter suggests, "cities, possibly the largest and most social of human constructs, are efficient symbols for creating a kind of mental topography" (109). In Invisible Cities, Calvino uses the city as a spatial trope that represents the notion of the construct and the centre itself; arguing for a conceptualization of the "city as language, as ideology, as the conditioning factor of every thought and word and gesture" (as cited in Roetzel and Scherpe 145). Roetzel and Scherpe note the tension between structuralism and poststructuralism in contemporary formulations of the city. Like Punday, he seeks some kind of reconciliation of the "comprehensive delocalization, decentring, and decomposition of the city as a 'locus of signs'" with a more "structural approach" (160) – "an integration of a topographic sense of orientation and a fantastic play of meaning" (161). An analysis of how blending works in Invisible Cities reveals it to be one such possible structural approach that nonetheless leaves room for metaphysical freedom. In fact, the thesis of Calvino's work is arguably this:

construction and meaning-making are regulated by guiding principles on which we as cognitively bound individuals depend, and these conceptual apparatuses have the potential either to build cities, centres, or master narratives as dangerous hegemonic forces or, when manipulated in new ways, to break these forces down by revealing their structure and the cognitive potential for reconstruction rather than deconstruction, for reenvisioning meaning in movement rather than completely tearing it apart at its foundations (mental foundations that are set in evolutionary⁶ stone so to speak). Rather than defamiliarizing the reader, as Margolin and Fludernik might say, and trying to move *beyond* the cognitive tendency to spatialize abstract elements such as time, Calvino exploits this dependence on spatial constructs in an extension of the spatial implications of his text. By collapsing the temporal linearity of narrative and conflating distance and closeness in a kind of paradigmatic layering effect, Calvino, like Saint-Exupéry, gives his reader global insight into the interconnectivity of all times and spaces in the here and now and, as a result, his or her spatial contingency – the real and pressing sense in which each individual is responsible for the space that we inhabit.

We may regard the diegetic levels of Invisible Cities in the same way as those of The Little Prince – as an iteratively embedded blend network in which the topology of the network may be maintained for a sense of distance, prompted by an image-schematic structure, or compressed for closeness in the blend. In this case, the intradiegetic level is Polo's description of each city, and the image-schema, rather than being in a linear structure from here to there (as with the land-star prompt), is one of centre and periphery, Khan and his garden being located at the centre (and hence the diegetic level of Polo and Khan's

⁶ See Turner (1996) for a discussion of the evolutionary basis of spatial thinking.

conversation located there), and the cities being both physically (in the image-schema) and discursively elsewhere. As with The Little Prince, the reader may either maintain the sense of distance between the periphery and the centre by mapping this distance onto the diegetic levels so that the told (the descriptions of the cities) are conceptualized as far away from the telling (the space of Polo and Khan's narrative). Or the reader may take his or her cue from particular textual prompts that initiate the completion and elaboration of the blend such that both physical places and diegetic levels are compressed and elicit a sense of integration, unity, or closeness for the reader. While these dual cognitive processes may remain unconscious to the reader of The Little Prince— the subversion of distance and closeness more subliminal one might say – Calvino utilizes the same processes more self-reflexively to increase ambiguity and make his readers cognizant of the cognitive blending they enact.

3.2 The Polo-Khan Frame Blend

Although Invisible Cities is composed of fifty-five short vignettes, each one describing a particular city, Calvino claims narrative status for his novel by embedding them in the historical tale of Marco Polo and Kublai Khan. In the frame narrative, which is an allusion to Marco Polo's Il milione, Polo and Khan converse in the gardens of Khan's palace, and the explorer tells the emperor of his travels through the empire and the cities – real and impossible – he discovers: “when he describes the cities visited on his expeditions...the emperor of the Tartars...continue[s] listening to the young Venetian with greater attention and curiosity than he shows any other messenger or explorer of his” (5, italics removed). The frame, which is a series of narrative moments composed of the conversations in the garden, brings the individual cities together and prompts their integration as they are situated within the same tale, arguably giving the text, which might otherwise be a series of sketches

or paradigms, its claim to novelistic form. However, the frame narrative does not actually develop diachronically; the frame story contains no significant event or action, and there is no distinct beginning or ending to the narrative since the book opens and closes in the midst of the conversation in Khan's garden. Further, just as Saint-Exupéry's narrator does not describe the little prince's journey between planets, Polo does not describe the journey or spaces between the cities he visits in any syntagmatic sense and, as such, his tale is not a travel narrative. Khan himself "notice[s] that Marco Polo's cities resemble...one another, as if the passage from one to another involve[s] not a journey but a change of elements" (43). Therefore, while the frame gives one the feeling of a narrative bound in the act of telling, it is itself paradigmatic, a kind of spatialization of the narrative form that is similar to, but more acute than, that in The Little Prince, another text that consists more in the direct presentation of dialogue – in the act of telling itself – than in the narration of chronological events.

The frame narrative, then, is a space that initiates the conflation of past and present moments, as well as concepts of distance and closeness, inside and outside. To be sure, the cities are not merely cities but cognitive and epistemological games – fables for thought – and, by framing them within Polo and Khan's viewpoints, Calvino prompts the partial integration of the cities in a kind of layering effect, as well as the integration within and between them of the past historical moment with the present readerly and writerly space. The frame narrative is itself a blend that compresses the past and the present and provides the reader with global insight into contingencies of space and time, linking the fantastical cities to real historical and present-day spaces, both mental and physical, and aligning them spatially.

This crucial frame blend is composed of elements from two input spaces: the thirteenth century, or past, input space, and the modern day, or present, input space. The first input space is constituted by the historical moment and is organized according to the viewpoints of Polo, the explorer and teller, and Khan, his interlocutor the great emperor, in the particular historical moment of thirteenth-century China. In this space, the reader understands Polo and Khan to be real entities that existed in the past, conversing in the garden of Khan's palace. Polo, the teller/speaker/knower, tells Khan, the listener/knowledge seeker, of the distant cities and regions under Khan's reign that he has visited. In this space, which is the past in the reader's real world but the present in the real world of the novel, Khan feels "pride in the boundless extension of the territories [he] has conquered" and "triumph over enemy sovereigns" (5, italics removed), and he wonders about the state of his empire – "the first and last names of officials dismissed and decapitated, the dimensions of the canals that the narrow rivers fed in times of drought" (21, italics removed). From his privileged place in the centre, Khan makes conjectures about his empire's future progress as a civilization and "the grandeur of his destiny" (60, italics removed); here Khan shows a desire to expand, take up space, and continue forward in time, but he has no inclination to go out into the peripheral lands of his empire, remaining in "the gardens of magnolias...listening to [the] long reports" (21, italics removed) of ambassadors.

While the diegetic setting of the frame is the thirteenth century space, Calvino prompts the reader to integrate this space with a second input in the frame, the space of the present twentieth-century western world, or the readerly place and time. In this space, we have the reader and Calvino the writer; Calvino tells the reader, who takes on the role of listener as the seeker of knowledge or interpreter, of another place and time – Khan's empire

in the thirteenth century. However, Calvino and the reader both have access to the knowledge of Khan and Polo as historical figures; author and reader are privileged to information, such as the certainty of the fall of Khan's empire, to which the characters in the first space do not have access. Calvino sets up this second input space rather subtly, especially in the first part of the novel, but it is nonetheless there from the very beginning, in which the demise of Khan's empire – its “endless, formless ruin” (5, italics removed) – is suggested by the narrator and may be recognized by the reader as proleptically known. Furthermore, Calvino prompts the reader to call up the contemporary space by including knowledge the reader may have regarding the historical Polo's *Il milione* (*A Million Lies*) and by referring to the skepticism with which Polo's tales have been received; contemporary readers “do...not necessarily believe everything Marco Polo says when he describes the cities” (5, italics removed) in his text, which they know to have been written when Polo was “taken prisoner by Genoese pirates and put in irons in the same cell with a writer of adventure stories” (155, italics removed). As well as providing historical information to which present day readers have access, Calvino further prompts the reader to build this twentieth century input space towards the end of the novel when he includes present day cities in Khan's atlas: “[i]n [which] there is an outpouring of networks without beginning or end, cities in the shape of Los Angeles, in the shape of Kyoto-Osaka, without shape” (139, italics removed).

Once the reader has set up this second input space (whether this occurs early or late in the process of reading the novel), an integration network emerges that leads the reader to blend it with the thirteenth-century Polo-Khan space. The result is that, in the blend, the past and the present are conflated and exist simultaneously within the space of Khan's empire.

The historical figures then have access to information about their futures as it is projected back to them from the present input space. For example, present-day knowledge about the source of Polo's Il milione is projected back to the past space such that Polo has speculative knowledge about his own future and the tale "which [he] might dictate late in life, if [he] were taken prisoner by Genoese pirates and put in irons in the same cell with a writer of adventure stories" (155, italics removed). Just as Polo's viewpoint is conflated with that of the contemporary reader in the blend, the readerly knowledge about contemporary skepticism with regards to the historical Polo's Il milione (A Million Lies) is also projected to Khan: "Kublai Khan does not necessarily believe everything Marco Polo says when he describes the cities visited on his expeditions" (5, italics removed). Further, in the blend, Khan has the impossibly proleptic knowledge of the demise of his own empire and the possible (real) future empires that will replace it: "The Great Khan contemplates an empire covered with cities that weigh upon the earth and upon mankind, crammed with wealth and traffic, overladen with ornaments and offices, complicated with mechanisms and hierarchies" (73, italics removed). Conflating the East and the West, this image projects back to the real world space and implicates our own world in it, also suggesting the fall of another empire to coincide with that of the Great Khan. Thus blending reveals how, in the frame narrative, the past and the present impinge on each other within the same space.

In The Little Prince, we saw Saint-Exupéry prompt for temporal compression in the Asteroid B-612 blend, where the blend of the planet input space with the house input space creates the emergent meaning in which The Little Prince was able to watch the sunset forty-four times per day. Although Calvino's use of postmodern anachronism elicits a different kind of temporal compression here, conflating two distant times instead of compressing one

length of time into a shorter period, the ease with which the reader is able to conceptualize both blends reveals that the potentially destabilizing and frustrating anachronistic technique makes use of the same cognitive structures as more ostensibly simple spatial compression in the children's narrative.

Invisible Cities is also akin to The Little Prince in its compression of the real reader and the extradiegetic space of reading and writing with the characters in the diegesis. In the blend, Calvino conflates the viewpoint of Khan, the interpreter or knower, with that of the reader, and the viewpoint of Polo, the teller, with the narrator, or the voice of Calvino, thus conflating the past and the present such that they co-occur in the same textual world. Calvino hints at this conflation with his use of the present tense in the first section of the book, as well as the use of the pronoun "we": "there *is* a moment which *follows* pride in the boundless extension of the territories *we have* conquered" (5, my italics). In the blend, "we," the readers/ knowers/ interpreters/emperors are conflated with Khan, the emperor, and Calvino and Polo are compressed by virtue of their discursive telling; both the reader and Khan seek to gain knowledge of the cities/empire through Polo's/Calvino's tales.

The blend reveals not only the conflation of past and present in the text, but that of closeness and distance, inside and outside, and subject and object, aiding the reader in his or her comprehension of the invisible cities themselves as well as the text as a whole. In the emergent structure, this conflation of space and time reinforces the sense of contingency of all spaces and all times, and it draws attention to the linguistic construction of reality and epistemological limitations that accrue as a function of closeness and distance, a theme that is crucial to a full understanding of Calvino's novel. From a stable position at the centre – from the inside looking out – Khan's attempt to know his empire is fundamentally limited. Khan

believes that “‘if each city is like a game of chess, the day when [he] ha[s] learned the rules, [he] shall finally possess [his] empire, even if [he] shall never succeed in knowing all the cities it contains” (121, italics removed) but, in the end, his knowledge is “reduced to a square plane of wood: nothingness” (123, italics removed).

Polo, on the other hand, is a foreigner who travels to the centre of the empire, then to the lands outside of the centre, and back to the centre again; his vantage is from a place of movement between inside and outside and, as such, he has special access to spatial manipulation: the ability to subvert the centre as a kind of cognitive manipulator or guide. As a traveler, Polo understands counterfactuals, and notions of absence and inversion: “Elsewhere is a negative mirror. The traveler recognizes the little that is his, discovering the much he has not had and will never have” (29, italics removed). Polo highlights the nature of the descriptive act as itself already a blend of the subject’s viewpoint with the object, which is no longer external to it, and so the city becomes a trope for the inherent spatiality in the acts of knowing and telling. The Little Prince, one might suggest, is also this kind of guide, and his and the narrator’s emphases on the possibilities inherent in empty space – the spot in the African desert from which the little prince disappears, and the star as distant unknown place – prompts readers to use their cognitive powers to project the story – and by extension their desires – onto that space. Similarly, in Invisible Cities, since the descriptions of the cities as objects are crucially contingent on the viewpoint of the subject, the invisible cities are spaces that contain and embody the act of telling; they are superimposed on cognitive maps and become representations of mental spaces, conflating space and time rather than existing as discrete or real entities in space and time. Calvino allows the voice of the narrator to intrude on his city sketches, reminding the reader that they are highly contingent not only

on the telling itself, but also on the place and subject-position from which the telling is told and the city conceptualized; as Polo concedes: “Everything I see and do assumes meaning in a mental space where the calm reigns as here...At the moment when I concentrate and reflect, I find myself again, always, in this garden” (103, italics removed). The frame becomes a way for the reader to understand him or herself understanding the text; as Herman argues in his essay on narrative embedding, “framed narratives function as both models for and vehicles of shared thinking, or socially distributed cognition” (358), and Polo’s vignettes serve as playfully guided revitalizations of not just cities as centres, but of ways of knowing.

3.3 Invisible Cities Blend 1: Laudomia and the Implications of Scale

As Markey suggests, Italo Calvino’s text allows readers global insight into vast and incomprehensible notions of human life and death and their contingencies on space and time, “elud[ing] the hard knocks of an either/or itinerary by slipping off to tranquil, alternate worlds where the omnipresent Calvinian spectator perceives the journey from cradle to grave as tolerable, adventuresome and wryly amusing” (107). As mentioned above, the frequency of spatial metaphors that occur in language to facilitate the comprehension of time has been well documented by researchers in cognitive linguistics. In his description of Laudomia, Calvino exploits this cognitive propensity by manipulating scale and radically spatializing time. As a result, Calvino maps the construction of a final megablend that allows the reader to formulate a holistic conception of, or global insight into, the existence, or nonexistence, of humanity through macrocosmic time, using highly spatialized images. As we will see with another city – Zaira – in the next section, the result of a reading of Laudomia is likely a sense in the individual of his or her interconnectivity with space and responsibility for the future as

spatially contingent, suggesting that the consequences of linear, differentiated, temporal thinking may be dismal because of its tendency to displace past from present from future.

In his composition of *Laudomia*, Calvino blends three input spaces corresponding to the living present, the past dead, and the future unborn, prompting first a blend of the living and the dead, then one of the living and the unborn, and finally one of the unborn and the dead; in each case he initiates cross-space mapping by virtue of spatial relations. The first input space is that of the present living city; it contains people with “their own names” (140), bodies of limited size, contained in a limited space, the city, with “streets”, “windowless buildings” (140), and an “arrangement of...dwellings”. There is a positive correlation between the increase in population of these individuals and the amount of space they take up: “the *Laudomia* of the living becomes crowded and expanded” (140). They have experiences, “a history of toil, anger, illusions, emotions” (140), “affairs, [and] revenges” (141), and they may also be identified with their connection to cultural artifacts such as “clothing” (141). Further, “the living population pays a visit to the dead” (140) in the cemetery, and those in the living space also have memories of the past, as well as an awareness of their “descendants[’]” (141) uncertain futures and a desire “to follow the thread of their own actions’ consequences” (142). Individuals in this present living space have voices capable of asking questions and “seek[ing] explanation[s]” (140), and they imagine past counterfactuals: what “could have been and [was] not” (141).

The second input space is that of the past dead. In this input space, Calvino calls the reader’s attention to the existence of people who have died but reside in the present space of the tomb or cemetery, with gravestones and so on. Space is also limited in this input, and the dead increase in number as do the living, filling up this space. The cemetery is also “an

arrangement of dwellings” (140) with “families more and more crowded together, in compartments crammed one above the other” (140). The dead have “names on their stone slabs” (140) that correspond to those of their living relatives, and these relatives visit them. Like the living, the dead in this space also have a past, “a history of toil, anger, illusions, emotions” (140). However, while those in the living present space wonder about their uncertain futures, the future of the dead is not uncertain, but “all has become necessary, divorced from chance, categorized, set in order” (140). This past is limited but, however certain it may be, the dead cannot communicate their history; in this input space, they do not have voices.

As in the living input space, Calvino arranges the input space of the dead spatially and paradigmatically more than temporally. Calvino uses the spatial coexistence of the living and the dead to initiate cross-space mapping between the two and thus conflates the past and the present by prompting the reader to blend the present living space and the past dead space. In the blend, both the living and the dead are spatially contingent and increase in number to fill up a limited space: “[t]he more the Laudomia of the living becomes crowded and expanded, the more the expanse of tombs increases beyond the walls” (140). The cemeteries and tombs are dwellings that mirror those of the living: “The streets of the Laudomia of the dead are just wide enough...and many windowless buildings look out on them; but the pattern of the streets and the arrangement of the dwellings repeat those of the living Laudomia, and in both, families are more and more crowded together, in compartments crammed one above the other” (140). The past and the present are spatially cumulative and contingent on one another. Further, the names of the living and the dead are counterparts in the blend and prompt the conflation of living and dead individuals, such that

the living “decipher their *own* names on their stone slabs” (my italics, 140). Most importantly, in the blend the dead are embodied and have voices, and the living can ask them questions about what might have been: “to feel sure of itself, the living Laudomia has to seek in the Laudomia of the dead the explanation of itself, even at the risk of finding more there, or less: explanations for more than one Laudomia, for different cities that could have been and were not, or reasons that are incomplete, contradictory, disappointing” (140-141). Nonetheless, the ability of the living to question the dead in the blend projects back to and modifies the living input space such that living individuals are able to extricate a “sense of security”(142) from the voices of the dead, since the fates of the dead – their pasts and futures – have already been decided.

In the next part of the Laudomia section, Calvino sets up a third input space, that of the future unborn; this input space blends with both the past dead and the living present spaces independently. The components of this future unborn space include the future, an infinite possible number of people who have not yet been born, and a sense of disembodiment or emptiness, since the future is essentially absent, or nonexistent until it happens and so de-spatialized: “the space is not in proportion to their number, which is presumably infinite...the area is empty...the unborn can be imagined of any size” (141). Like the living, the unborn have a cache of possible future experiences that the living project upon them; they are “intent on the concerns of their future life” (141), such as “continuing their affairs [and] revenges” (141). In this space, the unborn retain the possibility of being imagined by the living as they are connected to them as “descendents” (141), but they are not able to communicate with them.

Here Calvino establishes a blend of the living present input space with the future unborn input space. The blend recruits spatiality from the living input space such that the unborn become inhabitants of their own city, residents of physical space: “Laudomia assigns an equally vast residence to those who are still to be born...an architecture all niches and bays and grooves” (141), but an infinite number of disembodied individuals is recruited from the unborn input space so that “there is nothing against imagining them erect or crouching on every object or bracket that juts from the walls, on every capital or plinth, lined up or dispersed” (141). In the blend, space *is* a factor, but Calvino describes it as an unlimited surface area that can accommodate all of the unborn who, disembodied, may be conceptualized as having any size. Thus Calvino draws the reader’s attention to his or her own cognitive deficiencies: the absurdity and impossibility of this magic realist blend reveals the limitations of the assumption that somehow humanity will continue to reproduce ad infinitum, having an endless number of descendents who will be able to fit within the limited space of the earth. In imagining unlimited time, we forget space and its contingency; we cannot comprehend how all of these people will fit in a limited space, so we disembody, or de-spatialize, the unborn. By giving bodies to the unborn – whatever size – and extending them into infinite time while still having them encroach on a limited space (since in the blend, the dead too take up space), Calvino gives the reader a sense of approaching limits: an awareness of his or her inability to conceptualize the vastness of space and time and the individual’s inherent connection with it.

Similar to the living, the unborn in Laudomia are perceived as having experiences and these experiences become counterparts with those of the living in the blend; the experiences of the living are projected to the blend as Calvino describes the dead as “crowded with

multitudes in clothing never seen before” (141). As in the living-dead blend, in the living-unborn blend the living are able to “frequent the house of the unborn to interrogate them” (141), but in this blend, the selfishness and egocentricity of the living is projected such that “it is always about themselves that the living ask” (142). Further, the inability of the present living to conceptualize the future is compressed with space in the blend, so that “the future inhabitants of Laudomia seem like dots, grains of dust, detached from any before or after” (142). The present living inhabitants are able to project their own experiences and selves onto the future, but they cannot conceptualize their contingencies upon the distant future, which is ultimately detached from them. One cannot normally extend one's perception diachronically and see an infinite timeline, but only direct cause and effect links: only dots.

In the next section, Calvino blends the living-dead space with the living-unborn space by virtue of disanalogy to describe their emergent structures before he moves on to describe the final megablend that derives from them: “the Laudomia of the unborn does not transmit, like the city of the dead, any sense of security to the inhabitants of the living Laudomia: only alarm” (142). In the emergent structure of the living-dead blend, the dead give a sense of security to the living because of their ostensibly set, ordered past and limited number, and this result of the blend projects back to the living present input space. By disanalogy, the unborn-living space reveals the unborn to give a sense of alarm to the living, projecting back to the living present space and intensifying the sense of uncertainty.

Thus the final blend of the past dead space and the future unborn space elicits the final megablend of the past, present, and future inhabitants of the earth. The uncertain future of the unborn space projects to the blend and back to the living space such that the living are presented with two options, two possible megablends: “either...the number of the unborn is

far greater than the total of all the living and all the dead, and then in every pore of the stone there are invisible hordes...with millions of persons who are to be born...Or else you think that Laudomia, too, will disappear, no telling when, and all its citizens with it; in other words the generations will follow one another until they reach a certain number and will then go no further” (142). In both possible blends, Calvino reveals the contingency of human time on space, as well as the intimate connection between the past and the future – their integral relationship, continuity, and interdependence. In the first blend option, the possibly infinite number of unborn projects along with the limited number of living and dead, but the limited space of these inputs is also projected so that the future population increases while their space does not; the result is a kind of mental, conceptual, and literal collapse, and the blend of limited space with an unlimited number of future inhabitants reveals the unlikelihood and absurdity of this possibility. The second blend makes better intuitive sense because it does not conflict with our notions of bounded space; in this blend, the limited number of the living and the dead and their limited temporality is projected such that the number of unborn is not unlimited, but finite, as a result of its spatial contingency.

Finally, in order to make the vastness of this realization more manageable and provide the reader with global insight into the matter, Calvino blends the final megablend with one last simple hourglass image: “the Laudomia of the dead and that of the unborn are like the two bulbs of an hourglass which is not turned over; each passage between birth and death is a grain of sand that passes the neck, and there will be a last inhabitant of Laudomia born, a last grain to fall, which is now at the top of the pile, waiting” (143). The limited number of dead in one input space is a counterpart with the limited number of grains of sand at the bottom of an hourglass, the living with the grains passing through the mouth of the

hourglass, and the unborn with the limited number of grains in the top of the hourglass.

When we elaborate the blend, we see that the last grain of sand is a counterpart with the last unborn child; the implications of the blend project back to the unborn in the second input so that the reader can conceptualize a last person to be born and the possibly finite number of human beings. In the emergent structure, the reader has the sense of contingency and connection with all that have been born and all that are to come, realizing his or her place in the vast scheme of things and responsibility for space. In the blend, the hourglass as a limited space or container becomes analogous to the earth, and the linearity of the spatial passage of grains of sand from the top to the bottom of the hourglass corresponds with the linear temporality that suggests an end. However, an hourglass may be turned over, and this possibility also projects to the blend such that that Calvino encourages, in the emergent structure, a reconceptualization of time on spatial terms, a kind of cyclical motion perhaps. Regardless, Calvino initiates a sense of agency: someone might turn the hourglass over – frame spatial and temporal realities in a new way, or shake things up – in order for the future to go on.

In much the same way that Saint-Exupéry's manipulation of scale (in his image of the Pacific islet in chapter two) encourages the reader to conceptualize his or her connection with the physical world around her, Calvino's manipulation of scale in the *Laudomia* blend reveals the spatial contingency of the individual human life, and, by extension, time. In the final megablend, space and time are conflated such that the past, present, and future become spatial, dependent on each other, and limited as such. The implication is the end of time, or the end of humanity. By making his reader think about his or her own inability to cognitively make sense of his or her own limits in space and time, Calvino elicits in the reader the sense

of the urgency of space, the danger of population growth and environmental irresponsibility, and our connection with, and responsibility for, future generations.

3.4 (Re)Constructing Narrative Space: The Case of Zaira

In his description of Zaira, Polo reveals that the concept of narrative is itself a blend by decompressing narrative space and dissociating temporal events from the physical locations in which they occur. He then recompresses them so that in the new blend, events are arranged spatially – according to physical and spatial proximity – instead of temporally. Through Polo's voice, Polo describes cause and effect not as occurring at separate moments in time but in terms of simultaneity and collocation, destabilizing time as the defining force in narrative. Calvino deconstructs the notion of the privileged centre – in this case that of the origin or cause – by initiating a radical spatialization of the city and the events that occur within it, arranging them paradigmatically so that all times exist in the same spatial moment. As such, Calvino draws attention to the cognitive tendency to separate past event from present space, criticizing temporal separation and differentiation that privileges a distant cause that is estranged from the present moment. By deprivileging the authority of the original cause, Calvino once again reveals the contingency and interconnectivity of the individual with the space around him or her, implying that one has a fundamental responsibility for this space. He also makes his reader cognizant of the frightening ability of language – and narrative in particular as syntagmatically organized – to alienate the individual from the past that seems to be, but is not, disconnected from this space.

Calvino begins his description of Zaira by prompting the reader to decompress the image of a normal, generic city space to two inputs, one corresponding to space and the other to time. His descriptions of the physical properties of the city at first prompt the reader to

call up the generic city frame: “I could tell you how many steps make up the streets rising like stairways, and the degree of the arcades’ curves, and what kind of zinc scales cover the roofs” (10); in this input space the city is spatial, real, and set in the present, consisting of quantifiable structures and a particular way of describing them that consists in the logic of numbers and materials. This input contains elements imported from the generic image of the city, including concepts of space and time, with a focus on the former in the descriptors. However, immediately after prompting the construction of this real city space, Calvino negates it by setting up a counterfactual space with the auxiliary conditional verb “could”: “I *could* tell you how many steps make up the streets...” (10, my italics). He further reinforces this counterfactual space in the same sentence: “but I already know this would be the same as telling you nothing” (10). Later, when the integration network is elaborated, the final blend will project back to this generic city space to show the limits of the empirical descriptors as well as the act of telling itself, revealing how the link between space and time is taken for granted in this space. Although this input includes an awareness of temporality and the past events that may have occurred in this generic city space, these events are negligible and not constitutive of the space per se, the present being divorced from the past and space taking precedence over time in the descriptors.

While Calvino is critical of the limitations of language with regards to describing the city in spatial terms, he utilizes this very cognitive reliance on spatial constructs to undermine these assumptions and help the reader to get beyond such linguistic and cognitive limitations. First, after setting up the generic city space, Calvino decompresses this space to two input spaces that reveal the inherent dissociation of the present space from the past event: “[t]he city... consist[s]...of relationships between the measurements of its space and

the events of its past” (10). The first input contains the spatial markers with which a city may be described in quantifiable terms – measurements of space arranged paradigmatically. Here Calvino retains the physical descriptors that quantify a description of the present city: “the height of a lamppost,” “the line strung from the lamppost to the railing opposite,” “the height of that railing,” “the tilt of a guttering” (10) and so on. Since space is not attached to time in this input, points in space are listed as contingent on each other spatially – next to or beside each other – but are temporally random, or not listed in sequential order.

In the second input, Calvino decompresses the space-time link in the generic space and displaces past events from the spaces in which they occur as well as from their chronological order and linearity in time: “the course of the queen’s nuptial procession,” “the leap of the adulterer,” “the bomb that destroys the guttering,” (10) and so on. By listing these events and using “and” to juxtapose them with empirical descriptions of the spaces in which they occur, Calvino ironically dissociates them and displays our cognitive tendency to separate past event from present space. However, it is important to note here that while the events are syntactically separated from the places in which they occur and thus placed in the second input away from them, they are still nevertheless described in spatial terms: “the height of a lamppost and the *distance from the ground* of a hanged usurper’s swaying feet” (10, my italics). While these events occur in time and can be arranged chronologically to make a coherent story (we will elaborate this later), they are nonetheless removed from time in the input space and retain their connection to space. However, although these events are not described temporally in the second input, there is an implicit notion of temporality and cause-and-effect in this space because they are *events* that import with them this sense of

linearity even as they are dissociated from it; they are chronologically random, but the reader will be aware of this and this temporal uncertainty will project to the blended space.

The components of the two input spaces that become counterparts in the blend do so primarily as a function of their spatial relations, as well as part-whole, property, and representation vital relations⁷. The connection by virtue of the vital relation of space, which is literally reinforced in the syntactic space of each clause, prompts the compression and reintegration of these events with the spaces in which they occur: “the height of that railing and the leap of the adulterer who climbed over it at dawn; the tilt of a guttering and a cat’s progress along it as he slips into the same window” (10) and so on. The word “and” separates the event – “the leap of the adulterer” – from the space – “the height of the railing” – and sets up the input spaces, but the components of the two input spaces are reintegrated in the blend – “the height of that railing and the leap of the adulterer” – since they correlate spatially. However, the reader nevertheless retains the entire integration network and thus their separation as well. The result is that Calvino prompts the reintegration of the inputs in the blend, arranging events not according to chronology or cause and effect, but paradigmatically: all moments in time coexist alongside each other in the same space. Calvino breaks down the division between the paradigmatic and the syntagmatic and privileges the former; the past event is now contained in and exists literally with and at the same time as the space in the present moment. Just as the entire story of The Little Prince is contained in the land-star image which prompts the reader to recall it, the events that happen in Zaira are contained and still present in the place where they once occurred. When this is elaborated in the emergent structure, the reader’s impulse to order events and pin down any

⁷ See Fauconnier and Turner (2002) for a more detailed explanation of vital relations.

absolute cause or origin is frustrated, preventing him or her from narrativizing the events and dissociating them from the present, thus providing him or her with a sense of simultaneity, interconnectivity, and urgency.

Despite his efforts at spatialization of events and subsequent frustration of the diachronic narrative act, Calvino makes an interesting move by nonetheless allowing his reader to narrativize the events, actually prompting him or her to do so. At the end of the paragraph, Calvino describes “three old men seated on the dock mending nets and telling each other for the hundredth time the story of the gunboat of the usurper, who some say was the queen’s illegitimate son, abandoned in his swaddling clothes there on the dock” (10). With this new information, the reader is able to go back to the event input and compose a chronological narrative based on cause and effect; a blend in itself, this narrative turns out to be one about the queen’s adultery, and her illegitimate son who attempts to usurp the throne and is hanged for it. Significantly, it is only in the telling of a story by the fisherman that we are prompted to make order, but in so doing we return back to the original generic space in which the linear movement of cause and effect creates a gap between past event and present space.

In the emergent structure, Calvino subverts the notion of origins and gives the reader a very real sense of his or her responsibility for the present space on which the past and the future are highly contingent, as well as the need for the revitalization of language and narrative. He suggests that people have a cognitive tendency to separate the past from the present in order to displace feelings of shame and guilt and position the cause or source of trauma elsewhere. In his sketch of Zaira, Calvino reveals the limitations of our cognition and

conceptions of space and time, but also the possibility of using these same limiting mental functions to break out of such potentially dangerous habitual assumptions about our world.

3.5 Conclusions: Some Implications of Spatial Multiplicity

The impulse toward categorization is that of the rational centre and parallels Kublai Khan's insistence on order in the knowledge of his empire, an insistence to, for example, "foresee the exceptions to the norm and calculate the most probable combinations" (69). Calvino stimulates this impulse in the reader by dividing his vignettes into eleven categories: Cities & Memory, Cities & Desire, Cities & Signs, Thin Cities, Trading Cities, Cities & Eyes, Cities & Names, Cities & the Dead, Cities & the Sky, Continuous Cities, and Hidden Cities. Each category contains five cities, and each city is numbered from one to five within its category. Thus Calvino elicits in the mind of the reader the cognitive impulse for ordering. By categorizing and numbering his cities and arranging them so particularly, Calvino initiates the cognitive tendency to parcel off discrete mental spaces and differentiate categories as well as numbers, searching for some kind of linear or chronological development perhaps; Carter seems to be searching for this when he writes: "Calvino has manipulated many kinds of desire, many kinds of space, mixing them in the individual cities, and juxtaposing them in groups of five. The cities have an aggregate effect, a procession of images, moods, effect that, in spite of their brevity, begin to take on an epic quality" (117). One could almost imagine Khan recording a log of the reports from his cities, numbering each and every one in order to carefully keep track of it. Accordingly, the reader will likely attempt to interpret each city as a function of the category in which it is set, and integrate it with the other cities in its category. For example, the "Cities & Desire" category sets up a generic space that includes elements such as desire – an ideal, aim, or goal – and

poststructuralist notions about the relationship between self and other. Thus the reader will likely attempt to project elements of this generic space to each of the five cities – Dorothea, Anastasia, Despina, Fedora, and Zobeide – within the category, setting up each city as an input space and blending them. However, a detailed explanation of this level of the blending process would be arduous at best, and it is unclear whether any reader might be able to manage such a large amount of information cognitively and keep each space accessible for retrieval. What is important here is that by placing his cities into categories, Calvino prompts for a blending within categories whose completion (or running) he subsequently *frustrates*, commenting as a result on the nature of knowledge and the impulse to order itself. However, while one must concede that Calvino does in fact destabilize the reader's ability to order, one must also not forget – as Margolin and Fludernik and some poststructuralist theorists may have done – that the author nonetheless relies heavily on such cognitive constructs in order to undermine them.

In his study of Invisible Cities, Carter searches for coherence and patterns in the categories, but at the same time he acknowledges that

the categories themselves are mixed: *memory* and *desire* are clearly mental categories, but *thin* and *continuous* are physical traits; *signs* and *names* are similar, but *trade*, *eyes*, and *dead* bear little direct relation...If Kublai and Polo, in their ordering, are following the rational, the orderly, and the linear, the cities seem to be associational, organic, and free-form...The men find themselves reduced to the rectilinear pattern of the chessboard, but the cities soar in unlimited space. (112)

As Carter suggests, one must bear in mind that the cities do not exist exclusively within their own category or domain, but spill out into others, disrupting the hierarchical organization of

numbers. While the cities one through five in each category are described in numerical order, they are not presented together, but displaced from each other, a city from each category juxtaposed with that of another category, in a logically shifting movement and kind of mathematical rotation in which each section from two to eight contains one set of five cities numbered one through five, each one from a different category. As a result, a city from each category literally occurs in every position, spatially (and temporally), with regards to the next, and the result is an arrangement based on spatial equivocation instead of temporal linearity: 1=2=3=4=5. Once again, this shuffling effect – the various combinations of cities and overlapping elements – prompts the reader to use the cognitively embedded frames of categorization and linearity precisely in order to suggest that the categorization of the cities is to some extent arbitrary. The result is a spatial simultaneity that prompts the impulse to control and then subverts it, refusing to acknowledge the supremacy of that impulse.

If Khan's is the impulse to order, this subversive and shifting movement between categories is Polo's – the traveler's impulse to move and seek, rather than establish a stable centre, "only... exceptions, exclusions, incongruities [and] contradictions" (69). There are strong thematic and tonal elements that repeat across categories, and many of the cities could successfully fulfill the requirements of any of the categories. For example, a number of the cities are described as having both idealized and corrupt states of being: Hypatia, from "Cities & Signs," contains "a magnolia garden...reflected in blue lagoons...but at the bottom of the water, crabs were biting the eyes of the suicides," (47); Eudoxia, from "Cities & the Sky," could be both "the form the gods gave the starry sky and the orbits" and "a stain that spreads out shapelessly" (97); Irene, from "Cities and Names," has "[a]t times...a music of bass drums and trumpets, the bang of firecrackers in the light-display of a festival [and] at

times the rattle of guns [and] the fires of civil war” (124); and Moriana, from “Cities & Eyes,” has one side with “villas all of glass like aquariums where the shadows of dancing girls with silvery scales swim” and one with “an expanse of rusting sheet metal, sackcloth, planks bristling with spikes [and] pipes black with soot” (105). By arranging his cities according to numbers and categories, Calvino elicits the reader’s cognitive tendency to sameness and compression, exploiting the capacity and desire to create order in sameness and difference and simultaneously undermining it. Each city then *departs* from this conventional description and understanding of citihood in particular ways, each one eliciting a particular type of blend or cognitive maneuver.

By decompressing, or deconstructing, the notion of the city, Calvino reveals the various underlying assumptions of citihood which are based on a particular epistemological stance, a particular way of knowing based on fact and structure. Ironically, Calvino suggests that the power to undermine such rigid ideologies of the fixed or quantifiable lies within the potentiality of space itself as a dynamic and fluctuating force. He uses the very cognitive structural techniques that allow us to assemble our concept of the city as centre, civilization, rightness, and power to reveal the limitations of such structures, prompting the reader to decompress the cities into their various conceptual components, revealing the notion of city itself to be a blend, disassembling it and reassembling it in order to criticize conservative ways of knowing and telling and reveal new possibilities: a renewal of language and cognition that allows the subject to go beyond the confines of the master narrative and hegemonic forces.

All of Calvino's invisible cities are derived from an initial generic space that constitutes the "real" city schema. This space is organized according to the entrenched city

frame, and Calvino reminds the reader of this preemptive space by frequently calling his or her attention to the bounded and quantitative descriptors with which a city is habitually described. This generic space is analogous with Khan and his particular way of knowing by virtue of ordering that is suggested in the frame blend. Polo initiates many of the descriptions of his invisible cities with a move toward such quantifiable, ostensibly objective analyses in terms of bounded physicality or materiality, and spatial qualities such as categorization, composition and measurement: "sixty silver domes, bronze statues of all the gods, streets paved with lead" (7), the "exchange [of] goods" (9), "the barracks, the mill, the theater, the bazaar" (34), "products and...profits" (61), "a fortified city on the slopes of a bay" (92), "authoritative architects [and] the most expensive materials on the market" (112), and "goods, packages, signs" (129). This space, which is organized by empirical descriptions of the city and includes components such as institution, industry, communication, economy, exchange, structure, organization, representation, history, the real and the visible, is constituted by the ways in which one knows and organizes citiness as a spatial and conceptual structure.

Calvino subverts this knowledge of citiness as a bounded and quantifiable space by decompressing the generic city space into various ways of knowing; instead of knowledge telling us about the city, the city is a space that tells us about knowledge. Although Calvino is critical of the fixed or stable structure as it seems to occupy – in an almost military sense – space, he nonetheless depends on his reader's ability to conceptualize the world in terms of spatial relationships and dynamics. Ultimately, Calvino is not describing cities, or a city, but *ways of knowing* bounded by a particular spatial understanding of reality of which citiness is a trope. Each of these categories imports notions of spatiality from the generic city space,

notions on which conventional descriptions of the city depend, and reconstitute them, bringing subjectivity, temporality, and otherness to bear on them. The final megablend, which is organized according to the Polo Khan frame story, is not so much a narrative about cities as a narrative about mental spaces; *Invisible Cities* are mental spaces, the faculties of the mind to make sense of space and time. In each category, such as "Cities & Memory" or "Cities & Desire," concepts such as memory and desire are literalized and spatialized, revealing the nature of subjectivity and ideology, as well as one's dependence on visual, spatial, and mental constructs to understand the world.

Invisible Cities is primarily organized according to cognitive decompression rather than compression; this is what makes it a difficult text to work through. Rather than allowing the reader to achieve global insight by compression (this is what a city, a power, a centre does), Calvino deconstructs and decompresses cities according to the various cognitive input spaces and frames by which we normally understand them, rearranging them and creating an intense effect of defamiliarization. Rather than helping us to understand how the final integration network constitutes a final blend, or an integrated whole in the reader's mind, blending shows us how Calvino takes a central blend, a crucial organizing frame of hegemony and civilization – the City – and disassembles it. At the same time, Calvino draws attention to such cognitive frames by manipulating them in these strange new ways, giving his reader a sense of possible realities that do nonetheless seem possible because they are logically de- and then re-constructed. In the final megablend, Calvino constructs an invisible city structure that is both a structure and not a structure, a highly contingent network of vital relations that cannot be neatly separated from each other and consistently overlap.

In his description of Irene, Calvino suggests that perhaps all his Invisible Cities are in fact one city: "perhaps I have already spoken of Irene under other names; perhaps I have spoken only of Irene" (125). Although such suggestions have led some to assume that the Invisible Cities are all Polo's Venice (Paul Bailey on the back of the Vintage Classics edition, for example), blending analysis reveals how the impulse to identify Calvino's cities as discrete spatial entities is to some degree faulty since the cities are spatial tropes for ways of knowing. Although categories are not blended in a compositional sense, nor are they discrete, by dividing his city into such categories, moving from the general idea of one city to cities that denote plurality and specificity, Calvino reveals the mental spaces that allow us to understand, or rather more crucially to *misunderstand*, notions of truth and reality based on the absolute centre. In the final blend, we have something like a city that is both one city and all cities, one time and all times, conflating here and there, then and now, order and chaos. What results is a sense of contingency and interconnectivity, the limits of language as an epistemological force and simultaneously the capacity of the human mind to stretch beyond these limits – if given space. And so Calvino, through the wisdom of Polo, sends out a call for the responsibility of language to reconstruct our formulations of reality:

And Polo said: 'The inferno of the living is not something that will be; if there is one, it is what is already here, the inferno where we live every day, that we form by being together. There are two ways to escape suffering it. The first is easy for many: accept the inferno and become such a part of it that you can no longer see it. The second is risky and demands constant vigilance and apprehension: seek and learn to recognize who and what, in the midst of the inferno, are not inferno, then make them endure, give them space. (165, italics removed)

In the end, Calvino suggests that there are two kinds of space: one is represented in the city as centre, a limited or closed space that consists in a bounded point; the other kind of space is that which connotes openness, expansion, and room to move: the space of Invisible Cities.

We might conclude, then, that Calvino's Invisible Cities, rather than simply destabilizing cognitive and narratological frameworks, calls our attention to the same basic spatially cognitive constructs on which simpler narratives also depend, making us conscious and aware of our own mental constructs and ways of knowing such that we are given insight not only into their limitations but also into their possibilities to lead us to new places of movement, freedom, and conceptual renewal. Calvino utilizes the reader's cognitive faculties and dependence on spatial frames in order to undermine the very rigidity of such frames – of linearity, form, or absolute centre – and question the historicizing tendency to separate cause from effect. As Carter suggests, Calvino reveals “an awe and reverence for the powers of the human mind, both in the dazzling play of fantasy and in the sobering insights into its limitations” (124). For Calvino, life and freedom consist in movement and the propagation of desire as a function of the renewal of language, fantasy, and cognitive play.

Chapter Four: Considering the Spatialized Narrative

Just as the Zaira description prompts the reader to deconstruct narrative and realign it spatially, the reader may project such deconstruction onto the structure of Invisible Cities as a whole, viewing it as a deconstruction of the narrative form. In Invisible Cities, Italo Calvino reveals cities, empires, or civilizations to be constructions – themselves mental spaces or cognitive artifacts – and suggests that power over language and cognition – a movement towards conceptual renewal – is necessary to get beyond the illusions on which such centres are built. In fact, Calvino's text, when all is said and done, could also be seen as a complex blend of the concepts of city (structure, centre, power, civilization, reality, inside, rightness, meaning, hegemony, permanency, spatiality, visibility, and so on) with those implied by the word "invisible" (other, subversion, linguistics, fantasy, play, potential, deconstruction, temporality, and flux). However, although Calvino conflates and undermines binary oppositions such as the many and the one, sameness and difference, centre and periphery, order and chaos, and real and imagined, he nonetheless exploits the reader's tendency toward such differentiations in order to reveal their limitations and simultaneously their possibilities. While the difficulty of Calvino's text supports Margolin's and Fludernik's arguments that the postmodern or experimental text destabilizes cognitive frames in order to frustrate the ease and cognitive efficiency with which the reader makes sense of the textual world, the facility with which Calvino manipulates such frames to successfully guide the reader toward new systems of thought suggests that poststructuralist texts utilize mental constructs rather than simply frustrating and destabilizing them. As David Herman argues in "Stories as Tools for Thinking," narrative is a cognitive artifact, a "representational tool...for

understanding and managing the complexities of experience” (167), and even “representation[s] of anomalous or atypical events can in turn reshape a culture’s or community’s sense of what is normal or typical, and thereby help build new models for understanding the world” (179). Since it may be difficult for us to see our own contingencies because we as individuals are so widely dispersed in space and time, Calvino uses blending to amalgamate space and time such that we gain global insight into our own roles in the larger scheme of things; with each invisible city, the very cognitive processes that limit our knowledge, allowing us to dissociate ourselves from our own ethical responsibilities, open our minds back up again.

As one may see from the above analysis of Invisible Cities, conceptual blending reveals basic modes of thought upon which texts *may be* structured, and how more complex, fragmented “antinarratives” may in fact cohere in the mind of a reader, but in a way that revitalizes and opens up new potentialities of thought through the spatial manipulation of form enacted by the author. Blending analysis reveals how the authors of Invisible Cities and The Little Prince use similar techniques to prompt the reader to configure mental structures in new and flexible – but to some extent predictable – ways, suggesting that for such spatialized narratives, spatial coherence creates a sense of storiness in which narrative is realigned paradigmatically, the reader’s movement through the text more literally spatial than in other more temporally structured narrative texts. Blending provides an opportunity to examine how it might be possible, then, for other kinds of frames, or image schemas, to organize narrative, both in its more traditional form and in some more abstract literature that nonetheless *feels like* narrative, or has a sense of storiness, despite its extensive manipulation and overt destabilization of temporality and referentiality. For example, Invisible Cities is

not narrative in the sense that it chronologically develops a central series of events; instead, it consists primarily of a series of spatial descriptors. However, the spatial organization of the text provides the novel with a coherence that helps the reader to make sense of it despite its destabilization and fragmentation. Polo's fictional telling of cities seems to be more than montage of descriptions; a reader may have the intuitive feeling that they are nonetheless stories – spatial stories. I define “story” here not as the chronological series of events that narratologists distinguish from the discourse of a text, but to what the reader may feel intuitively to be a fictional tale of storyworlds.

In The Literary Mind, Turner's primary task is to show the ways in which everyday thinking is literary in its ubiquitous use of spatial analogy and metaphor; however, it is not such a logical leap to hypothesize that such spatial thinking might be used in the construction of narrative and, more specifically, a particular corpus of narrative or literary texts that exploit the spatiality of thought to in order to renew narrative structure. Both physical real world space and abstract metaphorical or conceptual space become paramount, and the two are mutually dependent in such spatialized texts, the former serving as a kind of image schema or paradigm by which the reader may align the latter in order to achieve insight into the thematic interconnectivity of the subject, the text, and the external world. Both Calvino and Saint-Exupéry make insistent use of vital representations of setting, place, or spatial location as metonymic for abstract spatial structures of the text that include narrative or diegetic levels, points of view, and multiple frames, relying on spatiality for thematic and structural coherence in the minds of readers. For example, in Invisible Cities, the decompression of narrative as itself a blend – as in *Zaira* where events are arranged spatially rather than chronologically – may be applied to the structure of the novel as a whole; instead

of arranging his novel in terms of the chronological development of a series of events, Calvino organizes his work around spatial locations – cities – that co-occur in one moment of time and whose descriptions are contained in the singular event of telling as itself a framing narrative. In The Little Prince, the star-land image schema that brings to mind the concept of the distant place may be integrated with the diegetic structure of the narrative as a whole. The Little Prince's description of his journey is diegetically elsewhere since it is mediated by the voice of the narrator, but the blend of narrative levels works in the same way as the star-land image – by bringing what is near and what is far away together in a single frame of reference.

From the above analyses of these two ostensibly different texts and the conclusions one may make about the affinities between them, one may infer that perhaps there is a particular corpus of texts that we could define as *spatialized narratives*, texts whose narrative coherence – by this I mean the reader's understanding of the text both as a whole and in its parts – lies in spatial connectivity and collocation rather than temporally linear progression, and such connectivity prompts for further compression of the integration network of the text in order to allow for global insight into the thematic interconnectivity of story elements (characters, places, voices) as points in space. Such an argument should come with two disclaimers. First, a much more extensive range of texts must be examined in order to draw such a conclusion. Second, I am by no means insisting that spatialized narrative is atemporal; the spatialized narrative may include temporality, and of course *must* include temporality – either in the form of a narrative succession of events or otherwise – to a greater or lesser degree, but my point is that in such spatialized narratives it is spatial rather than temporal connectivity that lends a sense of narrativity to the texts. I am defining narrative,

then, as a kind of text that has a sense of fictionality, a sense of tellability, and a *sense* of storiness or coherence, as I have argued that both The Little Prince and Invisible Cities do.

The most obvious use of space as it coincides with the form of narrative is the journey motif in which authors and speakers spatialize the progression of narrative events through time; where writers use this metaphor, they take advantage of an everyday image-schematic understanding of narrative as motion along a path. As Mieke Bal writes: “a traveller in narrative is in a sense always an allegory of the travel that narrative is” (137). The frequency with which authors structure their narratives around this motif⁸ suggests that one may take the potentiality of spatial manipulation a bit further and fruitfully apply to the analysis of narrative our often spatial understanding of abstract concepts such as time and knowledge. Fauconnier and Turner, in “Rethinking Metaphor,” use blending theory to analyze spatial metaphors for time. They illustrate how we map the notion or frame of “motion along a path” onto temporally ordered events in order to speak of time in terms of physical location and movement, as in the phrase, “it took two hours to get through the lecture.” Such spatial metaphors are also used to describe narrative; we can say, for example, that it took two hours to get through the story. Alongside this spatial understanding of narrative is its manifestation in metaphors of distance and knowledge. This is clearly the case in journey narratives such as the bildungsroman where traversing distance and reaching the end of a journey coincide with character insight, epiphany, learning, or psychological development of some sort.

While on one hand the common trope of narrative as a journey reveals the crucial role played by space in narrative, on the other, the start-to-finish nature of the journey motif –

⁸ From the archetypal hero's journey of Greek myth (Homer's The Odyssey) and fairy tales (Grimms' "Hansel and Grethel") to Chaucer's The Canterbury Tales, Sterne's A Sentimental Journey, Joseph Conrad's Heart of Darkness, Jules Verne's Journey to the Centre of the Earth, and Yann Martel's Life of Pi...

however twisted or labyrinthine it may become – betrays narrative prejudice for cause and effect and spatial linearity. In this case, the temporal event structure of the narrative is projected onto space, such that movement through time is equated with movement through space and the linearity of the former is privileged. In his discussion of the path of events as image-schematic, Turner makes this connection between narrative and spatial linearity, suggesting that story “consists of movement along a directed path. The points on the path correspond to the stages of the story” (10). However, as we have seen in the aforementioned narratives, Calvino and Saint-Exupéry prompt their readers to project spatial coordinates onto narrative form, composing not the ostensible progression of narrative as seen in the journey motif but instead a new kind of narrative coherence in a sense of the simultaneity of space around which they organize their texts. Space (and time) may be ordered in a linear fashion, but it may also be ordered according to interconnectivity in a moment of time – a kind of juxtaposition or collocation. Rather than narrative progression following a direct route from an event at the beginning of a given time to ones at the middle and finally the end, what becomes predominant in such narratives is the movement of the reader from one physical space or narrative level (these may interact, as we have seen) to another, and these connections matter more to the narrative as a whole than the temporal development of events. Werth gestures towards this possible reconceptualization of narrative when he notes that while the difference between description and narration is that the former is an arrangement between objects and the latter involves movement along paths (10); “just as an arrangement may be viewed as a static distribution of objects or as a kind of ‘guided tour’ of a scene, so may a path be viewed as a map of a movement or as a set of static points in space” (14). As Mitchell makes clear in his “Spatial Form in Literature,”

in literature, our sense of continuity, sequence, and linear progression is not nonspatial because it is temporal. Continuity and sequentiality are spatial images based in the schema of the unbroken line or surface; the experience of simultaneity or discontinuity is simply based in different kinds of spatial images from those involved in continuous, sequential experiences of time. Geometry has no difficulty in ‘mapping’ both continuous and discontinuous functions in spatial coordinates, not does it restrict one kind of function to space, the other to time. Readers do a similar kind of mapping, if less methodically, when they begin to construct images of temporal or other organizational patterns in any work of literature. (542)

Mitchell suggests that to think of narrative in terms of temporal progression is already to spatialize it, since to do so is to frame it in linear terms, as a journey along a path, from cause to effect, from point *a* to point *b*. His emphasis on the reader’s handling of space in narrative as schematic mapping speaks loudly, though unintentionally, to cognitive linguists who work more directly with such formulations, and blending analysis allows us to examine how an author may organize his or her narrative according to new spatial configurations that are not so linear in fashion.

The image schema “motion along a path” structures linear narrative progression, and, as we have seen in Calvino’s description of *Zaira*, blending allows us to break down this conceptualization of narrative to reveal how it is itself already a blend that may be decompressed, or separated from its ostensible linearity – a spatial arrangement that one takes for granted as having a cause and an effect, or a beginning and an end – such that this linearity is no longer necessarily seen as intrinsic to narrative or literary coherence. The possibility for multiple points in space to occupy one point in time simultaneously, and the

relativity of spatial dimensions (one's position and movement determining the structure) allows for the narrative to be organized and its coherence to come from a more dynamic form than the linearity of temporal narrative may allow. If a story may be seen as enacting the spatial metaphor of the frame "motion along a path," some stories may be organized in terms of spatial collocation and the relationships between physical distances – the paradigmatic y axis of thought – more than the linear temporal journey. The Little Prince and Invisible Cities, though arguably very different in style, content, and purpose, are both examples of this kind of spatialized narrative at work. Perhaps this confirms O'Neill's assertion that "narrative as a discursive system is always potentially subversive both of the story it ostensibly reconstructs and of its own telling of that story" (3). It is my hope that this project, as an exploration of literary texts that extend and manipulate the spatial cognition of everyday thought, reveals that the coherence we often term narrative and the fragmentation of postmodern experimental texts often called anti-narrative may not be so different after all.

The affinity between the works of Saint-Exupéry and Calvino suggest, then, that structuralism and poststructuralism are not mutually exclusive but, rather, the deconstructive act necessarily entails a breaking down, or decompression, of mental spaces and blends – constructs that are already there – and their reconstruction. Calvino reconciles the structuralist notion of meaning, and a specific, constitutive way we arrive at it, with poststructuralist deferral of meaning, absence and otherness, and the subversive political stance of deconstruction. As much as theorists attempt a kind of spiritual movement away from formalism after the death of God, language and cognition are to a large extent formal structures on which most, if not all, human beings depend. Nevertheless, Calvino, by giving us Invisible Cities, and Saint-Exupéry, by telling us of his little prince, reveal the ways in

which these same cognitive structures that have the potential to be dangerously limiting can also be extremely liberating, helping us to conceive of our world and other textual worlds, however surprising, fantastic, linguistic, or creative they may be: for movement and play that makes sense.

Although it is structuralist in nature, blending is not reductionist. Those who seek to map the blending process do not insist on the closure of a final interpretation, but instead suggest that predictions about possibly successful blends may be useful in understanding how a reader might make sense of a complicated text, conceding that their findings are not necessarily absolute conclusions: “The blended space [may be] different in each case, and its structure accounts for the corresponding difference of truth values in the interpretations” (Fauconnier and Turner 65). As such, conceptual integration provides a bridge between poststructuralism and structuralism that reinstates the integrity of the latter not as opposed to the former, but as an integral, constitutive part of it: a requirement in fact. For example, the dialectical movement of absence and presence in poststructuralist thought can be linked to everyday counterfactual thinking and negation: to assume, as poststructuralism does, something like “the self is inherent within the other” is not unlike to say, as blending does, that a statement such as “there is no money in my wallet” involves a counterfactual space that contains the idea “there is money in my wallet.” For both poststructuralist thought and conceptual integration theory, the notion of presence contains within it the notion of absence. In the above analysis of The Little Prince, I have shown that even a simple children’s narrative depends on concepts such as absence and negation to suggest presence, enacting poststructuralist deconstruction of binary oppositions such as distance and closeness. Thus, blending explains how the very productive and necessary act of deconstruction is a function

of the human mind with all its tendencies toward integration, suggesting that the purposive move to deconstruct the master narrative and destabilize the centre is only possible through what is initially a constructive turn.

Arguably, the most essential difference between popular fiction and the more abstract postmodern and experimental works (including poetry) touted by academics is that the former contains an easily identifiable story and the latter does not; the general trend is to see traditional linear narrative as making sense because it makes sense through time, and postmodern or experimental narrative as resisting sense because it does not allow itself to be arranged in a linear pattern of events. Postmodern (and modern) experimental fiction overturns, overthrows, revolutionizes some may say, the assumptions about narrative coherence on which the fiction of the lay reader is based. Postmodern and deconstructionist theories and analyses of such texts tend to focus on their destabilizing aspects; however, blending shows that such texts prompt their readers to use the same basic cognitive functions as more ostensibly simple texts. In some cases, rather than simply frustrating readerly expectations and destabilizing narrative frameworks in a negatively-oriented anti-movement that rejects narrative, we may examine how postmodern experimental writers make use of the same cognitive structures as more basic narratives, exploiting spatial cognition in such ways that its extension reveals the potentialities of the human mind to utilize the very structures on which it depends in order both to expose and liberate them.

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