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"Sans cause": Affect and Truth in Marcel Proust

There is a strong correlation between affect and truth in the work of Marcel Proust. In the narrative and conceptual framework of *In Search of Lost Time* there is no real truth without affect and no genuine affect without truth. Philosophical readings of Proust have indicated that the notion of truth found in his novel – one based on encounter and affect – has substantial implications for philosophy. Gilles Deleuze argued that Proust invented a new "image of thought" to rival the one proposed by philosophy: while the philosopher is a *friend* of thinking, the writer is *forced* to think.[1] More recently, Pierre Macherey followed this lead by claiming that Proust laid out a new "regime of the idea" based on affect.[2] As I will show in what follows, the new conceptualisation of truth developed in Proust's novel does not suggest a reduction of truth to affect. Rather, the affective nature of truth in turn implies a certain metaphysics of affect.[3]

1. *"… en dehors des possibles"*

As explained by the narrator in *Time Regained*, the verity that the intellect on its own is able to extract from "immediate reality" in "full daylight" appears

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[1] "Truth depends on an encounter with something that forces us to think and seek the truth." Gilles Deleuze, *Proust and Signs*, trans. by Richard Howard, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis 2000, p. 16. See also the chapter "The Image of Thought", pp. 94–102, where the implications of Proust's critique of friendship for philosophy are laid out.

[2] Pierre Macherey, *Proust: entre littérature et philosophie*, Éditions Amsterdam, Paris 2013, p. 49.

[3] Apart from the philosophical readings mentioned, the motivation for this essay also stems from a *missing* philosophical reading of Proust. While Alain Badiou is not a reader of Proust, it could be shown – although I will not pursue this reading here – that in his recent work on the immanence of truth and the metaphysics of happiness, he comes close to properly Proustian territory. As noticed by Jean-Jacques Lecercle, Badiou lacks a proper reading of prose (*Badiou and Deleuze Read Literature*, Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh 2010, p. 158). While there is a poetry of being and event in Badiou (Mallarmé), there is no prose of the worlds. Perhaps Proust could be read as such.

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to be merely a "possible truth."[4] A real truth, on the other hand, is something that occurs and affects us, something that – although obscure at first – presents itself to us as necessary and inevitable, with the potential to reframe what we perceive as reality. For Proust's narrator, possibilities are mere imaginary interpretations, while the real can only appear beyond the realm of the possible: "The infinite field of possibilities extends before us, and if by any chance the real presented itself to our gaze, it would be so far beyond the bounds of possibility that, dashing suddenly against the boundary wall, we should fall over backwards."[5] According to Macherey, it is not so much the content of the idea that is essential here, but rather the manner in which it appears or emerges as passing in flight. It can only be seen from a certain biased perspective and grasped (or missed) at a certain moment in time.[6]

While the Proustian notion of truth is thus marked by a constitutive *impurity*, the notion of affect is characterised by a fundamental *displacement*: the impressions gained in the haze of the presence of a beloved person are stored up as negatives to be developed later in the solitary inner darkroom; the sufferings of the jealous lover turn out to be the royal road to the joy of gaining knowledge of the general laws that govern human behaviour; mourning for a deceased grandmother takes place more than a year after her death (due to "that anachronism which so often prevents the calendar of facts from corresponding to that of our feelings"[7]), and, finally, the immense joy of reminiscence leaves the narrator with nothing but the seemingly unsolvable enigma of its truth. The displacement at the core of affect removes it from its immediacy and transforms it first into an indicator of another affect still to come and then into a sign that inevitably triggers the work of interpretation. Sticking to the photographic metaphor, the narrator describes the affect as a negative that has to be developed by the intellect: "Only when the intelligence illuminates it [...] we distinguish, and with how much difficulty, the shape of that which we have felt."[8] The de-

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[4]   Marcel Proust, *Time Regained*, http://gutenberg.net.au/ebooks03/0300691.txt. (Citations from Proust are from C. K. Scott Moncrieff's translation, available online at Project Gutenberg Australia; all accessed on 1 November 2017. The exception is *Swann's Way*, where a more recent translation is used due to greater accuracy.)

[5]   Marcel Proust, *The Captive*, http://gutenberg.net.au/ebooks03/0300501.txt.

[6]   Pierre Macherey, *Proust*, pp. 48–49.

[7]   Marcel Proust, *Cities of the Plain*, http://gutenberg.net.au/ebooks03/0300491.txt.

[8]   Marcel Proust, *Time Regained*.

velopment of the negative, it has to be added, is not merely an interpretation but also a form of intervention. When the feeling of the grandmother's absence finally sinks in, the narrator reflects that "reality has no existence for us, so long as it has not been created anew by our mind."[9]

The affect is simultaneously the truth's index, ensuring its realness, and the sign of an evasive truth that still needs to be extracted from it. Truth and affect thus signify each other's immanent difference. Truths without affects are empty; affects without truths are blind. Following up on Macherey's assertion that what matters to Proust is the occurrence of truth, the manner of its apparition and the way it can be grasped or missed, one could say that the reflection on the relation between affect and truth is Proust's way of thinking *subjectivation*. A truth that is not empty is a truth that turns an individual into a subject, a truth that is only developed in the course of the process of subjectivation. This process, however, requires affects that are not blind, i.e. affects that are not only felt by the individual, but rather affects that give rise to another being from within the individual that can be the bearer and the developer of a truth.

Affect does not guarantee the realness of truth in the sense that a truth would only be real if an individual genuinely feels it to be true. Rather, affect is the Proustian way of bridging the gap between the individual, who can hold on to empty truths and feel blind feelings, to a subject that is able to develop a truth. The narrator is a witness of "the being within him," which "tasted the impression" brought about by reminiscence, "a being which only appeared when through the medium of the identity of present and past, it found itself in the only setting in which it could exist and enjoy the essence of things, that is, outside Time."[10] From within a finite individual, concerned by his or her travails and pleasures, rises a subject that exists on the level of infinity, developing a truth.

Despite existing on an extra-temporal level, the occurrence of this being is completely dependent on an event of the reminiscence, the "miracle of analogy," as the narrator calls it, that might just as easily never have happened. The event, as Macherey observes, triggers the interpellation by which this being forces

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[9]   Marcel Proust, *Cities of the Plain*.
[10] Marcel Proust, *Time Regained*.

itself upon the individual.[11] These events are not particular to an individual, they are a singularity out of which something universal can be developed. The affect may first be personal, but subjectivation is a process of depersonalisation, which, as Macherey analyses, transforms the narrative subject from "*je*" to "*nous*". The experience now no longer belongs only to the individual, but can be transmitted and shared by others.[12] Such a transmission is only possible if an affective experience of reminiscence is developed, if the affect is followed up by the work of writing, which enables the subject to trace the temporal existence of the extra-temporal.

2. *"… sans la notion de sa cause"*

This immortal subject enters the stage in the famous madeleine scene, some fifty pages into the novel. The narrator suddenly ceases to feel mediocre, contingent, and mortal, all on the merit of a specific kind of pleasure, provided by the taste of the tea-soaked cake. The affect is described as follows: "A delicious pleasure had invaded me, isolated me, without my having any notion as to its cause."[13] Contrary to the ordinary pleasures of cake eating, the madeleine is not the cause of the affect. The pleasure – in isolation – invades the narrator as something that suspends the immediate reality and, as can be read in a later scene, attaches him to another reality in which a "true life" could be led. In his attempts at interpretation, the narrator is perplexed by this experience that "infinitely" exceeds the immediate sensation of taste:

> Where could it have come to me from – this powerful joy? I sensed that it was connected to the taste of the tea and the cake, but that it went infinitely far beyond it, could not be of the same nature. Where did it come from? What did it mean? How could I grasp it?[14]

The pleasure is not only without a cause, but challenges the very notion of causality. The sensation, concludes the narrator, leads to a truth that cannot mere-

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[11]   Pierre Macherey, *Proust*, p. 191.

[12]   *Ibid.*, p. 195.

[13]   Marcel Proust, *Swann's Way*, trans. by Lydia Davis, Penguin Books, London 2004, p. 45.

[14]   *Ibid.*

ly be discovered but that will still have to be created – as a cause: "Seek? Not only that: create. It is face-to-face with something that does not yet exist."[15]

The joy of the madeleine, however, is *not* the affect that sets the novel in motion. According to the very logic of *Search*, the novel should not have started without an affect related to a reminiscence, an instance of involuntary memory that enables the lost time to be regained and thereby the novel to start. And yet, dozens of pages precede the madeleine scene, pages that introduce us to the town of Combray, to the young narrator's sensibilities that will subsequently develop into a love of art, to his relation to his mother, which sets the tone for his later behaviour towards women, and to the figure of Mr Swann, who introduces the complexity of social relations that will come to be examined in great detail. All the great subject matters of the novel are thus laid out *before* the joy without a cause announces the central enigma to be unravelled.

The novel actually starts with another affect, the affect of *étonnement*, i.e. amazement or astonishment, brought about by a sudden awakening from a light slumber. In the very first paragraph, the narrator recounts how he would often fall asleep reading a book, his immersion into the fictional world lingering on in his mind. The awakening would disperse this immersion – not by delivering the narrator back to reality but by plunging him into the worldless dead of night: "immediately I recovered my sight and I was amazed to find a darkness around me soft and restful for my eyes, but perhaps even more so for my mind, to which it appeared a thing without cause, incomprehensible, a thing truly dark."[16] The amazement brought about by this "*chose sans cause* [...] *chose vraiment obscure*" reveals both a physics and a metaphysics of affect, which pave the way for the logic of reminiscence that will structure the novel as a whole.

If one wakes up after falling asleep in an unfamiliar position, one loses the sense of orientation that informs the awakening body of its coordinates in time and space. The body's memory thus recalls other nights and other rooms in which it has woken up in a similar position: "the memory of its ribs, its knees, its shoulders, offered in succession several of the rooms where it had slept, while around

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[15]   *Ibid*., p. 46.
[16]   *Ibid*., p. 3.

it the invisible walls, changing place according to the shape of the imagined room, spun through the shadows."[17] This is how the narrator is first, well before the madeleine scene, transported back to his childhood bed in Combray, waking up wondering why his mother failed to come and kiss him goodnight.

The physics of uncomfortable limbs is supplemented by a metaphysics of darkness. The narrator imagines the time of sleep as the simultaneity of possible worlds, while the moment of awakening into darkness seems much like a moment of uncertainty in the decision process of the Leibnizian creator. "A sleeping man holds in a circle around him the sequence of the hours, the order of the years and worlds," explains the narrator.[18] However, faced with the thing without cause, "their ranks can be mixed up, broken."[19] The obscure thing without cause seems to suggest the Leibnizian question that Heidegger regarded as fundamental for any metaphysics: Why is there something rather than nothing? Since it implies the contingent nature of the world as a construction, it might very well provoke the anxiety of worldlessness, disregarding any construction of a world as merely a phantasy. If a man

> dozes off in a position still more displaced and divergent, after dinner sitting in an armchair for instance, then the confusion among the disordered worlds will be complete, the magic armchair will send him travelling at top speed through time and space, and, at the moment of opening his eyelids, he will believe he went to bed several months earlier in another country.[20]

In the very moment of awakening one is stuck in between worlds. Robbed of the sense of being-in-the-world, one becomes, to follow up on the Heideggerian reference, like an animal, poor-in-the-world: "when I woke in the middle of the night, since I did not know where I was, I did not even understand in the first moment who I was; I had only, in its original simplicity, the sense of existence as it may quiver in the depths of an animal."[21]

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17 *Ibid.*, p. 6.
18 *Ibid.*, p. 5.
19 *Ibid.*
20 *Ibid.*
21 *Ibid.*

However, the affect the narrator describes as a consequence of the encounter with darkness is not anxiety, but amazement. The obscure thing is not the ultimate real beyond the construction of the world, but the gap that makes the world reconstructable. The Proustian logic of worlds is more cosmogonic than it is apocalyptic. The amazement based on the thing without cause is thus the logical precondition of the joy without cause that itself leads to the truth of the recreation of the world of Combray.

The affect of amazement, however, cannot be subjectivised. It is the affect of possibility, while a truth – as we have already observed – requires an encounter, which introduces a degree of necessity or at least inevitability. Subjectivation requires a passage from the thing to an object, i.e. the passage from possibility to necessity via contingency. "There is a great deal of chance in all this,"[22] the narrator reflects when – just before the madeleine scene – he asks himself if the past, and with it the world of Combray, is lost forever. The past world can be recreated only if we have the luck to stumble upon the right object: "The past is hidden outside the realm of our intelligence and beyond its reach, in some material object (in the sensation that this material object would give us) that we do not suspect. It depends whether we encounter this object before we die, or do not encounter it."[23] The nature of the object is purely contingent, but the chance encounter with the object provides a degree of necessity to the world to be recreated.

Combray might not be the best of possible worlds, but it is the necessary, inevitable one. The Proustian metaphysics is thus a certain kind of dismantled Leibnizianism. On the one hand, there is the multiplicity of possible worlds and, on the other, the isolated monad, i.e. an alien object out of which a whole world could be unfolded, like the Japanese game described by the narrator, the game of putting folded pieces of paper into a bowl of water and watching them unfold into the shape of flowers, houses, or human figures.

This dismantled Leibnizianism actually corresponds to the dual use of Leibniz in 20th century aesthetics. On the one hand, many philosophers and theoreticians tried to use the notion of a possible world to describe works of fiction. On

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22   *Ibid.*, p. 44.
23   *Ibid.*, p. 45.

the other, Adorno used the concept of a windowless monad as a conceptual metaphor for the modern work of art. The monad in this sense is not an element of the world but an object alienated from it. Being windowless, it does not represent reality, but rather conveys its truth: not the theological, pre-established harmony, but the socially pre-established disharmony.

Nonetheless, none of these options are applicable to Proust. The fiction created by the novel cannot be explained as a possible world since possibility implies arbitrariness, lacking the verity that can only be provided by an encounter with something real outside the realm of possibility. On the other hand, the encounter with the worldless monadic object resulting in an affect without a cause is merely a negative imprint of a world still to be developed by the work of art. For Proust, the artwork is not a windowless monad harbouring the truth of the world's disharmony, but rather a monadless window enabling the *work* of fiction, i.e. the work of reframing and recreating the world.

3. *"… un plaisir irraisonné"*

This allows us to propose a metaphysical definition of the Proustian affect. An affect related to truth is an affect brought about by the detachment of objects from the frame of the world. On the one hand, the frames of other possible worlds invade the actually existing one, frames lacking in objective materiality, while on the other hand, one stumbles into objects that appear alien to this world, monadic objects that contain, in a folded way, a negative of another world that may or may not be developed, depending on an event.

This takes us back to the "*plaisir irraisonné*" first evoked in the madeleine scene, the joy without a cause but not without an object in which an object is isolated from its immediate spatial and temporal reality, but which already implies the work of development and reframing. After the world of Combray is reconstructed, we gain insight into the childhood promenades of the narrator, during which sensible events begin to invade him:

> [S]uddenly a roof, a glimmer of sun on a stone, the smell of the road would stop me because of a particular pleasure they gave me, and also because they seemed

> to be concealing, beyond what I could see, something which they were inviting me to come take and which despite my efforts I could not manage to discover.[24]

Trying to think of a serious philosophical topic to once write about, the young Marcel is instead subject to the "unreasoning pleasure" brought about by "a particular object with no intellectual value and no reference to any abstract truth."[25]

Hence, the madeleine reminiscence has two predecessors: the amazement linked to darkness as a logical predecessor and the childhood sensible events as a temporal predecessor. What is striking is that the secret to be developed has already announced itself in the impressions of a child, who strictly speaking has nothing to remember, no different temporal layers that could coincide (which would also confirm Deleuze's claim that memory is a topic of secondary importance to Proust). Thus, what I am proposing is a reading that puts the emphasis not on the relation between different temporal layers and the continuity of time – and, for that matter, not even on the relation between spatial continuity and discontinuity – but rather on the relation between isolated, worldless impressions and the reframing of the world, or, in other words, the relation between monadic objects and "monadless" frames.[26]

One of these childhood impressions, the famous observation of the church towers of Martinville from Dr Percepied's carriage, delivers an illusionistic specta-

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[24] *Ibid.*, p. 182.
[25] *Ibid.*, p. 183.
[26] For Proust, one of the primary devices that manage to isolate objects by cutting the symbolic and imaginary ties that place it into the world is photography. In a scene from *The Guermantes Way* (http://gutenberg.net.au/ebooks03/0300411.txt), the narrator suddenly sees his grandmother outside the "animated system" of his affection. The unexpected and depersonalised gaze allows him to see her mechanically, as on a photographic plate, as "a dejected old woman whom I did not know." In *The Captive*, the photographic metaphor is evoked again in relation to Albertine, the narrator's great amorous obsession. Albertine is imagined as a fragmentary series of "snapshots", while the totality of Albertine remains unreachable, fuelling the narrator's jealousy: "We imagine that love has as its object a person whom we can see lying down before our eyes, enclosed in a human body. Alas, it is the extension of that person to all the points in space and time which the person has occupied and will occupy." Albertine exists simultaneously in several worlds, many of which remain obscure, undevelopable to the narrator. While photography provides the metaphor of "development", it does not itself allow the passage from a monadic object to the reframing of the world.

cle of otherwise immobile objects changing their position in space. Macherey comments that Proust is implying not only the lesson of Kant's Copernican revolution (Proust himself compares Kant's revolution to the one implied by Flaubert's style), but also that *a priori* transcendental forms are not unchangeable, which renders the artistic reframing of the world possible.[27] Macherey suggests that the ultimate meaning beyond the secret of the Proustian joy is precisely its lack of a reason itself. The truth can only, at first, be revealed by the intermediary of an affect because it is a truth that does not yet exist, that still needs to be developed. Joy stands for "the radical experience of rupture," which demands "a jump into the void, replacing the world full of acquired certainty with a network of uncertainties that unwinds in a precarious equilibrium between the lost time that leads from existence to death and the time regained that opens the path to eternity, constantly threatening to turn from one side to the other."[28] Monadic objects are thus joined by excessive frames that rival the general framework of reality. Such aesthetic reframings of the world are first observed in Elstir's painting. The narrator perceives the painter's studio as a "laboratory of a new creation of the world."[29] Elstir manages to capture in his paintings what the narrator can only fleetingly perceive in the singular impressions that bring him such joy. The narrator describes how sometimes, when observing the sea through a window, he would be "led by some effect of sunlight to mistake what was only a darker stretch of sea for a distant coastline, or to gaze at a belt of liquid azure without knowing whether it belonged to sea or sky."[30] As soon as the impression passes, reason would re-establish the distinctions of reality and find the causes of the illusory impressions. However, nature is itself ultimately unreasonable, which is why only art's fiction can properly represent it: "But the rare moments in which we see nature as she is, with poetic vision, it was from those that Elstir's work was taken."[31]

The aim of art, the narrator explains, is a "revelation, impossible by direct and conscious means, of the qualitative difference there is in the way in which we look at the world." This world-view, however, is not an expression of individu-

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[27]   Pierre Macherey, *Proust*, p. 134.
[28]   *Ibid.*, p. 163.
[29]   Marcel Proust, *Within a Budding Grove*, http://gutenberg.net.au/ebooks03/0300401.txt.
[30]   *Ibid.*
[31]   *Ibid.*

ality, but rather a subjective development of a "reality far removed from the one we live in," which is made possible by art:

> By art alone we are able to get outside ourselves, to know what another sees of this universe which for him is not ours, the landscapes of which would remain as unknown to us as those of the moon. Thanks to art, instead of seeing one world, our own, we see it multiplied and as many original artists as there are, so many worlds are at our disposal, differing more widely from each other than those which roll round the infinite and which, whether their name be Rembrandt or Ver Meer, send us their unique rays many centuries after the hearth from which they emanate is extinguished.[32]

The rupture of the sensible experience takes us from *the* world as reality and totality to the precarity of *a* world that still has to be fictionally constructed.

4. *"... les anneaux nécessaires d'un beau style"*

The correlation between affect and truth thus implies another correlation, the one between event and world. *The* world as a frame of totality is dissolving due to events: appearances of worldless objects and excessive frames that suggest a multiplicity of worlds. On the other hand, the events disappear without a trace if the truth they imply is not developed. The truth, as we have seen, is not individual but singular and universally addressed; it entails the construction of *a* world to be shared, which is the task, according to Proust, of an "original artist." The concept of world that Proust invents here is not a reference to the ultimate reality or totality, nor to a transcendental construction, but rather a properly fictional concept of world, inasmuch as fiction entails the work of developing a truth, the negative of which appeared as a sensible event.

The concept of fiction implied here resonates with the one developed recently by Jacques Rancière: "A fiction is not the invention of an imaginary world. Instead it is the construction of a framework within which subjects, things, situations can be perceived as coexisting in a common world and events can be identified and linked in a way that makes sense. Fiction is at work whenever a sense of

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[32]   Marcel Proust, *Time Regained*.

reality must be produced."[33] The problem for Rancière, but also for Proust, as I would like to argue, is what kind of narrative and temporal structure will come to shape the world, or, in other words, which of the possible worlds will come to be the common one.

The intrusion of sensible events isolated from the plots that shape the narrative reality is what defines modern literature, according to Rancière. Plots and characters dissolve into a series of sensible micro-events – the "shower of the atoms", to use the reference to Virginia Woolf – in which the literature of the aesthetic regime discovers its metaphysics, a Deleuzian molecular ontology. Rancière claims, however, that while the "the ontology of the new fiction is monist, [...] its practice can only be dialectical: [...] a tension between the great lyricism of impersonal Life and the arrangements of the plot."[34] Rancière has often discussed this tension of modern literature via the opposing principles of Proust's novel, in which the linear logic of the plot is opposed to a string of metaphors and sensible epiphanies.

Two kinds of temporality are implied here, according to Rancière, the ones that Aristotle described as separating poetry and historiography. On the one hand, the causal linkage of what could have happened, according to the possibilities of character and plot formation, and on the other, the purely metonymical succession of events that simply occur. While the former provides a framework that implies division and hierarchy, the latter implies a "democracy of sensible coexistences."[35] Again, the sensible events should not be understood as monads, harbouring the affective truth of the moment against any kind of duration, but as windows allowing "unexpected connections from this random point," thereby "engendering another line of temporality."[36]

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From this perspective, the question is whether Proust's novel is built around a paradox of simultaneously building the Aristotelian plot and dissolving it in a series of micro-events, as repeatedly suggested by Rancière himself, or if the

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[33] Jacques Rancière, *Modern Times: Essays on Temporality in Art and Politics*, Multimedialni institut, Zagreb 2017, p. 13.

[34] Jacques Rancière, *The Lost Thread: The Democracy of Modern Fiction*, trans. by Steven Corcoran, Bloomsbury, London 2017, p. 62.

[35] Jacques Rancière, *The Lost Thread*, p. 13.

[36] Jacques Rancière, *Modern Times*, pp. 33–34.

Proustian narrative is an attempt to construct an alternative to the Aristotelian temporal logic and to provide a model of establishing another kind of temporality based on the connections that can be established on the basis of singular sensible events.

The Proustian loss of time indicates that the continuity of the world and the succession of time are broken. However, *Search* is not aimed at regaining this continuity through involuntary memory. The time regained rather refers to the development of a truth out of the sensible events that themselves are isolated both from the continuity of the world and the succession of time. Nevertheless, if the affect of joy stemming from sensible impressions suspends the continuity of time, why, then, was it necessary to introduce the reminiscence and the seeming reconstruction of the same continuity through memory?

Sensations by themselves cannot form a relation nor develop the truth of the affect. Such a development is triggered by involuntary memory, which does not, however, reveal a pre-established relation. Rather, it is completely dependent on the contingent connections that can only be formed once the continuities of time and the world have been lost and certain objects have been affectively isolated. If another kind of temporality is to be constructed, the affect induced by the sensible event must form connections and reframe the world, i.e. transform the monad into a window. According to the narrator, the writer posits reality as "a relation between those sensations and those memories which simultaneously encircle us[;] that unique relation which the writer must discover in order that he may link two different states of being together for ever in a phrase."[37] Such a relation does not entail a reconstruction of reality, but a recreation of the world through style:

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> In describing objects one can make those which figure in a particular place succeed each other indefinitely; the truth will only begin to emerge from the moment that the writer takes two different objects, posits their relationship, the analogue in the world of art to the only relationship of causal law in the world of science, and encloses it within the circle of fine style.[38]

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[37]   Marcel Proust, *Time Regained*.

[38]   *Ibid*.

The reference to science does not imply a reconstruction of the Aristotelian narrative logic, but rather the necessity missing from an ornamental conception of style. In this sense, style is a procedure of the development of a truth from the negative of an affect, a singular window, through which a world is to be framed by the writer as subject. The narrator concludes: "The relationship may be of little interest, the objects commonplace, the style bad, but unless there is that relationship, there is nothing."[39] Instead of a good description – a bad style: this is the Proustian formula for (artistic) truth.

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[39]   *Ibid.*