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AESTHETIC AND IDEOLOGICAL FUNCTIONS OF TIME AND SPACE SHIFTS IN THE POSTMODERNIST NARRATIVE

MA Paper

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to analyse aesthetic and ideological functions of time and space shifts in the postmodernist narrative. The paper investigates the problems of time and space relationships in literary discourse and is based on the material of famous postmodern novel by Kurt Vonnegut, Jr. *Slaughterhouse-Five or The Children’s Crusade, A Duty- Dance With Death*. The textual features expressed by space and time relations have not received enough attention in English critical literature.

Time and space shifts constitute the structural and semantic backbone of the novel. The method chosen for the study is descriptive. The paper discusses the general theoretical issues of time and space dimensions in literary discourse. It is maintained that the changability of time and space presents structural and semantical devices of textual stylistics. The applicability of these dimensions influences the fabula and sjuzet of the novel, creates its aesthetic and ideological underpinnings. Singularity of the discourse of Kurt Vonnegut’s novel is that the changability of time and space which marks its postmodernist character also foregrounds the elements of strong realistic brand.
INTRODUCTION

Time is a fundamentally important category for the existence of human beings and their relationship to the changing world. Time relations are inseparable from spatial relations because the change of time almost always encounters the change of space. The concept of time which is linked to both the physical world and our perception of the world are also related to a narrative space, i.e. the fictional universe which the text presents through its narrative discourse. In narrative texts the spatial dimension stands out most clearly in connection with the concept of journey or travel. Of course, a narrative space is not dependent on the fact that the characters in the story actually travel, either physically or metaphorically. The conceptual metaphor of time can indicate an inner space and is the expression of a strong specialization of the experience of time and is therefore well suited to expressing the complex of problems associated with our realization of ourselves, which is fundamental to narrative texts. The travel motif in the literature represents the changeability of the inner and outer world and of objects described. The conceptual metaphor of time and space is a powerful vehicle in literary discourse, however, it is not a special object of investigation in this paper.

The purpose of this study is to analyse aesthetic and ideological functions of time and space shifts in the structure and meaning of postmodernist narrative, which is characteristic of discorsal deviation. The paper investigates on the problems of time and space relationships in literary discourse and is based on the material of famous postmodernist novel by Kurt Vonnegut Jr. *Slaughterhouse-Five or The Children’s Crusade, A Duty-Dance With Death.*

The method chosen for the study is descriptive. The novelty of the paper is its theoretical and practical investigations of time and space issues which have received sufficient attention in the works of literature. They have always been an integral part of literary works, however the changeability of time and space in postmodernist literature acquire special features of meaningfulness and style.

*Slaughterhouse-Five or The Children’s Crusade, A Duty-Dance With Death* is surely the best achievement of Kurt Vonnegut, Jr. and even one of the most acclaimed works in American literature. The novel, written and published in 1969, years after World War Two was convulsed by new tragedies (assassinations of Martin Luther King, Jr. and Robert Kennedy) and the loss of values. These experiences gave him rich material for evaluation of the tragedy of humanity and calling for human ideas. Vonnegut’s writings constitute an unremitting protest against the horrors of the twentieth century: the unspeakable atrocities of
war, the destruction of the environment, and the depersonalization of the individual in a society ruled by science and technology.

The MA paper consists of two basic parts and their subdivisions. The First Part of the paper examines structural and semantic differences between traditional and postmodernist narrative discourse. It analyses different theoretical approaches to narratology, fabula and sjuzet, linearity and other related issues.

The Second Part analyses time and space relationship in Kurt Vonnegut’s novel *Slaughterhouse-Five or The Children’s Crusade, A Duty-Dance With Death* and their semantic, structural and ideological features which dominate the novel’s framework. The novel presents a manifold interest as an anti-war novel, postmodernist novel and as a novel which discusses the period of tragedy of humanity in World War Two. The novel is interesting from the ideological and aesthetic point of view. Billy Pilgrim, the novel’s protagonist, has become unstuck in time. He travels between periods of his life, unable to control which period he lands in. As a result, the narrative is not chronological or linear.

“Billy Pilgrim has come unstuck in time. Billy has gone to sleep a senile widower and awakened on his wedding day. He has walked through a door in 1955 and come out another one in 1941. He has gone back through that door to find himself in 1963. He has seen his birth and death many times, he says, and pays random visits to all the events in between”(Vonnegut 1969, 17).
1. THE SEMANTIC AND STRUCTURAL DIFFERENCES IN THE TRADITIONAL NARRATIVE AND THE POSTMODERNIST LITERARY DISCOURSE

1.1 General characteristics of the narrative in the structuralist narratology

The notion of the traditional discourse involves the understanding of the narrative in formalist, New Critical and structuralist theories based on linear narrative sequences, especially characteristic of realist literature. Around 1960 – 1970s structuralists contributed greatly the development of narrative theory. According to them “narratology deals especially with the identification of structural elements and their diverse modes of combination, with recurrent narrative devices, and with the analysis of the kinds of discourse by which a narrative gets told.” (Abrams 1993, 123).

The study of narrative is particularly important since ordering of time and space in narrative forms constitutes one of the primary ways we construct meaning in general. As Hayden White puts it, "far from being one code among many that a culture may utilize for endowing experience with meaning, narrative is a meta-code, a human universal on the basis of which transcultural messages about the nature of a shared reality can be transmitted" (White 1987, 64). Given the prevalence and importance of narrative media in our lives (television, film, fiction), narratology is also a useful foundation to have before one begins analyzing popular culture.

Narrative is a construct created in a suitable medium (speech, writing, images) that describes a sequence of fictional or non-fictional events. As stated in wikipedia it derives from the Latin verb “narrare”, which means "to recount" and is related to the adjective “gnarus”, meaning "knowing" or "skilled". The word "story" may be used as a synonym of "narrative", but can also be used to refer to the sequence of events described in a narrative. A narrative can also be told by a character within a larger narrative.

There are narratives not only in literature but also in other cultural utterances that surround us. According to (Lothe 2000, 3) a narrative presents a chain of events which is situated in time and space. While in wikipedia a narrative is a story: an interpretation of some aspect of the world that is historically and culturally grounded and shaped by human personality. In everyday communication, humans often tell narratives as a means of sense making, or to better understand events, people, places, etc.
Narrative is fundamental not only to different forms of cultural expression but also to our own patterns of experience and our insights into our own lives. For instance, our conversation with other people contain narrative sequences, we often report something we have experienced. Our thoughts often assume a narrative form, and even our dreams are like incomplete and confusing stories. “Human beings have a deep-seated need to establish narrative patterns, something that is again connected with the tendency we have to see life as a story – a temporally limited line of development from beginning to end, from birth to death, in which we like to find each stage meaningful and to justify the choices we make.” (Abott 2002, 54). In literature we also observe a certain narrative sequence (a narrative line). The simplest way to define narrative is as a series of events in specific order – with a beginning, middle and an end.

For general purposes in structuralist literary theory, a narrative is defined as a story or part of a story. It may be spoken, written or imagined, and it will have one or more points of view representing some or all of the participants or observers. In stories told verbally, there is a person telling the story, a narrator whom the audience can see and/or hear, and who adds layers of meaning to the text nonverbally. The narrator also has the opportunity to monitor the audience's response to the story and to modify the manner of the telling to clarify content or enhance listener interest. This is distinguishable from the written form in which the author must gauge the readers likely reactions when they are decoding the text and make a final choice of words in the hope of achieving the desired response.

Whatever the form, the content may concern real-world people and events. This is termed personal experience narrative. When the content is fictional, different conventions apply. The text is projecting a narrative voice, but the narrator is ontologically distant, i.e. belongs to an invented or imaginary world, and not the real world. The narrator may be one of the characters in the story. In wikipedia Roland Barthes describes such characters as "paper beings" and fiction comprises their narratives of personal experience as created by the author. When their thoughts are included, this is termed internal focalization, i.e. when each character's mind focuses on a particular event; the text reflects his or her reactions.
1.2 Ideological issues in the narrative discourse

In the narratives, the reader hears the narrator's voice both through the choice of content and style (the author can encode voices for different emotions and situations, and the voices can either be overt or covert), and through clues that reveal the narrator's beliefs, values, and ideological stance, as well as the author's attitude towards people, events, and things.

Ideology is a complex concept but, broadly speaking, refers to a set of ideas which produces a partial and selective view of reality. This in turn serves the interests of those with power in society. It has its roots in the nineteenth-century writings of Karl Marx, who argued that the property-owning classes were able to rule by ideas which represented as natural the class relationships of production, therefore justifying their own wealth and privilege. These ideas could be found in all areas of social knowledge, such as religion: for example, the notion that it is God's wills that some are born rich and that the poor will be rewarded in the next life. Thus the notion of ideology entails widely held ideas or beliefs, which may often be seen as common sense, legitimising or making widely acceptable certain forms of social inequality. In so doing, ideologies are able to disguise or suppress the real structure of domination and exploitation which exists in society. “Ideology is not something which informs or invests symbolic production; rather the aesthetic or narrative form is to be seen as an ideological act in its own right, with the function of inventing imaginary or formal solutions to unresolvable social contradictions.” [http://www.english.ilstu.edu/Strickland/495/ideology.html].

Modern writers (Marxist and others) have adapted and developed this idea so that all belief systems or world views are thought to be ideological. Although some ideas and beliefs seem more natural or truthful, there is no absolute truth with which to measure the accuracy of representations. What interests those who analyse media representations is whose ideological perspective is privileged. This raises the issue of power inequalities. “While Marxists have emphasised social class differences, others have increasingly pointed to gender and racial inequalities. What is agreed is that popular culture, especially media output, is the site of a constant struggle over the production of meaning.” [http://www.northallertoncoll.org.uk/media/ideology.htm].

The Hungarian thinker Georg Lukacs proposed that “each great work of literature creates its own world, which is unique and seemingly distinct from everyday reality. But a master of realism in the novel such as Balzac or Tolstoy, by bringing to life the greatest possible richness of the objective conditions of life, and by creating typical characters who
manifest to an extreme the essential tendencies and determinants of their epoch, succeed – often in opposition to the author’s own conscious ideology – in producing a fictional world which is a reflection of life in the greatest concreteness and clarity and with all its motivating ideology” (Abrams 1993, 243).

The concept of ideology has been expanded in recent decades, encompassing not only the ideas of Marxism or class struggle, but also indicating the beliefs, political and moral issues, the role and fate of human identity. According to the well known theorist Terry Eagleton, ideology is connected with the following issues:

- the process of production of meanings, signs and value in social life
- a body of ideas characteristic of a particular social group or class
- ideas which help to legitimate a dominant political power
- false ideas which help to legitimate a dominant political power
- systematically distorted communication
- forms of thought motivated by social interests
- identity thinking
- socially necessary illusion
- the medium in which conscious social actors make sense of their world
- action-oriented sets of beliefs
- the confusion of linguistic and phenomenal reality
- the process whereby said life is converted to a natural reality


Ideology is most often found in political discourse, but it also appears in literature e.g. human relationships, values. According to wikipedia the main purpose behind an ideology is to offer change in society through a normative thought process. Ideologies are systems of abstract thought applied to public matters and thus make this concept central to politics. Implicitly every political tendency entails an ideology whether or not it is propounded as an explicit system of thought. Meta-ideology posits that ideology is a coherent system of ideas, relying upon a few basic assumptions about reality that may or may not have any factual basis, but are subjective choices that serve as the seed around which further thought grows. According to this perspective, ideologies are neither right nor wrong, but only a relativistic intellectual strategy for categorizing the world. The pluses and minuses of ideology range from the vigor and fervor of true believers to ideological infallibility.
1.3 Different approaches to time and space

Time relations are inseparable from spatial relations because the change of time almost always encounters the change of space. The concept of time is linked to both the physical world and our perception of the world; it is also related to narrative space, i.e. the fictional universe which the text presents through its narrative discourse.

In narrative texts the spatial dimension stands out most clearly in connection with the theme of travel. A journey, which can take place in inner space, is the expression of a strong specialization of the experience of time and is therefore well suited to expressing the complex of problems associated with our realization of ourselves, which is fundamental to narrative texts. Of course narrative space is not dependent on the fact that the characters in the story actually travel, either physically or metaphorically. Travel motif illustrates the close relationship between narrative space and narrative time.

Space is a region of the brain, which has evolved to carry out this particular function. The first thing that must happen is that the characteristics of the situation to be represented must be defined. These are: where it takes place, when it takes place, who is in it and what is in it. These space defining details are known as deictic elements. Deixis is the Greek for pointing or indicating. “A deictic space is one which has been defined in terms of place and time, and has characters and entities positioned in it. Deictic information gives the reader a very rich mental representation of the setting of a novel or story” (Verdonk 1996, 47).

Among prominent philosophers, there are two distinct viewpoints on time. One view is that time is part of the fundamental structure of the universe, a dimension in which events occur in sequence. Isaac Newton subscribed to this realist view, and hence it is sometimes referred to as Newtonian time. The opposing view is that time does not refer to any kind of "container" that events and objects "move through", nor to any entity that "flows", but that it is instead part of a fundamental intellectual structure (together with space and number) within which humans sequence and compare events. This second view, in the tradition of Gottfried Leibniz and Immanuel Kant, holds that time is neither an event nor a thing, and thus is not itself measurable.

Human beings always have their experiences at some place and at some time; they cannot have them nowhere. It therefore seems only natural that whenever we read about something happening, we try to conceptualize the background situation comprising the where and when of the event as well as the people and objects positioned in it. Though they are separated in time and space, the author and reader of a literary fiction are participants in an
interpersonal communicative event. Time and space relations have a certain semantic and stylistic function.

In the twentieth century, one of the most important influences on literature’s exploration of time was the collection of radical sciences grouped under the term “The New Physics” (Morrison 2003, 26). For many writers of both modernist and postmodernist fiction, indeed, the shattering of conventional wisdom by Albert Einstein, Niels Bohr, Werner Heisenberg and others has been seen as an immense imaginative challenge. It has become a popular mythology of the twentieth century that in 1905, with the emergence of Einstein’s *Special Theory of Relativity*, the concept of time in Western society suddenly changed. In one sense, the importance of Einstein’s work was certainly immense, supplanting Newton’s conception of a universal, abstract, mechanistic time with Relativity’s quite different model of a flexible four-dimensional space-time. Across many of the disciplines of science, Relativity did change the face of the older Newtonian universe. Einstein himself was only one amongst a variety of thinkers in the twentieth century and before who have sought to question the truth of absolute time (Morrison 2003, 26).

In a number of other areas of thought, alternative conceptions of time to that of Newton had, in fact, been in play for a long period. For Immanuel Kant, time was certainly not conceived as something absolute. Rather, time experience could only be considered as objective in the sense that it was a function shared by all human consciousness. As Kant argued in 1781: “Time is therefore a merely a subjective condition of our intuition … and in itself, independently of the mind or subject, is nothing” (Morrison 2003, 27). For Edmund Husserl, one of Einstein’s contemporaries, time is again far from absolute, becoming meaningful only in the formation of the self. Reciprocally, for Husserl the self only has meaning as a creation of time. And similarly, according to the influential German philosopher Martin Heidegger, the entire question of time is inextricable from the question of human being. According to Heidegger, “it is only owing to our ultimate anticipation of death that any authentic experience of being – in – time becomes possible.” (ibid. p. 27). As we can see from these few examples, then, in philosophy as well as physics the notion of absolute time has been in question for much of the modern period.

In *A New Refutation of Time* by Jorge Luis Borges time remains a psychic labyrinth from which one cannot escape. “Time is the substance I am made of. Time is a river which sweeps me along, but I am the river; it is a tiger which destroys me, but I am the tiger; it is a fire which consumes me, but I am the fire. The world, unfortunately, is real; I, unfortunately,
am Borges.” (Morrison 2003, 32). Here Borges attempts to explore alternate conceptions of time and experience.

The theorist Paul Ricoeur in his three-volume study *Time and Narrative* analyses the relationship between narrative and the experience of time in a way that throws the disjunctive strategies of contemporary fiction into relief. For Ricoeur, the crucial role of narrative in our everyday social and personal lives is essentially to affirm the coherence of our temporal impressions. Thus “time becomes human to the extent that it is articulated through a narrative mode, and narrative attains its full meaning when it becomes a condition of temporal existence.” (Ricoeur 1990, vol.1, 52). Ricoeur argues that time should not be seen as a linear continuum, but rather as a multi-level construction. Between the vast schemes of cosmic time, the public plane of historical time and the private, fluctuating experience of personal time, he suggests, our experience of time can easily be discordant and unsettling. Narrative’s function, then, is to mediate between these different levels of time consciousness, creating a sense of comforting continuity. In Ricoeur’s theory, we could argue that narrative’s role is fundamentally a conservative one. Arising from a pre-understanding of the world of action, its meaningful structures, its symbolic resources and mediating between these and the experience of the reader or viewer, what a narrative is supposed to do, over and over again, is to rehearse the coherence of conventional time. Its duty is to ensure a comfortable continuum between our understanding of the cosmic or absolute, our sense of our historical placing and the texture of our everyday experience. In contemporary fiction, it is useful to consider Ricoeur’s analysis of narrative’s classic function as a healer of time, because it helps us to see the extent to which this function has been abandoned in recent writing. Amongst writers who deal with the problems of collective memory, likewise, new ways of exploring the relations between time, history and subjectivity have had to be found (ibid. p. 53).

Mikhail Bakhtin was one of the thinkers who have done most to illuminate the disjunctive remodeling of time in contemporary fiction. He developed the notion of “chronotope to open up the complex exploration of time that is possible in literary texts. The notion of the chronotope parallels Albert Einstein’s famous texts *On the Electrodynamics and Moving Bodies* and *The Foundation of the General Theory of Relativity* which, sought to overturn the idea that space and time can be considered as separate entities.” (Morrison 2003, 36). In his work on relativity, Einstein explicitly refutes the idea that chronometric time – the time of the clock progresses evenly in all circumstances. This leads to the conclusion that the structure of the universe can only be understood in terms of a single four – dimensional continuum, space – time. In a similar way, Bakhtin’s chronotope brings together
the prefix ‘chrono’ indicating time with the suffix ‘tope’ indicating space or place as a single idea. For Bakhtin: “In the literary artistic chronotope, spatial and temporal indicators are fused into one carefully thought-out, concrete whole. Time, as it were, thickens, takes on flesh, and becomes artistically visible; likewise, space becomes charged and responsive to the movements of time, plot and history” (Morrison 2003, 37). For Einstein space – time is a single universal continuum. Bakhtin’s chronotope is more radical than this in one important respect: in his theory, multiple chronotopes or modes of the time horizon are possible. Even within a single literary work, more than one chronotope may be in play. And looking from a historical perspective, Bakhtin argues that great shifts in perception can be understood in terms of the transition between different chronotopes.

In the literary discourse we can distinguish two types of time: the time of narrating and narrated time. Müller and Gerard Genette propose the analysis of fictional time at two levels: the time of the act of narrating and the time that is narrated. In addition to these two kinds of time, Ricoeur proposes a third one that is not intrinsically textual – the time of life. In other words, his analysis of the conjunctions / disjunctions of time runs along a threefold axis: utterance - statement – world. Ricoeur argues “that the analysis of this third category of time, generated by the writer’s selection, pacing and distribution of the most meaningful sequences, captures some important experiential aspects of narratives which are left out by formalist approaches” (Onega 1996, 129). Later Müller in his *Morphologische Poetik* distinguished three times: the time of the act of narrating, the time that is narrated, and finally the time of life. The first is a chronological time; it is a time of reading rather than of writing. We can measure only its spatial equivalent, which is counted by the number of pages and lines. Narrated time, for its part, is counted in years, months, and days and may even be dated in the work itself. It is, in turn the result of the “compression of a time spared or set aside, which is not narrative but life” (ibid. p. 134).

As we can see time relations are inseparable from spatial relations and in the literary discourse they appear together.
1.4 Narrative structure in the traditional (pre – postmodernist) conception

The study of theories of narrative has become known as narratology, i.e. the grammar of narrative. The first modern theories of narrative derive from early twentieth century movement known as Russian Formalism. Narratology as a field of literary research was formulated by structuralist theoreticians (Gerard Genette, Tzvetan Todorov, Mieke Bal). Structuralist narratologists have greatly contributed to analyzing the narrative. The theoreticians (Onega 1996, 93) propose the following definition of the narrative structure: “the representation of a series of events, i.e. narratives are composite entities in a number of senses, that in a narrative can be analysed into the events which can be studied according to their position with respect to each other”. Narratology is complicated by the fact that different theorists have different terms for explaining the same phenomenon, a fact that is fueled by narratology's structuralist background: narratologists love to categorize and to taxonomize, which has led to a plethora of terms to explain the complicated nature of narrative form.

First of all, any narrative happens in certain condition of time and space, i.e. it is placed in a certain sequence of a narrative discourse. The narrative theory has been developed by a number of scholars. The famous structuralist theoretician Gerard Genette proposed classification of narrative fiction which consists of discourse, story, and narration. Genette’s starting point is the term narrative, which in French has three meanings: a statement, the content of the statement, and the action one performs when producing the statement. In his argument Genette distinguishes between these three meanings of the word by giving each of them its special term: discourse, story, and narration. “Discourse is the spoken or written presentation of the events. Put in simple terms discourse is what we read, the text to which we have direct access. In discourse the order of events is not necessarily chronological, people are presented through characterization, and the transmitted content is filtered through narrative voices and perspectives. Story refers to the narrated events and conflicts in narrative fiction, abstracted from their disposition in the discourse and arranged chronologically together with the fictional characters. Thus story approaches what we usually understand by a summary of the action. Narration is the mode how a text is written and communicated. The process of writing, of which narration is a trace, carries a number of narrative devices and combinations, which all contribute to constituting discourse. There are important links between the author of a text and the narrator in it”(Lothe 2000, 6). While Genette’s classification of narrative fiction has exerted a great influence on recent narrative theory.

The primary interest of a structuralist narratologists is the way the narrative discourse
fashions the story in terms of fabula and sjuzet. “Fabula is a paraphrasing summary of the action, which the formalists relate to what Viktor Shklovsky calls the material for narrative construction” (Lothe 2000,6). According to Mieke Bal, the fabula is a bare scheme of narrative events which does not take into account any specific traits that individualize agents or actions into characters and concrete events. Sjuzet on the other hand refers to the oral or written design of the story, to the different procedures and devices in the text that make it literary. Thus the formalists’ concept of sjuzet is linked to the word discourse. Sjuzet is an element of form which extends over into the text’s content side. In this way sjuzet is related to plot.

The structuralist theorist Jonathan Culler attacks wide-spread assumption among French narratologists that events at the fabula level are arranged to a true or natural order, later modified and disrupted by the requirement of narrative presentation at the discourse level. “Culler, drawing on the American theoretical tradition, contends that literary as well as non-literary narratives are organized around a double, contradictory logic, the logic of events which reinforces the causal efficacy of origins and assumes the primacy of events regardless of their signification, and the order of coherence, which denies their causal efficacy and treats the events as primarily the products of meaning. Culler’s thesis is that these opposed logics do not cancel each other but create a tension on which the power of the narration depends” (Geniené 2007, 197). We can draw conclusions that the relationship of fabula (the natural sequence of events) and sjuzet (the plot, the events presented at discourse level) create the intrigue and the meaning of a text, and may indicate changes in the narrator’s point of view. For example, in F.S. Fitzgerald’s The Great Gatsby, the narrator’s telling of the story begins placing the effect before its cause. In the process of the novel Nick pronounces several sentences foreshadowing his final judgment about Gatsby. “Only Gatsby, the man who gives his name to this book, was exempt from my reaction – Gatsby, who represented everything for which I have an unaffected scorn… No – Gatsby turned out all right at the end; it is what preyed on Gatsby, what foul dust floated in the wake of his dreams that temporarily closed out my interest in the abortive sorrows and short-winded elations of men” (Fitzgerald 1998, 5). This sentence, however, may slip the reader’s attention. The further development of the sjuzet is interrupted by several retrospective passages in which Gatsby lies about his noble origin, his past military merits, etc. causing nick’s resentment and forming negative opinion about Gatsby. The subsequent complications of sjuzet for example when Gatsby, trying to save Daisy who caused the car accident during which Mrs Wilson was killed, takes the responsibility for it, redeem him in Nick’s eyes (ibid. p. 197 ).
But narratives also invariably involve what the narratologist Gerard Genette has called anachronisms – flashbacks, “jumps forwards, the slowing down and speeding up of events and other distortions of the linear time sequence” (Onega 1996, 54). Texts such as Virginia Woolf’s The Mark on the Wall dislodge our sense of temporal sequence. The story begins “Perhaps it was the middle of January in the present year” (Woolf 1982, 41). This suggests that the events recounted span a number of months, but by the end we have the sense that the story follows the wanderings of the narrator’s consciousness over only a number of minutes or, at most, hours. Despite this and many other distortions of chronological order, however, Woolf’s text is only readable insofar as it exploits our expectations of narrative sequence. Indeed, these distortions themselves can only be conceived against a background of linear chronological sequence. Time, then, is crucial to narrative.

In order to discuss how narrative space is presented in verbal fiction, it is important to know the distinction between story space and discourse space. “Story space is the space containing events, characters, and the place or places of the action as it is presented and developed in the discourse. It is elements from story space that we build on when we construct the story on the basis of the text we are reading. Discourse space is the narrator’s space. This can assume different forms and need not to be indicated in the text at all, but it is distinguished from story space” (Lothe 2000, 50).

The relationship between narrative time and narrative space suggests that an author of fiction must use different forms of presentation according to whether she or he wishes to depict what the universe and the objects in it look like, or tell what happens to objects in the universe. On this basis Nojgaard distinguishes between three forms of presentation: “Narration; as purely temporal presentation (i.e. only presentation of movements – action in the traditional sense). Description; as purely spatial presentation (i.e. presentation of objects in space disconnected from the aspect of time). Comment; which is neither spatial nor temporal presentation”( Lothe 2000, 52). For we rarely meet these forms of presentation as pure variants in prose literature: they are usually connected and they mutually influence one another. Thus even a descriptive pause is narrated, and as a result is influenced by the temporal presentation inherent in the narrative.

In order for story events to be presented narratively, they must have happened, i.e. they must have been realized within a fictional world. Time and space are connected. They are textual stylistic features because have meaning and function and are based on retrospection and prospection. Relationship of time is expressed by category of retrospection. These textual categories were outlined by I. R. Galperin (1981). The temporal relationship
between narration and events in a story can vary, and we distinguish between four main variants. The first and most important is retrospective narration. Here events in a story are related after they have happened. The distance between the act of narration and the events that are related varies from text to text. In Dickens’s *Great Expectations* the distance is approximately fifteen years; in Kafka’s *The Trial* it is unspecified. Retrospective narration is found in most fictional prose. This narration form exists, as Genette puts it, “through a fundamental paradox: on the one hand, retrospective narration is temporally related to the story it is telling; on the other hand, it has an atemporal essence since it does not give any impression of the passage of time” (Lothe 2000, 53). For Käte Hamburger, this paradox contributes to making narrative texts fictional. Only in narrative fiction, she argues, do we accept without reservation a sentence such as “Tomorrow was Christmas Eve”, which in everyday speech would be an illogical construction. Retrospective narration is in one sense the only possibility; we can also have pre-emptive narration. Even if this variant is seldom found in modern literature, it is not unusual in texts such as the Old Testament books. A third variant is contemporary with the story events. A ready non-literary example is the broadcasting of a football match on the radio. It is hardly possible for narrative fiction to be so contemporary, since the written text necessarily indicates a difference, and thus a distance, from the act of narration. Finally, as in novels written in the form of letters or a diary, we may have embedded narration. Here the narrative acts change with the actions that are being talked about.

Time is not only something authors write about, it is also a factor that constitutes both the story and the discourse. Narrative time can be linked to three main terms: order, duration and frequency (Lothe 2000, 54):

- **Order**, which answers the question ‘when’? By order we mean the temporal order of events in the story in relation to the presentation of these events in the narrative discourse. If a text is so narrated that it departs from the chronologically ordered story, there arises a type of difference which Genette calls ‘anachrony’, and which has two main variants: *analepsis* and *prolepsis*. These two terms correspond to flashback and foreshadowing. *Analepsis* is an evocation of a story event at a point in the text where later events have already been related, i.e. the narration jumps back to an earlier point in the story. This narrative variation, which is more common than the prolepsis, is divided by Genette into three types:
1. **External analepsis:** the time of the story lies outside and prior to the time of the main narrative. This means that the narration jumps back to a point in the story before the main narrative starts.

2. **Internal analepsis:** the narration goes to an earlier point in the story, but this point is inside the main story.

3. **Mixed analepsis** means that the time period covered by the analepsis starts before but leads up to or jumps into the main narrative.

*Prolepsis* is any narrative manoeuvre that consists in evoking in advance an event that will take place later. Prolepsis occurs most often in first-person narration. Prolepsis involves a narrative manoeuvre that represents a departure from the first, dominant narrative. It is the evocation of a story event at a point before earlier events have been narrated. This form of narrative information can be extremely compressed; it may be so dense that we can hardly say that the prolepsis is narrated. Prolepsis always calls up a later event without identifying it.

- **Duration**, answers the question “how long”? On the other hand to answer the question how long a narrative text lasts is really impossible. It is because reading time varies from reader to reader. If we nevertheless say that story time and discourse time coincide in scene, this is based on conventional grounds. One reason why this convention has developed is that a dialogue in a scene communicates language in language, we reckon that words in the text stand for words that were uttered in the story. Textual length, which is an integral part of an author’s narrative technique, has an important temporal aspect. Gerard Genette proposes to use ‘constant speed’ as an imagined norm against which to measure different degrees of the passage of time. Constant speed means that the ratio between how long the story lasts and how long the text is remains stable and unchanged, for example in the case of a novel which consistently uses one page to present each year in a character’s life. On the basis of this norm the speed may increase or decrease. The maximum speed is ellipsis; the minimum speed is descriptive pause. Between these two extremes we have summary and scene.

1. Descriptive pauses: such pauses are common in narrative fictional prose, and they can have many different functions.

2. **Scene:** narrative time = story time. Narrative time corresponds to story time. Second, a scene too is narrated. This applies also to texts in which the author
mostly uses only dialogue, which is commonly regarded as the purest form of scene.

3. Summary; narrative time is less than story time. Together with scene this is an extremely common variant in narrative fiction, and the two are often combined.

4. Ellipsis: There are two main variants of ellipses: explicit ellipsis, the text indicates how much of the story time it jumps over. In implicit ellipsis no direct indication is given of change or transition in story time. Sometimes the transition may be made clear in other ways for example by the context, but an implicit ellipsis can also be disorienting, since we do not know what has been left out or how long a period of time the narration has jumped over. In the context of analysis, an implicit ellipsis is often more interesting than an explicit one. The ellipsis opens a chronological gap in the text, and for the reader it is a challenge to understand and explain what thematic effect the ellipsis has. (Lothe 2000, 54).

- **Frequency** answers the question “how often”? It is an important temporal component in narrative fiction. For Gerard Genette, frequency refers to the relationship between how many times an event occurs in the story and how many times it is narrated in the text. The relationship between story events and their narration in the text have three main variants:

  1. Singulative narration: what happened once is told once. This is the simplest and most common form of frequency. To this category also belongs a less common narrative phenomenon, namely telling several times what happened several times.
  2. Repetitive narration: what happened once is told several times.
  3. Iterative narration: what happened several times is told once.

In the traditional narrative, not only time and space, but also other elements are important such as plot, textual structure, historical and cultural context, textual structure, narrator and his/her point of view.

**Plot** is the basic story-line of a narrative. In other words it is the sequence of elemental, chronologically-ordered events which generate a narrative. “So, where plot
represents the abstract story – line of a narrative, discourse is the actual text which is produced by a writer” (Verdonk1996, 141).

“Cultural context and linguistic code jointly express the historical, cultural and linguistic setting which frames a narrative. Cultural context, more specifically, locates the narrative in time and place and identifies the socio-cultural backcloth which informs it. The variety of language which reflects this cultural context is the linguistic code.” (Brooks).

The textual structure is very important component of the traditional narrative structure. This accounts for the way individual narrative units are arranged and organized in a story. A study of textual structure may focus on large scale elements of plot as well as more localized features of the story’s organization. “A range of stylistic models are available for the analysis of different levels of textual structure in a narrative, of which the frameworks of cohesion, coherence and natural narrative have proved especially popular among stylisticians.”(Verdonk 1996,142). In the textual structure we can distinguish two characterization components. The first describes how character, actions and events intersect. It also accounts for the ways in which the events of narrative are connected with what a character does, thinks and says. The second category of narrative characterization, focalization, concerns the relationship between a character’s viewpoint and mode of narration. It explains whether a narrative is first person or third person, or whether the events of the story are viewed from the perspective of a particular character or from that of an omniscient narrator.

The narrator plays very important role in the narrative discourse. In modernist literature the narrator may undertake multiple roles simultaneously in different time shifts. Speaking about narrator it is worth to make distinction between narrator and narratee which form two of the links in the communication model. As Rimmon – Kenan says, “the narrator is the agent which at the very least narrates or engages in some activity serving the needs of narration… the narratee is the agent which is at the very least implicitly addressed by the narrator. If the narrator explicitly addresses one or more narrates, the narrative situation in one sense resembles that of the oral proto- situation.’ (Lothe 2000, 20). In some texts, if the narratee is only addressed implicitly, his or her function may approach the role of the implied reader. The narrator in a narrative text must be clearly distinguished from the author of the text. The narrator is an integral part of the fictional text written by the author. The narrator is a narrative instrument that the author uses to present and develop the text, which is thus constituted by the activities and functions that the narrator performs. Gerald Prince describes narrator as “the one who narrates, as inscribed in the text. There is at least one narrator per
narrative, located at the same diegetic level as narratee he or she is addressing.” (Lothe 2000, 20). Diegetic level is the fictional world in which the situations and events narrated occur. The narrator is an important narrative instrument for the author. Therefore the concept of narrator is useful and productive of insights in narrative analysis. According to Mieke Bal the narrator is the most central concept in the analysis of narrative texts. Much of the reason for the key position held by the concept of narrator in narrative theory lies in the text’s narration aspect. The narrator is the narration instance within the narrative text. It needs to be stressed, therefore, that the narrator is part of the narrative text, and that he does not exist outside the linguistic structure which constitutes him. The function of the narrator as a narrative instrument is most clear in narrative texts in which he serves as a ‘pure’ narrator, i.e. without at the same time being an active character in the plot. This brings us to the distinction between two main types of narrator.

In the traditional narratives the first and the third person narrators are the most prominent. Since the concepts of third-person and first-person narrator are mostly readily definable in relation to each other, I would like to start with quotation from Franz Stanzel “the contrast between an embodied narrator and narrator without such bodily determination, that is to say, between a first-person narrator and an authorial third-person narrator, accounts for the most important difference in the motivation of the narrator to narratee. For an embodied narrator, this motivation is existential; it is directly connected with his practical experiences, with the joys and sorrows he has experienced, with his moods and needs. For the third-person narrator, on the other hand, there is no existential compulsion to narrate. His motivation is literary- aesthetic rather than existential.” (Lothe 2000, 21). In other words the first-person narrator is active in the plot, i.e. in the dynamic shaping of the text’s action, events, and characters. The third-person narrator is on the other hand outside the plot, even though he is also in the text. Since he does not participate in the action, the function of the third-person narrator is more purely communicative. It is on the contrary typical for the first-person narrator to combine the functions of narrator and character. The transitions between these two main variants of narrator may be unclear. For instance, a third-person narrator may well link the presentation to characters in the plot. The distinction between third-person and first-person narrator is an important one. For example in Slaughterhouse – Five narrators stand in other relation, one is the writer and the other is the character to whom the writer delegates his experience. There could arise a question how a third-person narrator can or should be identified. The problem is that even if the third-person narrator is also distinct from the author, she/he/it can nevertheless express opinions, viewpoints, feelings that are not neutral
with respect to gender. A related problem is that although we may refer to the third-person narrator as he/she/it, there is a sense in which all narrative situations presuppose a first-person narrator. There is no simple solution to this problem, partly because the alternatives to third-person narrator also have terminological drawbacks; external narrator is easily misunderstood as meaning that the narrator is outside the fiction; authorial narrator may suggest too close relationship between narrator and author.

The above analysed elements of the great narrative chain have basically expressed views of the traditional structuralist narratologists. To sum up, the traditional narratologists place their main emphasis on the intermediary structures of the story construction and narration; they devise modes of analysis of time structure, order of events, temporal distortions, duration and selection of scenes, the study of point of view, omniscience, free indirect style, narrative voice, the types of narrators, focalizors. Such theories constitute the traditional narrow core of narratology.

1.5 The postmodernist treatment of narrative discourse

There are fundamental differences between the approaches of the traditional narratology and postmodernist treatment of literary discourse. The below presented statements demonstrate poststructuralist views rejecting the main concept of narratology.

Postmodernism as a literary trend having developed around the 60 – 70 of the 20th century is a reaction to the supposed falsity of realism and rigidity of structuralism. "Postmodernism as a phase in the history of mankind, society, culture, and the individual’s thinking, in which classical traditions, the idea of absolute truths, stable universal moral values as well as the traditional humanist understanding of a human being are rejected.” (Miniotaitė 2007, 6).

Time in contemporary fiction is something that has taken place not in isolation, but rather against the background of a whole set of explorations in different fields and disciplines. In the area of literary and cultural studies, these debates have been at least as vigorous as elsewhere. For theorists of postmodernism such as Jean Francois Lyotard in his collection The Inhuman: Reflections on Time, for example, the fact that contemporary texts retain the power to radically surprise and confound us is seen in itself as one answer to the colonizing, terrorist tendencies in modern time. Others, such as Fredric Jameson in his influential study Postmodernism, are much more pessimistic. For Jameson, postmodern culture, with its shiny surface and historical amnesia, is seen ultimately as a threat to our self – liberation and self –
determination. The novel’s flexibility and imaginative dynamics make it an unusually effective vehicle for exploring concerns about time, memory and history which are widespread throughout many areas of culture and society.

The controversial movement of postmodernism embraces a wide area of creative activity ranging from philosophy, literature and visual arts to architecture, theatre and music. Postmodernism, like many literary trends, is context-bound. New literary trends often emerge during changes or crises in society. Thus by the time of the students’ uprisings in Europe in the 1960s strongly ethical and individual existentialism moved away from realism and modernism towards skeptical and antihumanist attitudes. Though in one way postmodernism is an extension of modernist self-consciousness about art, the representation of human psychoanalysis and experimental language use.

“The postmodern is that which puts forward the unpresentable in presentation itself; that which denies itself the solace of good forms, the consensus of a taste which would make it possible to share collectively the nostalgia for the unattainable; that which searches for new presentations, not in order to enjoy them but in order to impart a stronger sense of the unpresentable. A postmodern artist or writer is in the position of a philosopher: the text he writes, the work he produces are not in principle governed by preestablished rules, and they cannot be judged according to a determining judgement, by applying familiar categories to the text or to the work”( Gregson 2004,11).

Postmodernism has many parallels with postructuralism in philosophical, linguistic and literary theories, which were predated by Saussurean statements about the distance between language and reality, the signifier and the signified. Postmodernist ideas were influenced by the well known postructuralist and deconstructivist thinkers Jack derrida, Roland Barthes, Michel Foucault and others. Postmodernists, as well as postructuralists, attempt to subvert the foundations of language in order to show that its apparent meaningfulness dissipates into a play of conflicting indeterminacies.

Postmodernism repudiating coherence or the logical development of ideas turned to presenting the everyday world as a mere dead array of disconnected particulars. And myth is a means of giving significance to something that has no inherent significance. Postmodern literature took a step further against the traditional understanding of character, meaning and questioned the very status of literature. According to postmodern thinking, man is torn by egoism, vanity, jealousy, instability and pragmatism. Human existence is no longer regulated by transcendental categories. The postmodernist individual is torn between extremities and imprisoned in a never-ending chain of binary oppositions. The representation of the character
as well as the meaning of language became shaky, unstable, fluctuating between presence and absence of identity. “The paradoxical nature of poststructuralist and postmodernist representation of man is ambiguous and ambivalent, functioning between the character and the author. Flat, ghost-like characters do not acknowledge the Barthean “death of the author” but rather testify that the author has dispersed among his characters. It is the narrative eccentricity which handles the characters as mere verbal constructs by authorial play with language and intertextuality. Sometimes, however, the characters may enter the literary scene as rather realistic beings.” (Genienè 2007, 227).

“Postmodern literature shifts its center from the deep level of character, typical of psychological realism and modernism, to the level beyond individual personality – a level of mentality - a complex integrity of mental and spiritual orientations of literary character, of author and of reader. Thus postmodern literature projects only generic types of mentality, such as loneliness or longing, which are common to and recognizable by everyone”( Beyond Postmodernism 2003, 284). There is no unity, no story as event, but the fragments of vocalized and objectivized situations.

In contrast to traditional and modernist literature, the dominant of postmodern fiction seeks to demonstrate the existence of a vast plurality of worlds that surround us by describing and creating them. The ontology of postmodern fiction, therefore, has affected other conventional relations between the elements of fictional space - the teller, the tale and the told, or the author, the text and the reader. The text is understood in most general meaning - as a mixture of already existing writings and in some cases belonging not only to the sphere of literature and thus cannot be distinguished according to traditional literary genres. The whole world, or rather a variety of worlds is understood as texts. R. Barthes suggests that an ontological structure of a postmodern text is similar to an enormous network, combining existing worlds and texts. Consequently, the text in postmodern fiction does not - and cannot - aim at mimetic representation of the so-called extralinguistic reality. The plurality of existing worlds inevitably presuppose the plurality of truths and values, therefore, mimetic representation as conveying the absolute Truth is hardly acceptable in literary postmodernism. This undoubtedly alters the traditional role of the reader as a common listener and interpreter of the author's ideas. Instead, he or she is intentionally thrown into the intricate labyrinth of the worlds and texts suggested by the author, where a number of possible interpretations are thrust upon the reader (Beyond Postmodernism 2003, 285).

The disintegrative features of the postmodern human are mirrored in breaks of the narrative, unpredictable changeability of focalization, indefiniteness of point of view. The
character’s voice can merge with that of the narrator, creating a metafictional narrative. It is one of the features of postmodern intertextuality to see the imaginative and critical writing as unified.

Both modernists and postmodernists have directed their main focus on the representation of character and both trends postulated the semantic instability of it, both trends have adopted fragmentation and the kaleidoscopic twists and turns of the plot. Modernism, however, tried to keep individual essences as some integral parts of a much loosened and disintegrated whole.

The twentieth century saw much cultural, political, philosophical and technical diversity: the play and mixture, juxtaposition and opposition, of the traditional and new in mores, the application of different verbal and visual techniques.

Postmodernist theorists deny the linearity of narrative and try to destroy the narrative sequence. If we compare traditional narratologists with poststructuralists, we will see that they are very different. The traditional narratologists place their main emphasis on the intermediary structures of story construction and narration; they devise modes of analysis of time structure, order of events, temporal distortions, duration and selection of scenes, the study of point of view, narrative voice, and the types of narrators. While the “deconstructive school of American critics represented by Paul de Man, J. Hillis Miller and others consider the earlier formalist and structuralist analysis as well as the terminology of narratology to be simplistic and contradictory” (Genienè 2007, 200). The well known American, poststructuralist and postmodernist theorist J. Hillis Miller denies the linearity of the text. He says that “the line is both a thread and a labyrinth, simultaneously moving forwards and backwards and incessantly begging for new nuances of meaning in a wealth of repetitive echoes” (Onega 1996,286). By comparing narrative line to Ariadne’s thread, he wants to show that the thread maps the whole labyrinth and at the same time it is the repetition of the labyrinth. According to scholar “the image of the line’s linearity and all terminology describing the narrative which tends to organize itself into links, chains, strands, figures, configurations, time, character, narrator, each term covering one of the topographical regions which are basic to realist fiction, all are wrong” (Geniene 2007, 201). We can draw conclusions if linearity is broken so proves that there is linearity which can be broken. He argues that there isn’t any narrative and there is no need to analyze narrative terminology. According to critics the scholar maintains that the image of the line tends always wrongly to imply the norm of a single continuous unified structure determined by one external organizing principle – origin, goal or base. Poststructuralist and postmodernist approaches to traditional narratology do not and cannot, in
fact, obliterate the phenomenon of narrative as such. They only allow to see narratives from new perspectives, as multidimensional entities which condition fragmentary representation of life. Postmodernism denies narratology, however, behind the story there is a certain line. Narrator which is characteristic in traditional discourse also remains in postmodernist narratives.

Postmodernism keeps away from the traditional narrative which was grounded on determinist logic. All phenomena were seen as related, generating one another. But quantum mechanics have destroyed the chain of cause and effect. The postmodern man destroyed the pyramid of definitive truth. Indeterminacy of time and space, annihilation of boundaries between subject and object, the emerging anti-hero – all of these turn the narrative into a parody of character presentation and rhetorical talking, governed by figures of reiteration, artificial and affected diction, acquiring the intonation of stylized ballads or tales. Postmodernist literature often evidences an absence of coherence or logical development of ideas, representing everyday world as an array of disconnected particulars, linearity of a text is interrupted by metafictional narratives, textual linearity, etymology, source, origin and the author are repudiated.
2. AESTHETIC AND IDEOLOGICAL FUNCTIONS OF TIME AND SPACE SHIFTS IN KURT VONNEGUT’S NOVEL

“SLAUGHTERHOUSE-FIVE OR THE CHILDREN’S CRUSADE A DUTY DANCE WITH DEATH”

2.1 Kurt Vonnegut and his writing context

In the post-war American literature Kurt Vonnegut Jr’s name stands out as one of the most prominent. Vonnegut, one of the 20th century’s great American pacifists was born on Armistice Day in Indianapolis on November 11, 1922. Critics state that both the location and the era of his birth helped shape his distinctive worldview, a worldview that informs all of his works. “Growing up in the American heartland in the calm interval between World Wars I and II, Vonnegut had a brief vision of middle-class world that embraced the values of honesty, decency, and human dignity” (Roth, 497). For Vonnegut, this was the world as it should be, a world unraveled by violence and war, a world untouched by technology. This period of childhood happiness was, however, merely the calm before the storm in this life that would be rocked by a series of personal and national disasters: the death of his mother by suicide on Mother’s Day; his prisoner of war experience in World War II, the deaths of his sister and brother-in-law; the dissolution of his first marriage; the bombing of Dresden and Hiroshima; and the Kennedy and King assassinations. All the factors both, of his family and his nation reverberate through Vonnegut’s work, while the artist, through his fiction, strives to create a saner, calmer world. He was captured by the Germans and, in 1945, survived one of the greatest massacres of the war, the Allied firebombing of Dresden. This horror pursued Vonnegut for twenty-three years, until he worked through the pain by writing Slaughterhouse–Five in 1969.

After the war, Vonnegut married and began studies in anthropology at the University of Chicago. After three years, he left college and took a job as a publicist with General Electric, where his brother worked as a physicist. “Vonnegut’s background in science and his disillusionment at The General Electric influenced his first two novels, Player Piano and The Sirens of Titan, both of which are parables of dehumanization in a technological society” (Roth, 497). Since 1952, Vonnegut has written more than a dozen novels, numerous essays, a Broadway play, and a musical work, Requiem. Despite his varied artistic talents, however, Vonnegut has always been known as a great master of fiction.
Vonnegut has described himself as a “total pessimist.” (Contemporary Novelists 1014). His writings constitute an unremitting protest against the horrors of the twentieth century: the unspeakable atrocities of war, the destruction of the environment, and the depersonalization of the individual in a society ruled by science and technology. “The satiric bent of his short stories points up his primary concern: the alleviation of human suffering. Fantasy, black humor, and a keen sense of the absurd are the ingredients of his fiction. All his books are strongly satirical and ironical, funny, compassionate and extremely wise” (Roth, 498). They mostly have a very poor plot or none at all and the emphasis is put onto the rather comic and pathetic characters. Kurt Vonnegut also very often uses science fiction and comic book formulas (quick action, short dialogues), which usually puts his books onto bookstore shelves marked science fiction. Vonnegut, however, doesn’t take the science fiction elements with the same seriousness as the other science fiction writers, and that probably makes the difference between his works and science fiction. In The Introduction: Kurt and Me Allen states that “it is easy to define Vonnegut’s writing as a simple. He writes journalistically, in short sentences and paragraphs, his characters are often deemed cartoonish or flat, and his stories and novels are crammed full of jokes.” But Allen notes that it is also easy to discuss Vonnegut’s work in the theoretical jargon of postmodernism. Most of his work contains elements of metafiction, experimentalism, structural anthropology and semiotic dabbling (Roth, 498).

In his novels, Vonnegut coaxes the reader toward greater sympathy for others and deeper understanding of the human condition. His novels are known for their dark humor and playful use of science fiction, as well as their serious moral vision and cutting social commentary. Although his novels have been criticized for being too simplistic, he has a cult among readers who love his imagination and sense of humor. He is at once irrelevant and highly moral, and this rare combination has made his voice integral to American literature. “His arena is as expansive as the whole universe and as tiny as a single human soul. Part philosopher, part poet, Vonnegut, in his fictive world, tackles the core problem of modern life: How can the individual maintain dignity and exercise free will in a world overrun by death and destruction, a world in which both science and religion are powerless to provide a solution? The reader will find no ready answers in Vonnegut, only a friendly guide along the questioning path” (ibid. p. 498). In Evolutionary Mythology in the Writings of Kurt Vonnegut Jr. critic Brian W. Aldiss argues that Vonnegut’s use of time travel and other science fiction devices is intrusive, i.e. too noticable, direct in a way that is disturbing or annoying.
Critical acclaim eluded Vonnegut until the publication of *Slaughterhouse – Five* in 1969. An immediate best-seller, it earned for Vonnegut respect from critics who had previously dismissed him as a mediocre science-fiction writer. “Vonnegut has been honored as the Briggs – Copeland Lecturer at Harvard University, as a member of the National Institute of Arts and Letters, and as the Distinguished Professor of English Prose at the City University of New York” (Roth, 497). Through his insightful and sympathetic treatment of the psychologically and morally crippled victims of the modern world, Vonnegut has earned his reputation as one of the greatest humanist writers of his time.

2.2 The allegorical title and structure of the novel

*Slaughterhouse-Five; or The Children’s Crusade, A Duty-Dance With Death* is surely the best achievement of Kurt Vonnegut and even one of the most acclaimed works in modern American literature. Although Vonnegut despairs of being able to stop war, *Slaughterhouse-Five* is an earnest anti-war novel. Vonnegut’s own war experiences turned him into a pacifist. *Slaughterhouse-Five* breaks all novelistic conventions. The title refers to that part of a Dresden abattoir where Vonnegut and other prisoners of war were held captive, and where they had the good fortune to survive the massive bombing raid on Dresden and the firestorm that followed. The narrator uses the allegorical metaphor of slaughter. It is an allegory of war. Extermination of reality is lying to a butcher’s house. The story is divided into ten chapters, spanning the years from 1944 to 1968. Opening with a simple, first-person narrator, Vonnegut describes his return to Dresden in 1967. He recounts his life after the war, presents his wife and children, and relives a conversation with his old war buddy Bernard V. O’Hare, in which he reveals why *Slaughterhouse-Five* is subtitled *The Children’s Crusade*. In the original Children’s Crusade of 1213, Catholic monks raised a volunteer army of thirty thousand children who were intent on traveling to Palestine but instead were sent to North Africa to be sold as slaves. In the end, half the children drowned en route and the others were sold. For Vonnegut, this incident provides the perfect metaphor for all wars: hopeless ventures fought by deluded children. Thus the Vonnegut prepares the reader for this personal statement about the tragedy of war. Part of Vonnegut’s artistry shows in his giving his peculiar brand of realism a strong pattern in its apparent randomness. The novel is also described as *A Duty Dance With Death*, which seems appropriate since there is a kind of sweeping circularity in its movement. Dresden, symbol of death, is always at the center; it begins where it ends, with the author speaking; and throughout characters appear and reappear. In confronting in this novel
the specter of death— the deaths of many others and his own near death— it is as if he is at last performing an obligatory dance with death.

On the title page of *Slaughterhouse-Five* Vonnegut invites the reader to see the book as a novel somewhat in the telegraphic schizophrenic manner interwined with science fiction in the episodes of the planet of Tralfamadore. With its short chapters and paragraphs, its short sets of sentences or paragraphs with spaces between them, the novel has a physical resemblance to the Tralfamadorean model. Many of the juxtaposed segments do not relate sequentially or thematically but together build a total impression like a montage. Events from two periods 1944 – 1945 and 1968 and from other points in the life of the protagonist, Billy Pilgrim, are intermixed. His life is not revealed chronologically, by beginning in medias res or by flashback; rather the reader knows its end from the start, and the parts are filled in, from all segments of his life, as the novel progresses. According to *Concise Dictionary of American Literary Biography* Vonnegut cannot use the traditional form of the novel in presenting life viewed in contemporary terms because the conventional novel conforms to assumptions of cause and effect and rigidities of time and substance that he questions. For him the apparently pointless firebombing of Dresden, with its destruction of beautiful art and architecture and the killing of thousands of innocents, epitomizes the illogical. Consequently he needs a form that, while providing the reader with an intelligible account, does not appear to rationalize the events. He has sought to incorporate this view of reality into his fiction from the start. It means that each object or character is its history, not something that exists and has a history.

The nonlinear characterization of Billy Pilgrim emphasizes that he is not simply an established identity who undergoes a series of changes but all the different things he is at different times. This novel could be seen as having a circular pattern, but the plot line begins at the bottom of the circle, jumps back to the top of the circle, jumps forward to the right side of the circle, and so on. There is an eventual circular pattern when the novel is finished. One would think that the events of this story would all lead up to the bombing of Dresden, but it is quite the contrary. There are several separate plots that survive on their own which have absolutely nothing to do with Dresden and everything to do with Billy Pilgrim and his life after the war. Vonnegut has visited the same scene two or three times before, but only to show the fact that Billy is unstuck in time.
2.3 Time and space scheme in the novel

_Slaughterhouse- Five_ as a postmodernist work is full of variability of time and space. As time and space relationship is one of the aesthetic tools of the novel and a vehicle to express the author’s ideological views, I found it necessary to put the narrative into a certain framework. A sequential order was hardly possible because the story jumps from one topic to another, from one place to another. However, for the ease of analysis, I have put the discourse into most prominent foregrounding episodes and the narrative structure was presented in two schemes.

**Scheme I** presents a hypothetically “real” sequence of events according to the fabula (plot) of the novel.

**Scheme II** reflects the discourse (sjuzet) level as represented in the work and according to which I am going to analyse the episodes of the novel.

Both schemes are given for comparison in order to foreground not only the features of postmodernist narrative but also to show “zigzagging”, oppositions and juxtapositions of aesthetic, ideological meaning and stylistic framework of the work as well the movements of the writer’s mind.

Graphically presented episodes would look like this. See Figure 1:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scheme I</th>
<th>Scheme II</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Episodes according to the fabula (plot)</strong></td>
<td><strong>Episodes according to the sjuzet (discourse)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Billy as unstuck in time.</td>
<td>20. The present – the time of writing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Billy in Luxemburg as unsuitable soldier.</td>
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1. Concept of time.

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14. Tralfamadorian books as having no chronology and expressing no morality.

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20. The present – the time of writing.

Figure 1

10. Billy’s eighteenth wedding anniversary.

6. Billy in Dresden, two days after the war, digging for bodies.
2.4 The analysis of the episodes according to the sjuzet of the novel

The story starts in medias res with episode 20 “The present – the time of writing”. Vonnegut in the postmodern manner discusses his plan for the novel. He apologizes for the fact that the novel is:

“so short and jumbled and jungled” (Vonnegut 1969, 11) and explains that this is because “there is nothing intelligent to say about a massacre” (ibid. p.11).

Here narrator uses metafictional device because this episode is not about Billy Pilgrim, but a preface about how he came to write Slaughterhouse-Five. This metafictional device is clearly autobiographical, and it exists on a plane different from that on which the bulk of the rest of the novel exists. His decision to make this contextual content part of the story rather than an introduction reflects how deeply entrenched his life is in the story that the novel relates, and perhaps how deeply imprinted is the story in his own and his contemporaries’ life. This kind of narrative reflects the postmodernist character of novel in which the story is constantly interrupted by authorial remarks. The struggle with creating a narrative is part of why it took the narrator so long to write the book:

When I got home from the Second World War twenty-three years ago, I thought it would be easy for me to write about the destruction of Dresden, since all I would have to do would be to report what I had seen. And I thought, too, that it would be a masterpiece or at least make me a lot of money, since the subject was so big. But not many words about Dresden came from my mind then – not enough of them to write a book, anyway. And not many words come now, either, when I have become an old fart (ibid. p. 2).

When he talks to Bernard O’Hare about his planned Dresden book, the idea of a novel with climax, plot, characters, and all of the other tricks of the novelist’s trade seems ridiculous next to the reality of the massacre. Vonnegut’s narrative conception is intricate, as evidenced by his description of the wallpaper roll on which he outlines it, and the story does not come to light until Vonnegut decides he can sacrifice the pleasant, organized outline for the true confusion entrenched in his war story. To convey the horror of his experience, narrator adopts a writing method that mirrors the circularity, confusion, and fatalism of his own feelings about the war. This fragmented structure persists throughout the novel, as protagonist Billy Pilgrim drifts back and forth in time. Time and its meaning is a broad theme in the novel.

Because of the force of his Dresden memories, in some sense his life has already ceased to be linear. The writer uses the children’s song about Yon Yonson as a metaphor for his feelings about Dresden:
My name is Yon Yonson,
I work in Wisconsin,
I work in a lumbermill there.
The people I meet when I walk down the street,
They say, ’What’s your name?’
And I say,
My name is Yon Yonson,
I work in Wisconsin...(ibid. p. 2).

The last line of the song is the first, and so there is no escape, no clean way to end it. The song has no ending, like his memories about Dresden.

In episode (20) we also get acquainted with the narrator. This novel has two narrators. One which represents the authorial voice as the writer who, however, has a bodily determination. And another narrator Billy Pilgrim who is also a certain mouth of the author. Only the authorial narrator represents the “real” one. We could say that one narrator is personal - first person and the other is impersonal - third person (see above p. 21). The latter is the story of Billy Pilgrim who, similarly to the author, fights in the World War II, is taken prisoner by the Germans and witnesses the fire-bombing of Dresden. The personal narrative is Vonnegut’s own story about writing a book about the worst experience of his life. It appears mostly in this episode, and describes his temptation to write a book about Dresden and his efforts to finally produce it. The personal view also appears in the last episode 6 of the book and surfaces twice in the Billy Pilgrim’s story:

“That was I. That was me. That was the author of this book” (Vonnegut 1969, 6).

This can assure the reader of particular identity of the author with Billy. But it is important to say that the character of Vonnegut in episode 6 is not identical with the author of the novel Slaughterhouse – Five. The character in this section might have the same experiences and friends as Vonnegut, the author, but he is still a character within the story of an author. The author removes himself from the plot as far as possible to gain distance from the horrible events he experienced in the war.

Also in episode (20) narrator himself for the first time mentions the phrase “So it goes” which recurs about one hundred and six times during the novel. It appears everytime anybody dies in the novel, and sustains the circular quality in the book. It enables the book, and thus Vonnegut’s narration to go on. The phrase becomes a mantra of resignation and acceptance.”So it goes” is a recurrent phrase as well the motif of the novel which discloses the poisoning of human actions and mind. Because the phrase is first uttered by narrator himself, each “So it goes” seems to come directly from his mouth:
His name was Gerhard Müller. He told us that he was a prisoner of the Americans for a while. We asked him how it was to live under Communism, and he said that it was terrible at first, because everybody had to work so hard, and because there wasn’t much shelter or food or clothing. But things were much better now. He had a pleasant little apartment, and his daughter was getting an excellent education. His mother was incinerated in the Dresden firestorm. So it goes. (ibid. p. 1).

When the narrator uses this phrase later on with the story, we can associate fact with fiction and also history with fantasy, as the sense of resignation and complacency experienced by Billy and other characters find support in what seems like actual authority.

In the next episode 1 which is called “Billy as unstuck in time” we observe discorsal deviation. The story jumps from the last episode to the first. At this point we notice ellipsis (see above p.19). The narration jumps from the first person to the third person. At the same time changes the time and space of the novel. The narrator bids us listen and declares that:

Billy Pilgrim has come unstuck in time. Billy has gone to sleep a senile widower and awakened on his wedding day. He has walked through a door in 1955 and come out another one in 1941. He has gone back through that door to find himself in 1963. He has seen his birth and death many times, he says, and pays random visits to all the events in between (Vonnegut 1969, 17).

Billy travels randomly through the moments of his life without control over his chronological destination. He jumps around his life, from senile widower to his wedding day. He has seen his own birth and death many times. He has no control over the trips and they aren’t always fun. He was born in 1922 in Illium, New York the only child of a local barber. Billy’s name could be understood as a symbol of his innocence. The author chooses the child’s form Billy rather than William, and his last name of Pilgrim has symbolic significance. He is on a journey, and pilgrim here strongly intimates innocence. He is more like a naive traveler than a warrior ascetic. Writer’s attempt to come to terms with the trauma of an atrocious firebombing cannot be contained within the bounds of a conventional narrative. Instead the text searches discontinuously amongst wartime recollection, space-travel fantasy, whimsical anecdote, quotation, reportage. Slaughterhouse-Five is an attempt to understand and to bear witness to the paradox of mass killing for democracy. And it is for this reason that, in terms of narrative form, the novel so explicitly reproduces the sense of disorientation and loss of faith in time as something progressive, coherent and meaningful that we have come to recognize more and more in contemporary fiction.
The following episode 16 “The planet of Tralfamadore as a new concept of time” presents a clear discorsal deviation. Billy Pilgrim shifts in time to year 1967. He is on radio show in New York City where talks about his abduction by aliens, Tralfamadorians. The narrator opposes the real world to a fantastic world of Tralfamadorians which is far more real because even fantastic features cannot understand the world. Here we observe Georg Lukas’ understanding of ideology according to which the author creates a fictional world which is a reflection of life in the greatest concreteness (see above p. 8). He explains the true nature of time which he learned in Tralfamadore. Billy’s belief in Tralfamadorian philosophy is the great comfort of his life, and he is eager to share this philosophy with the world. The aliens taught Billy, the optometrist, a better way to “see”. On Tralfamadore, time is not linear, all moments are structured and permanent; death is merely one moment out of many moments in a person’s life. Tralfamadorians and their views are evident in the episodes 12, 13, 14 and 15. On the night of his daughter’s wedding day, Billy cannot sleep. Because he has travelled in time already, he knows he will be kidnapped by the Tralfamadorians’ flying saucer in an hour. Billy gets out of bed by the light of a full moon and wanders down the hallway and into his daughter’s empty bedroom. He watches a late-night documentary on American bombers and their gallant pilots in World War II. Slightly unstuck in time, Billy watches the movie forward and backward. Planes fly backward; magically quelling flames, drawing their fragmented bombs into steel containers, and sucking them back up into their bellies. Guns on the ground suck metal fragments from the pilots, crew, and planes. Weapons are shipped backed to factories, where they are carefully disassembled and broken down into their constituent minerals. The minerals are shipped to specialists all over the world who

“hide them cleverly in the ground, so they never hurt anybody ever” (Vonnegut 1969,54).

In Billy’s mind, Hitler becomes a baby and all of humanity works toward creating two perfect people named Adam and Eve.

After daughter’s wedding night Billy is kidnapped by Tralfamadorians (episode 12 “Night after Billy daughter’s wedding”). Billy heads out to the backyard to meet the saucer that will arrive soon.

The saucer was one hundred feet in diameter, with portholes around its rim. The light from the portholes was a pulsing purple. The only noise it made was the owl song. It came down to hover over Billy, and to enclose him in a cylinder of pulsing purple light. Now there was the sound of a seeming kiss as an airtight hatch in the bottom of the saucer was opened. Down snaked a ladder that was outlined in pretty lights like a Ferris wheel (ibid. p. 54).
There is an essential difference between Billy’s trip in the boxcar and his trip in the flying saucer. In the boxcar he is cold and forced to sleep standing up whereas on the flying saucer he has a comfortable chair in which he can relax.

On the way to Tralfamadore Billy reads the novel “Valley of the Doll” (episode 14 “Tralfamadorian books as having no chronology and expressing no morality”). He learns that the aliens’ novels are slim, sleek volumes. Because they have a different concept of time, Tralfamadorians have novels arranged by juxtaposition of marvelous moments. The books have no cause or effect or chronology, their beauty is in the arrangement of events meant to be read simultaneously. The aliens love their books because they contain:

“the depths of many marvelous moments seen all at one time” (ibid. p. 64).

Tralfamadorians experience all time simultaneously, they know everything that will happen. The aliens accept fate completely and without struggle. Billy, unstuck in time, knows everything that will ever happen to him. The Tralfamadorian concept of time emphasizes the role of fate in shaping existence and completely rejects free will. When Billy is kidnapped, he understands that all people and things are trapped in life’s collection of moments like bugs trapped in amber. Billy is locked into his fate; any resistance to this notion is futile. Billy’s question “Why me?” (ibid. p. 55) reveals the limits of human consciousness; the Tralfamadorians would never think to ask such a question, since they know that the structure of time is beyond anyone’s control. They tell him that there is no why, since the moment simply is and since all of them are trapped in the moment, like bugs in amber. What is important, then, is how one interprets the events in one’s life, which certainly changes for Billy after he returns from the war.

As he begins his stay with the Tralfamadorians, Billy learns about their concept of time and their philosophy of acceptance. If there is no free will, and if each moment is structured so that it can only occur the way it occurs, then it makes sense to accept things as they come. Their philosophy states that all time is all time. It does not change. It simply is. All moments exist in time simultaneously and forever. One cannot change the past or the future because they already and always exist. In the Tralfamadorian view of the universe, guilt does not exist because in their view one is not responsible for one’s actions. Whatever will, or has happened will always happen and did always happen. There is no way to change the course of events. Everything is predetermined. Billy is told by the Tralfamadores that:

Today we do. On other days we have wars as horrible as any you’ve ever seen or read about. There isn’t anything we can do about them, so we simply don’t look at them. We
ignore them. We spend eternity looking at pleasant moments – like today at the zoo. Isn’t this a nice moment? (ibid. p. 85).

In Tralfamadore Billy learns that the best philosophy is to enjoy the good moments and ignore the bad ones. Reconciliation to the world, or the “So it goes” attitude, comes from visiting all the moments of one’s life innumerable times. The moment of death is no more permanent than any other moment. This realization comes as a great comfort to Billy, given the horrible killing he has witnessed. Since it offers him immediate comfort, he makes a willed decision to share his insights with the world when the time is ripe. According to critics by offering the Tralfamadorian theories to the public, Billy figuratively extends his optometry practice beyond typical lenses and spectacles, correcting humankind’s understanding of death and will. Billy’s desire to share his story with the public, however, is a matter of personal will. Ironically, Billy concertedly exercises his free will in order to teach others that free will is futile. Despite this irony, Billy is yet unaware that there is danger in a world without free will, especially when no one claims responsibility for his or her actions. Billy accepts the Tralfamadorian advice to look at life’s nice moments as much as possible. He still does not control his time travel, but he takes comfort in the foreknowledge he gains from it (Vees-Gulani).

In the Tralfamadore Billy spends few days at the zoo, which is a suspended reality, in which Billy lives out his dreams and receives lessons about the nature of the universe:

Billy Pilgrim says that the Universe does not look like a lot of bright little dots to the creatures from Tralfamadore. The creatures can see where each star has been and where it is going, so that the heavens are filled with rarefied, luminous spaghetti. And Tralfamadorians don’t see human beings as two-legged creatures, either. They see them as great millepedes – with babies legs at one end and old people’s legs at the other, says Billy Pilgrim (Vonnegut 1969, 63).

The Tralfamadore told him that there were at least seven sexes at Earth and that human babies would not be possible without people such as homosexual males and woman over sixty-five. The guide tries to explain to the crowd how Billy perceives time:

The guide invited the crowd to imagine that they were looking across a desert at a mountain range on a day that was twinkling bright and clear. They could look at a peak or a bird or a cloud, at a stone right in front of them, or even down into a canyon behind them. But among them was this poor Earthling, and his head was encased in a steel sphere which he could never take off. There was only one eyehole through which he could look, and welded to that eyehole were six feet of pipe (ibid. p. 83).
The alien asks the crowd to imagine being fitted with a metal sphere with one opening on six feet of pipe which was all a human could see of existence. This metaphor used by alien guide to describe how earhlings perceive time makes human existence seem more like torture or imprisonment. It also states that the human is strapped to a railcar that sometimes moves faster and at other times slower.

Also in Tralfamadore he meets Montana Wildhack. She is six months pregnant and asks him to tell her a story, during which narrator discloses his memories about Dresden (episode 15 “Conversation with Montana Wildhock for disclosing memories about Dresden”). Billy Pilgrim did not choose another story for example about more pleasant moments. All the time narrator wants remind humanity what happened twenty years ago.

Dresden was destroyed on the night of February 13, 1945, Billy Pilgrim began. He told Montana about the four guards who, in their astonishment and grief, resembled a barbershop quartet. He told her about the stockyards with all the fenceposts gone, with roofs and windows gone – told her about seeming little logs lying around. There were people who had been caught in the fire-storm. So it goes. (Vonnegut 1969, 130).

Billy Pilgrim tells Montana of the destruction of Dresden with all atrocities and of the little burned logs lying all around that were actually people. In bombed-out Dresden, the guards and the prisoners venture out onto the moonscape to search for food and water. In the city itself they do not encounter another living soul. At nightfall, they reach an inn in a portion of a suburb untouched by bombs or flames. The blind innkeeper and his family know that Dresden has been destroyed. They give the prisoners soup and beer and a stable to sleep in for the night. As the prisoners prepare for bed, the innkeeper says in German, “Good night, Americans. Sleep well.” (Vonnegut 1969, 132).

The planet of Tralfamadore could be read as a metaphor and as a symbol for the worldview that allowed Billy to assimilate his war experiences into his post-war life. The Tralfamadorian view is that time is an established series of events devoid of morality and cause and effect relationships. Further, while bad things happen it is best to focus on the good times. Vonnegut injects the science-fiction thread, to indicate how greatly the war has disrupted Billy’s existance. It seems that Billy may be hallucinating about his experiences with the Tralfamadorians as a way to escape a world destroyed by war; a world that he cannot understand. Furthermore, the Tralfamadorian theory of the fourth dimension seems too convenient a device to be more than just a way for Billy to rationalize all the death with he
has seen face to face. Billy, then, is a traumalized man who cannot come to terms with the destructiveness of war.

From memories about Tralfamadore Billy jumps to episode 2 “Billy in Luxemburg as unsuitable soldier”. At this point we observe repetitive narration (see above p.19). It is the year 1944, when he is in Luxemburg. He was a chaplain’s assistant, an unpopular position in the army. He hasn’t got any equipment and didn’t look like a soldier:

Billy was wearing a thin field jacket, a shirt and trousers of scratchy wool, and long underwear that was soaked with sweat. He was the only one of the four who had a beard. It was a random, bristly beard, and some of the bristles were white, even though Billy was only twenty-one years old. He was also going bald. Wind and cold and violent exercise had turned his face crimson. He didn’t look like a soldier at all. He looked like a filthy flamingo (Vonnegut 1969,24).

As we see the war changes people completely not only their appearance but also psychology. War possesses a destructive power. During such events human relationships disappear.

Later on Billy jumps to year 1965; episode 11 “Billy visits his mother in a nursing home”). She had pneumonia; her voice was nearly gone, so in order to hear her, Billy had to put his ear right next to her papery lips. She asked the question: “how did I get so old” (Vonnegut 1969,32) and passed out. After this Billy mentioned the phrase “so it goes”. In this episode the mantra “so it goes” could be understood that Billy has learned to cope with death adopting the Tralfamadorian view. This mantra appears each time death is mentioned in the novel and serves to dissipate the emotional weight normally attached to the event.

From memories about his mother Billy jumps to year 1961 (episode 9 “New Year’s Party”) when disgracefully drunk, he seduced a woman. Billy usually did not drink much, because the war had ruined his stomach, but he certainly had a snootful now, and he was being unfaithful to his wife Valencia for the first and only time.

In the next episode 3 “Billy is captured by Germans along with Weary” the author comes back to year 1944, to his war experiences when Billy is captured by Germans along with Weary. This purposeful lack of cohesion is like a warning for future generations that the war has a destructive power. It ruins not only the world but also man’s mind. In episode 3 we get acquainted with Roland Weary, who was only eighteen, was at the end of an unhappy childhood spent mostly in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. He had been unpopular in Pittsburgh.
“He had been unpopular because he was stupid and fat and mean, and smelled like bacon no matter how much he washed. He was always being ditched in Pittsburgh by people who did not want him with them” (Vonnegut 1969, 25).

A stupid, cruel soldier taken prisoner by the Gremans along with Billy. Unlike Billy, who is totally out of place in the war, Weary is deluded glory seeker who fancies himself part of the Three Musketeers and saves Billy’s life out of a desire to be heroic. Weary, like the medieval crusaders and the Three Musketeers whom he idolizes, believes he is acting in dignified and exalted accordance with God’s will. We see, however, that he actually has no more dignity than Billy. Vonnegut indicates here that war is war and death is death. The novel thus indicates one of war’s most tragic ironies, that there can be no heroes without villains and victims which makes even the most glorified aspects of war useless in the face of death. The narrator’s tone is familiar and ironic, and he uncovers touches of dark humour and absurdity that do not diminish the lyrical and emotional power of the material. When Billy and Weary are attacked by enemies, and a bullet misses Billy by inches, the narrator says:

“Billy stood there politely, giving the marksman another chance. It was his addled understanding of the rules of warfare that the marksman should be given a second chance” (ibid. p. 28).

This expression might seem comical at first, but the topic the narrator comments upon, war, is a serious one. Using such ridiculing comments comments in a context of war, the narrator seems to neglect the seriousness and cruelty of war at first sight, but taking a closer look at these scenes, I think that they even seem more cruel and serious by these comments. This is also the effect Vonnegut wants to achieve concerning the reader.

Then follows episode 4 “Billy’s journey by train to the prison’s camp for disclosing an absurdity war” where is presented Billy’s journey by train to the prison’s camp. Episodes 3 and 4 are connected because in the 3rd episode Billy and Weray were captured by Germans while episode 4 presents their journey to the prison’s camp. We notice only shift in space but not in time. Billy and the other prisoners march with their hands on their heads. Billy is bobbing up and down because of the broken heel and he occasionally bumps into Roland Weary whose own feet, poorly clad in clogs, are turning to bloody pulps. At each crossroads other groups of prisoners join the columns. As the prisoners cross the border into Germany they pass a film crew set up to chronicle the battle. The camera crew is out of film. Eventually the prisoners reach a rail yard where many boxcars are waiting to take them further into Germany. The soldiers separate the men by rank and begin to stuff them into boxcars. One American officer, crazed by pneumonia, tells Billy that “If you're ever in Cody,
Wyoming, just ask for Wild Bob!” (Vonnegut 1969, 49). Vonnegut interjects at this point to say that both he and Bernard O'Hare were there at that moment. Billy and Roland are put in separate boxcars. Billy climbs into the corner of his car so he can see out the ventilator. He sees Germans spray painting the contents of each car on its side. One of the prisoners in the car with Billy is a hobo who blandly states that he has "been in worse places than this. This ain't so bad." (ibid. p. 49). The men take turns sleeping and standing. No one wants to let Billy sleep beside him because Billy yells and kicks in his sleep. He thus sleeps standing up. During the night some of the trains begin to pull out of the station. They have orange and black flags indicating they are carrying prisoners and should not be bombed. Billy's train, however, does not move for two days because all the prisons are full. During the two days that they wait the prisoners are not allowed to leave their cars. To the guards the boxcars become organisms that take in food and water and excrete piss and shit through their ventilators. Finally, the train with Billy's car begins to slowly move eastward. Billy is not aware of it but Christmas day comes and goes. On Christmas night he sleeps spooned up with the hobo on the floor of the boxcar.

In the course of this episode 4 we learn some details of Billy's middle-aged years. He has lucrative investments, the appreciation of his peers, a large home and a fine car. He suffers from spells of weeping which indicate a troubled psyche. These details are juxtaposed with the time he spent waiting in the prison boxcars during which he was powerless and miserable. The curious glimpse he gets of the comfortable interior of the guard's boxcar juxtaposes with the details of his middle-aged years and serves to impress upon the reader the transitory nature of wealth and comfort.

From the memories about his journey in the boxcar, Billy jumps in time and space to year 1948 when he is in the mental veteran’s hospital in New York (episode 7 “Billy in the mental veteran’s hospital in New York in 1948”). The episode presents a clear discorsal deviation, a scene is laid few years after the war when Billy Pilgrim is a mental patient in Lake Placid, New York. No one else suspected he was going crazy but the doctors agree that his is going crazy. They think it is because his father threw him in the deep end of the pool and taken him to the Grand Canyon when he was a child. The man in the bed next to Billy is Eliot Rosewater who introduces Billy to science fiction and the works of Kilgore Trout who becomes Billy's favorite author as well. Rosewater like Billy, has little love for life, in part because of things he saw and did in the war. Rosewater tells Billy that everything there is to know about life is in The Brothers Karamazov but that this isn't sufficient anymore. He tells a psychologist that they will have to develop new lies or no one will want to go on living.
Rosewater is reading a book by Kilgore Trout titled “Maniacs in the Fourth Dimension” in which the author claims that all mental diseases exist in the fourth dimension and can't be understood by psychologists. Trout claims that vampires, werewolves, goblins, angels and William Blake also live in the fourth dimension:

It was about people whose mental diseases were all in the fourth dimension, and three-dimensional Earthling doctors couldn’t see those causes at all, or even imagine them. One thing Trout said that Rosewater liked very much was that there really were vampires and werewolves and goblins and angels and so on, but that they were in the fourth dimension. So was William Blake, Rosewater’s favorite poet, according to Trout. (Vonnegut 1969, 75).

Rosewater explains that Trout is not a good writer but has great ideas. He tells Valencia that he has never met another person who has heard of Kilgore Trout and that nobody knows where he lives. He congratulates Valencia on her ring and upon learning that it was war booty exclaims that the nice thing about war is that everybody gets something. The author interjects to observe that Kilgore Trout actually lived in Illium and that Billy would eventually meet him. We also get acquainted with Kilgore Trout and his books in episode 18 “Kilgore Trout’s books as a symbol of real world”. Kilgore Tout lived in Illium where he made a living as a circulation man for the Illium Gazette. Billy met him in 1964 when Trout was sixty-two years old. He did not think of himself as a writer, had never seen a copy of any of his books in print and had no idea how many he had written. Billy is driving his Cadillac down an alley when he recognizes a bearded man haranguing a group of kids to convince their customers to subscribe to the Sunday edition. Using vulgar language, he tells them that the carrier with the most new subscriptions will receive a free trip to Martha's Vineyard. The only girl carrier asks if she can take her sister too and Trout refuses and asks her if she thinks money grows on trees. One of Trout's stories is about a money tree that attracts humans who kill themselves for its fruit and make very good fertilizer. Billy recognizes the man but can't say for sure who he is. He parks his car and watches as one of Trout's boys quits, leaving Trout to deliver the route himself. Trout calls the boy a "gutless wonder" (Vonnegut 1969, 122) which is also the title of one of his stories about a robot that drops jellied gasoline on people and is ostracized by human society until it cures its halitosis. Billy approaches Trout and asks if he is the writer named Kilgore Trout. Trout is confused by the question and admits that nobody has ever called him a writer. Trout admits that he has received only one piece of fan mail and he assumed it was from an insane person. Billy tells him about Eliot Rosewater
who wrote the letter and Trout is shocked to learn that it was written by a grown man. "He writes like a fourteen-year-old" (Vonnegut 1969, 123) Trout says.

Kilgore Trout and Billy Pilgrim represent two potential courses for Vonnegut's own life. Trout represents the bitter opportunist that Vonnegut would have become if he had been a less successful writer and Pilgrim represents the malaise of middle-class suburban life that would have consumed him if he had not started writing. In a humorous commentary on the relationship between writers and their readers, Kilgore Trout believes that his number one fan, Eliot Rosewater, writes like an adolescent and Rosewater believes that Trout is a horrible writer with good ideas.

"Kurt Vonnegut has said that the character of Kilgore Trout, who appears in many of Vonnegut's novels, represents what he might have become if his writing career had not met with success" (Welling 32).

Within the context of *Slaughterhouse-Five* Trout and his stories symbolize the real world which is to say, Earth bound ramifications of the Tralfamadorian philosophy. As such, when Trout reinvents the story of Jesus to produce a more universal moral it resonates with Billy's efforts to assimilate his war experiences into the greater scope of time.

Billy travels in time to his wedding night in a rented studio apartment on the water in Cape Ann (episode 8 "Billy’s wedding night with Valencia in Cope Ann, Massachusetts"). The narrator reminds us that Valencia and her father are very rich, and Billy will benefit greatly from his marriage to her. After they have sex, Valencia tries to ask Billy questions about the war. She wants a heroic war story, but Billy does not really respond to her. He has a crazy thought about the war, which narrator says would make a good epitaph for Billy, and for the author, too:

"Everything was beautiful, and nothing hurt" (Vonnegut 1969, 88). Subtle parallels in Billy's time traveling emerge as well during this episode. Once back in bed with his wife he sleeps spooned against her as he had once slept spooned against the hobo in the boxcar. Although he is experiencing nice moments in his life, all the time he is coming back to his war experiences. He can’t forget the cruelty of war.

The following episode 5 "Dresden as a symbol of peaceful and happy living" presents a clear discorsal deviation. Dresden is presented as a symbol of peaceful and happy living. After a lecture on personal hygiene by an Englishman and an election in which Edgar Derby is named their leader, the Americans are shipped to Dresden. Dressed in his fur-satin coat and swathed in cloth scraps and silver boots left over from the production of Cinderella, Billy looks like the war’s unwitting clown. Billy does not mean to be disrespectful when he
dresses himself in the curtain and boots from the Cinderella play. He is cold and needs better shoes. He is also in a real state, mentally. On the other hand, war is about the loss of human life, and must be dealt with respectfully. The British officer who assumed that Billy's ridiculous costume was meant intentionally as a joke by the German guards, the German veteran who stops Billy in the street and accuses him of wearing the outfit intentionally as a reprehensible joke. Neither the British officer nor the German veteran understand that Billy, as well as themselves, are simply the victims of circumstances and each are doing the best with the materials at hand.

When the prisoners are on their way to Dresden, the Englishman says:

“You need not worry about bombs, by the way. Dresden is an open city. It is undefended, and contains no war industries or troop concentrations of any importance” (ibid. p. 137).

Especially this expression emphasizes the senselessness of the attack on Dresden. As often stated in the text, the war is, at that point, nearly over, and another attack on a city with many civilians is not necessary to defeat the Germans. By this dramatic irony the narrator creates, the events seem even more atrocious to the reader who already knows that Dresden will eventually be destroyed and that thousands of innocent people will die. But the narrator does not only use ironic comments to underline and express the seriousness of the situation, he also uses solemn expressions to convey the conclusions he has drawn from his experiences during the war:

I have told my sons that they are not under any circumstances to take part in massacres, and that the news of massacres of enemies is not to fill them with satisfaction or glee. I have also told them not to work for companies which make massacre machinery, and to express contempt for people who think we need machinery like that (ibid. p. 14).

In this part of the novel, the reader experiences Vonnegut in the role of the educator. Considering the fact that Vonnegut has been to war himself, one can conclude that his experiences have led him to this statement, which the reader is to take seriously.

When the boxcars open, the Americans gaze on the most beautiful city they have ever seen. “Oz” says Kurt Vonnegut, who is in the boxcar too. Dresden compared to oz symbolizes the innocence and purity of peaceful, happy living. Eight German soldiers guard one hundred American prisoners. They are marched through the city to a former slaughterhouse that will serve as their quarters. The building has a large five on it. The soldiers are taught the German name Schlachthof-funf for their new home, in case they get lost in the city. Billy is amazed by Dresden’s architecture. The city is relatively untouched by war, with industries and
recreational facilities still operating. All the citizens are amused by the ragtag parade, except one, who finds Billy’s ridiculous appearance offensive. The man is insulted by Billy’s lack of dignity and his apparent reduction of the war to a joke.

In Dresden the American soldiers are exposed to a domestic environment in which women play a larger role though their presence is tempered by the war. During the first evening at the slaughterhouse, Edgar Derby, and their young German guard Werner Gluck accidentally open a door onto a shower room full of beautiful naked girls. This incident marks the first glimpse of female nudity that Billy and Gluck have ever had. The three men finally make it to their intended destination, the prison kitchen. The cook regards their sorry condition and declares, “All the real soldiers are dead.”(Vonnegut 1969, 116) which carries the implication that in order to be a real soldier one must be dead.

In Dresden soldiers work in a factory that manufactures malt syrup. The prisoners of war work there making the syrup intended to serve as a nutritional supplement for pregnant women. All the prisoners who work at the factory secretly eat the syrup themselves, scooping it out of vats with spoons hidden in every corner of the building. Billy takes his first spoonful on his second day at work, “and then every cell in Billy’s body shook him with ravenous gratitude and applause.”(Vonnegut 1969, 116). Billy hands a syrupy spoon through a window to Edgar Derby, who is working outside:

“So Billy made a lollipop for him. He opened the window. He stuck the lollipop into poor old Derby’s gaping mouth. A moment passed, and then Derby burst into tears. Billy closed the window and hid the sticky spoon. Somebody was coming.”(ibid. p. 117).

We could say that the syrup becomes a symbol of longing for simple pleasures, simple happiness.

Dresden is an “open city”, not militarily important to the Allied Powers, people from surrounding cities flee to Dresden to take refuge. Ironically, the city is bombed and the thousands of people taking sanctuary in Dresden are all killed. Billy, the other American soldiers, and their German guards are all saved from the bombing because they are in the highly sheltered basement of Slaughterhouse-Five. It is also ironic that the description of the bombing of Dresden, the most important event of the novel, is given one of the vaguest descriptions of the novel:

“There were sounds like giant footsteps above. Those were sticks of high-explosive bombs. The giants walked and walked.”(ibid. p. 129).

As such, the senseless destruction of the city and its inhabitants symbolizes the inexplicable and often traumatic permutations of modern life. After the bombings stop, the
people taking shelter in Slaughterhouse-Five come out and look around at the once built-up, now leveled, industrial city. The soldiers are now forced to help dig up the corpses of the victims of the Dresden bombings, a hard and repulsive job. At first, it is bearable, but after a few days the bodies start to decompose, and the smell becomes intolerable. One soldier dies from the dry heaves after being forced to work in a rotting corpse mine. Ironically, this man has survived the bombing of Dresden, yet dies from the smell of others who died in the bombing.

After the memories about Dresden and its destruction follows episode 19 “Billy’s death” in which Billy’s death is presented. “As a time-traveler, he has seen his own death many times, has described it to a tape recorder. The tape is locked up with his will and some other valuables in his safe-deposit box at the Illium Merchants National Bank and Trust, he says.

"I, Billy Pilgrim, the tape begins, will die, have died, and always will die on February thirteenth, 1976.” (Vonnegut 1969, 103).

At the time of his death the United States has divided up into twenty small nations and that Chicago has been hydrogen-bombed by the Chinese. He is speaking to a large crowd in a baseball park, extolling the virtues of the lessons he has learned from the aliens. He tells the crowd that he will be dead in an hour because a man who once promised to kill him will do so that day. He tells the crowd there is nothing to regret in his death and he closes his speech as always by saying "Farewell, hello, farewell, hello." (ibid. p. 103). A moment later Lazzaro shoots him dead with a high-powered laser gun. Death is simply a violet light and a humming noise. He experiences the violet nothingness of death, and then he swings back into life and to 1968. The narrator’s tone shifts slightly when relating Billy’s account of 1976. Distancing himself from Billy’s own statements, the narrator is not exactly skeptical, but he adopts a disclaimer-like attitude. Instead of reporting the world events and the details of Billy’s assassination in his own voice, the narrator relays the transcript of Billy’s tape in order to make clear that it is Billy, not the narrator. The narration, which earlier functions as a sense of external authority and support, now creates distance between us and the story, and this distance confuses our sense of what we can trust and believe.

After his own death Billy shifts to episode 17 “Plane’s crash in Vermont in 1968” when he survives the plane’s crash in Vermont. Episodes 19 and 17 are juxtaposed. In episode 17 nearly twenty-five years after his experience in Dresden, Billy boards a chartered plane with twenty-eight other optometrists, including his father-in-law, headed for a trade conference in Montreal. Billy knows that the plane will crash. A barbershop quartet of
optometrists called the Four-eyed Bastards serenades the passengers with bawdy tunes. One of them is a Polish song about coal miners, which makes Billy remember a public hanging he witnessed in Dresden in which a Polish man was lynched for having sex with a German woman:

Me and Mike, ve vork in mine.
Holy shit, ve have good time.
Vunce a veek ve get our pay.
Holy shit, no vork next day. (Vonnegut 1969, 113).

The plane crashes into Sugarbush Mountain in Vermont, and Billy survives with the copilot. Austrian ski instructors wearing black ski masks arrive on the scene. As they check for signs of life, Billy whispers ‘Schlachthof-fünf’, a phrase he learned in Dresden in order to communicate the address of his prison if he got lost. The ski instructors transport Billy down the mountain on a toboggan. A famous neurosurgeon operates on him, and Billy remains unconscious for two days. The narrator tells us that Billy’s convalescence is filled with dreams, some of them involving time travel.

Could be said that two story lines dominate episodes 5 and 17. In one Billy and his fellow optometrists are flying into disaster even as they are serenaded with rowdy songs. In the other Billy and his fellow prisoners settle into their life in Dresden, a city at the heart of the war yet depicted as a place of soft colors and peaceful days. The juxtaposition of these two episodes effectively relieves the tension associated with the doomed plane and adds suspense to the otherwise enthusiastic Dresden scenes.

The following episode 10 “Billy’s eighteenth wedding anniversary” presents a clear discorsal deviation. A scene is laid eighteen years after Billy and Valencia’s wedding. Billy invites Trout to his anniversary celebration, where Trout is a hit with the optometrists and their wives. The guests love Trout because they admire authors though none of them have ever read his books. The Four-eyed Bastards or Febs, the barbershop quartet made up of optometrists, sing a sentimental song about old friendship. The experience of watching and listening to them visibly shakes Billy. Trout guesses that Billy has looked through a “time window.” (Vonnegut 1969, 126). When the barbershop quartet sings again, Billy has to leave the room because the song affects him. He goes upstairs and lies down on his bed. He remembers the night Dresden was destroyed. As we see the war has destroyed Billy’s consciousness.

The group of four optometrists who sing sentimental songs figures prominently in two places of the novel and in each case they are harbingers of doom. The first time they are
presented is on the fatal plane ride that ends when the aircraft hits Sugarbush Mountain (episode 17). In this case, the group's loud songs and light-hearted ditties serve as a reminder that horrible events occur in the context of hilarity and pleasure. The second time we meet them in episode 10 at Billy and Valencia's anniversary party. On this occasion the sight of the quartet causes Billy to suffer tremendous mental anxiety. Upon reflection he realizes that the quartet has reminded him of the almost comical appearance of the four German guards the morning after the attack on Dresden. In this manner the barbershop quartet, as represented by the German guards, again symbolizes the juxtaposition of horror and hilarity.

Although Billy often seems to bounce through life, at key points he shows the signs of serious damage. The barbershop quartet makes Billy remember the destruction of Dresden. A sentimental song about a gang of friends makes him think of the four guards looking out on their destroyed city. This is not a jump through time. This part is memory. There is a connection between the Tralfamadorian concept of time and memory; in a real sense, memory means that events in the past do continue to exist. Here, we do not see the firebombing of Dresden after one of Billy's leaps through time. He remembers it, an old man unnerved by a song, and the memory is as real as a time leap. The Tralfamadorian concept of time may teach us more than their pain avoiding philosophy. According to the alien view, massacres that happen are always happening. Time's passage cannot get rid of them. Although Billy and the aliens choose to try to take comfort from the always existing quality of events, Billy's near-breakdown and the return of his memories of Dresden suggest that things are not always so easy. Cruel situations cannot just be ignored.

In the last episode 6 “Billy in Dresden, two days after the war, digging for bodies” Billy leaps in time to May of 1945, two days after the end of the war in Europe. In a coffin-shaped green wagon, Billy and five other Americans ride with loot from the suburbs of Dresden. They found the wagon, attached to two horses, and have been using it to carry things that they have taken. When they go to the slaughterhouse and the other five Americans loot among the ruins, Billy naps in the wagon. He has a cavalry pistol and a Luftwaffe ceremonial saber. He wakes; two Germans, a husband and wife are angry about how the Americans have treated the horses. The horses' hooves are shattered, their mouths are bleeding from the bits, and they are extremely thirsty. Billy goes around looking at the horses, and he bursts into tears. It is the only time he cries in the whole war:

“When Billy saw the condition of his means of transportation, he burst into tears. He hadn’t cried about anything else in the war.” (Vonnegut 1969, 144).
Vonnegut throws the tragic absurdity of human life into sharp relief in his description of Billy’s happiest moment. The coffin-shaped wagon points to a symbolic death suffered even by the survivors of war. It is the death of a meaningful existence, the death of innocence for all the “babies” who carry out the latest Children’s Crusade. Billy has not yet grasped the emptiness of victory. Yet when two Germans point out the miserable state of the horses hitched to Billy’s coffin, he cannot avoid the fact that his victory also contains his own defeat. The happiest moment in Billy’s life ends in tears for the plight of two beleaguered beasts of burden.

In this episode (6) Billy is back in Dresden, two days after the war, digging for bodies. Vonnegut and O’Hare are there too. After spending two nights in the stable, the prisoners are put to work excavating the ruins of Dresden, where they discover innumerable “corpse mines.” (Vonnegut 1969, 156). It is May, the time of the war’s end, and also the time for the renewal and rebirth of springtime. But Billy and his friends are still finding reminders of death. The bodies rot faster than they can be removed, making for a grisly cleanup job. One prisoner, a Maori, dies of the dry heaves. The bodies are cremated where they lie in subterranean caverns. The soldiers use flamethrowers to carry out this grim task. During the course of the excavations, while the men are still under German command, Edgar Derby is discovered with a teapot found in the ruins. He is arrested and convicted of plundering, then executed by firing squad. Soon it is spring, and the Germans disappear to fight or flee the Russians. The war ends. Trees sprout leaves. A bird says to Billy, “Poo-tee-weet?” (ibid. p. 157) to which there can be no reply. As the narrator warns in the episode 20, there is nothing intelligent to say about a massacre. The novel’s ending suggests that bird-talk makes as much sense as anyone’s talk about war. This is ironic, since the theme of the novel, which should be the clearest message derived from the story, is summed up in the incoherent words of a bird. All these incidences of irony show senselessness and coincidence, with undertones of dark humor. This parallels the idea that war is nonsense, senseless, full of coincidence, and is unexplainable. Yet, like the bird, the narrator has persisted in filling the silence left after the massacre. Even if words and stories are meaningless, that they have managed to survive at all in the aftermath of a war that saw the mass incineration of books as well as of bodies is quite a feat.

In this final episode (6) the narrator demonstrates the Trafalmadorian view that death is something which happens to everyone, whether they are Martin Luther King, Robert Kennedy or his own father. He juxtaposes this observation with the fact that the world is gaining in population and under such circumstances death is only a deterrent.
On an average, 324,000 new babies are born into the world every day. During that same day, 10,000 persons, on an average, will have starved to death or died from malnutrition. So it goes. In addition, 123,000 persons will die for other reasons. So it goes. This leaves a net gain of about 191,000 each day in the world. The Population Reference Bureau predicts that the world’s total population will double to 7,000,000,000 before the year 2000 (Vonnegut 1969, 155).

His speculation that all the new souls in the world will want dignity draws upon the novel's central theme of importance in the universe. Namely, that respect and dignity are something that only living creatures expect and that death frees us from such expectations. The fact that Edgar Derby's execution, the event that Vonnegut had previously cited as the climax of the work, happens as a matter of course and as an aside also serves to highlight the novel's central message. Death comes to us all and we are fools before we get there.

In *Slaughterhouse-Five* Vonnegut not only dismisses the conventional story structure, which includes a climax and sequential continuity but he also shows how the war has made the idea of a climax completely irrelevant. While Vonnegut suggests to O'Hare early in the novel that the story should climax in the shooting of Edgar Derby for plundering a teapot, his portrayal of this moment is quite matter-of-fact:

“Somewhere in there the poor old high school teacher, Edgar Derby, was caught with a teapot he had taken from the catacombs. He was arrested for plundering. He was tried and shot. So it goes.”(ibid. p. 157). But with the phrase, “So it goes,” Vonnegut implies that there is no justice in death.

As we can see Vonnegut gives a compelling account of the horrors of war using intricate, clever story-telling techniques, bringing together the extremes between realism of representation and science fiction. He uses the extraordinary technique of combining Billy's views of World War Two with the serious message from the figment of madness of Tralfamadore to show the inexplicable occurrences of war and its repercussions.
CONCLUSIONS

After the investigations of temporal and spatial relationships in Kurt Vonnegut Jr’s novel *Slaughterhouse-Five; or The Children’s Crusade, A Duty-Dance With Death* the following conclusions could be drawn:

1. Time and space relationships acquire different representational form in the traditional realist narratology in comparison with the language of postmodernist literary discourse. The traditional narratology (writers and critics) place their main emphasis on the sequential structures of story construction and narration; they devise modes of analysis of time structure, order of events, temporal deviations, duration and selection of scenes, the study of point of view, narrative voice, and the types of narrators. Postmodernists do not observe any linearity in a text and easily adhere to all kinds of time shifts, for example transition from present to past and vice versa. The time of narration intermingles with the time of the narrative itself and with the writer’s own commentary. Kurt Vonnegut Jr’s novel *Slaughterhouse-Five; or The Children’s Crusade, A Duty-Dance With Death* furnishes an excellent specimen of the postmodernist mode of writing in time-shifting accompanied by indispensable changes of space.

2. In addition to the above mentioned postmodernist features, the novel contains conspicuous elements of surrealism, science fiction, fantasy and historical realism. The documentary and the fantastic often appear in the form of inclusions from other historical and literary sources. The war scenes have a strong autobiographical and experiential imprint.

3. The science fiction and fantastic element is represented in “text-in-a-text” episodes describing Billy Pilgrim’s encounter and a later visit to Tralfamadoreans. The Tralfamadore extracts shift the story into the surroundings of a fantastic planet and its inhabitants. These fantastic episodes foreground and stand in opposition to the absurdity of the reality of war and its atrocities.

4. The postmodernist framework of the narration manifests itself in two narrative voices: that of the narrator – speaker (the writer himself) and Billy Pilgrim to whom the writer has delegated the rendering of his story.
5. The central part of the novel is occupied by the metaphor of travelling in time. Billy Pilgrim, as the second ego of the writer, is fluctuating in time and space: “Billy Pilgrim has come unstuck in time. Billy has gone to sleep a senile widower and awakened on his wedding day. He has walked through a door in 1955 and come out another one in 1941. He has gone back through that door to find himself in 1963. He has seen his birth and death many times, he says, and pays random visits to all the events in between” (Vonnegut 1969, 17).

6. Vonnegut’s wartime experiences and their effects lead him to the ultimate conclusion that war is unexplainable. The irrationality of war is emphasized in each dimension by contrasts in its comic and tragic elements.

7. Billy’s psychosis is built around retrospection, turning his memories into a transgression of linear narrative. His story orbits the horror of Dresden, distorting his ability to maintain a healthy psychic development within purposive American society.

8. The research demonstrated that the time and space shifts is one of aesthetic tools of the novel and a vehicle to express the author’s ideological views; irony and illogicality of war and lack of humanism in human relationships. The fragmentary technique of the novel juxtaposes the absurdities of war with the episodes of “real” life, foregrounding distortions of human psychology and the loss of man’s integrity to find his/her identity in the inhuman political play.

9. The postmodernist time and space changeability, however, does not obliterate the element of strong realistic brand in the novel. The novel is a warning for future generations against any dehumanised ideology which may lead to the destruction of mankind.
SUMMARY

Laiko kaita naratyve yra neatsiejama nuo erdvės, nes laiko poslinkiai visada sukelia erdvės pasikeitimą. Šiame darbe siekiama atskleisti laiko ir erdvės kaitos estetines ir ideologines funkcijas postmodernistiniame Kurto Vonneguto, Jr. romane Skerdykla Nr.5 arba Vaikų Kryžiaus Žygis Privalomasis Šokis su Mirtimi. Laiko ir erdvės kaita romane apsprendžia jo struktūrines, semantines ir stilistines savybes.


Antroje darbo dalyje analizuojamos estetines bei ideologines laiko ir erdvės kaitos funkcijos Kurto Vonneguto, Jr. romane Skerdykla Nr.5 arba Vaikų Kryžiaus Žygis Privalomasis Šokis su Mirtimi.

Romanas Skerdykla Nr.5 – pati ryškiausia antikarinė rašytojo knyga, kurią Vonnegutas komponuoja pasakojimo pasakojime principu, fragmentiškai pateikia sukurtą Bilio Pilgrimo istoriją ir į ją įrašą dokumentinių, autobiografinių pasakojimų apie savo nelaisvę Dresdene ir apsilankymą jame jau po karo. Postmodernistinė romano struktūra yra kaitalinga su realistinių žiaurių bei satyrinės epizodų realizmu. Įvykių pristatomi chaotiškai ir nenuosekliai, nuolat grižtama tai į ketvirtąjį, tai į šeštąjį dešimtmetį. Laikė ir erdvėje besikaitaliojantį romano diskurse, pasakotojas vaizduoja ką matė ir patyrė. Kaip pacifistas jis pasmerkia žmonių smurtą, karą – „privalomajį šokį su mirtimi.“ Jo skausmas ir kančia dėl žmonių patirtos karo beprotybės romane išreikštas potekste, slypinčia įvairiuose kūrinio fragmentuose.

Skerdykla Nr.5 – knyga, kurioje Vonnegutas atkuria vienišą rašytojo knygą, kurią Vonnegutas komponuoja pasakojimo pasakojime principu, fragmentiškai pateikia sukurtą Bilio Pilgrimo istoriją ir į ją įrašą dokumentinių, autobiografinių pasakojimų apie savo nelaisvę Dresdene ir apsilankymą jame jau po karo. Postmodernistinė romano struktūra yra kaitalinga su realistinių žiaurių bei satyrinės epizodų realizmu. Įvykių pristatomi chaotiškai ir nenuosekliai, nuolat grižtama tai į ketvirtąjį, tai į šeštąjį dešimtmetį. Laikė ir erdvėje besikaitaliojantį romano diskurse, pasakotojas vaizduoja ką matė ir patyrė. Kaip pacifistas jis pasmerkia žmonių smurtą, karą – „privalomajį šokį su mirtimi.“ Jo skausmas ir kančia dėl žmonių patirtos karo beprotybės romane išreikštas potekste, slypinčia įvairiuose kūrinio fragmentuose.
Pasakotojas nuolat pabrėžia žmonių gyvenimo ir karo absurdiškumą, piešia karą be jokios romantikos, pasitelkęs skerdyklos alegoriją apnuogina nacizmo ir militarizmo piktžaizdes tarsi įspėdamas, kad žalojanti ideologija, nuodijanti žmogaus sąmonę, veiksmus ir pasąmonę, gali suardyti būsimų kartų gyvenimą.
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