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The Sociality of Novelistic Consciousness: György Lukács, Henry James, and the Practice of Novel Theory

Wu, Eaming

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The Sociality of Novelistic Consciousness:

György Lukács, Henry James, and the Practice of Novel Theory

Eaming Wu

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Abstract

This dissertation argues that, in the early 20th century, when novel theory was first being developed by the now-influential thinkers Henry James and György Lukács, the novel was approached by both thinkers as a genre that had a unique ability to offer experimental forms for consciousness and to allow readers to experience the social possibilities for a consciousness that could come to think by way of such forms. In Chapter 1, I explain how, for Lukács, the novel allows the search for self-consciousness by way of abstraction to be distributed *across* characters; in constituting its world of characters who engage in what I call an "intersubjective mistake" of applying their abstractions about the self to others, a glimpse of the self's implicatedness in its social engagements and its participation in constituting the world it lives in can be had. In my reading of James' *The Golden Bowl* and *The New York Edition of Prefaces*, in Chapters 2 and 3, I show how James experiments with different forms for consciousness through his characters, who are also engaged in representing one another to themselves. I argue that he is interested in the experiential consequences a representational practice of consciousness can have in the context of other consciousnesses.

In advancing this new understanding of novel theory, I not only demonstrate that the often opposed founders of novel theory James and Lukács actually have compatible views of the novel, but that their practices of novel theory have surprising commonalities. I advance the notion that their projects of theorizing the novel—for James, in *The New York Edition Prefaces*, and for Lukács, in *Die Theorie des Romans*—are both phenomenological presentations of thinking and experiencing subjects who have taken on a "novelized" consciousness. That is, having seen how the novel experiments with a plurality of characterological consciousnesses and considers how these

consciousnesses experience themselves and one another, both "theorists" seek to offer their own consciousnesses as legible in their social continuity with the novelistic world of characters.

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Introduction

This dissertation reads Henry James's *The New York Edition Prefaces* and György Lukács's *Die Theorie des Romans* as phenomenological presentations of thinking and experiencing subjects who, having seen how the novel experiments with a plurality of characterological consciousnesses and considers how these consciousnesses experience themselves and one another, seek to offer their own consciousnesses as legible in their social continuity with the novelistic world of characters. Insofar as these texts are often associated with James and Lukács's "theories" of the novel, my approach reverses the traditional understanding of the relationship between the knowing subject of "theory" to its object; I consider first what each of these theorists has been made to think and experience given their encounter or interaction with novels—that is, I read what they have to say *about* the novel as instituted as an effect of a novelized consciousness. They both seem to solicit such an interpretation, albeit in different ways. Lukács' *Die Theorie des Romans* casts the Novel itself as its speaking subject, as if to undermine "theory's" claim to an outside perspective by which it can "know" its object (as a theory about the novel), and to instead indicate the possibility that the "theory" rendered in the text is so novelistic in the way it thinks that it is basically synonymous with what the genre's own "consciousness" of itself would say. In a different way, James invites us to consider how his consciousness has been novelized in the *Prefaces* by describing his predominating "interest" in his own novels—their value to him as a prefacer and reader—as constituted of the "terms" which his re-acquaintance with them has unexpectedly caused to bloom in his consciousness: "The deviations and differences [between his present consciousness and the one he sees represented of himself 'in' his novels] might of course not have broken out at all, but from the moment they

began so naturally to multiply they became, as I say, my very terms of cognition." (*AN* 337) These "terms" of his created consciousness overlap with what has been understood as his "novel theory"; so he elsewhere specifies that his return to his past publications makes "the art of representation bristle[s] with questions, the very terms of which are difficult to apply and to appreciate." (*AN* 3) However, in so emphasizing the novelized position from which they articulate their respective "theories," each of these texts also indicates consciousness's incompleteness and dependence on something experienced by way of novels, but which remains only elusively referenced in their writing. Therefore, I rely on other works to help illuminate each thinker's views on the social potential in the novelistic world. I read James by applying his experimentations with different forms of consciousness and their social consequences in his novel *The Golden Bowl* to the *Prefaces*. To understand Lukács, I turn to his earlier *Die Seele und die Formen*—particularly to his essay on Lawrence Sterne, where he presents a dialogue between two characters discussing their judgments of novels; these characters end up being represented in terms of a social experience *from* the novel in their conversation.

The Experience of the Social World of the Novel

What is it we experience when we read novels? In particular, what kind of social world do we become embedded within—of what is it constructed, and how does novel form affect our experience of this construction? How might we understand our own relation to this world by way of this experience? I see both Lukács and James as endeavoring to integrate these questions into their literary critical practices, and as therefore working in terms of similar approaches to the world created in novels—it is a place in which characterological consciousness searches for social experience amidst other consciousnesses. However, James and Lukács ultimately have very different views on what constitutes novelistic consciousness and what might be experienced

as the social—views that take their assumptions and concepts from distinct intellectual traditions, neither of which I mean to take as authoritative as to how we should define consciousness. By placing James and Lukács together, I mean to emphasize that the forms and experiences that are proposed for novelistic consciousness need not be considered universal—I explore James' *The Golden Bowl* by looking at three different experimental forms for considering how consciousness might arrange and select the experiences that constitute it; in a different way, Lukács offers another model of form for consciousness by considering the dynamics of an abstracting consciousness that moves with the energy of glimpsed sociality, but whose experience tends to be documented in terms of its melancholic mourning and ironic conclusions. We can, nevertheless, situate what they have in common in their understanding of how certain forms of consciousness operating in the novel can produce certain social experiences, relative to other conceptions of novel form (understood by these others as a kind of form for consciousness—not necessarily contained in character—that can have social implications).

The world of the novel is often understood as constructed by way of the author's mimetic pursuit of a particular conception of "reality"; as such, the genre's development and its formal modes of representation come to be understood in terms of literary techniques that are primarily epistemological. These kinds of studies, which tend to minimize novelistic poetics and the distinctiveness of the novel (or aesthetics in general), have made novel form synonymous with modes of perception that seek to "know" a reality presumed to exist as separable from the knowing subject (even if it does not really "exist" in terms of the conceptions attributed to it).[1]

[1] Lukács is typically counted among these critics, "hauled in as a whipping boy by critics railing against the naïvete of reflection theory," as Rita Felski has noted (*Uses of Literature*, 81) although taking him as an example of this epistemological approach ignores the fact that he thought of literary form as also expressions of the passions and social attitudes of their author. Erich Auerbach is perhaps a better representative, with his studies in the development of

So, for example, to turn to a text that has had an enduring influence on this understanding of the novel, Ian Watt's *The Rise of the Novel* figures the novel's aims and purposes in terms of its "analogy" to what he calls "modern realism" in philosophy, which seeks to discover the "truth" of reality through individual experience and the senses. He thus comes to interpret the novel in terms of its "formal realism," as he calls it, such that formal elements of the novel appear to be reflections of assumptions as to how "reality" is constructed. Character and plot then become symptoms of a view that the modern social world is best described as a "developing but unplanned aggregate of particular individuals having particular experiences at particular times at particular places," as opposed to the "unified world picture" of the Middle Ages.[2] The novel, in this understanding of it, is a genre whose end product is the experience of reality that it has endeavored to "know"—to reflect accurately and to grasp social reality in its entirety in a kind of mental image or conception—with whatever historical or cultural assumptions and conventions that final conception of "reality" might entail. The represented world of the novel can then be translated into the "social" by way of what a theory can know *for* it—how epistemic practices are implicated in larger social structures and how they work within a social field.

In contrast, narratological studies of the novel have provided more terms to speak of the novel's formal inventiveness, the fictional nature of the world it references, and some of its distinct aesthetic qualities—but, they tend to restrict their understanding of the formal to linguistic structure, a structure which often seems to also assume the function of a form of perception; they then often close off their studies from explicit considerations of the social. Dorrit Cohn has pointed out that the novel (which for her would fit into a larger category of

different conceptions of "reality" through literature and their stylistic consequences in *Mimesis: Dargestellte Wirklichkeit in der abendländischen Literatur*.

[2] Watt, Ian. *The Rise of the Novel*, 31.

narrative fiction) has an intimate and unique relationship to an "imaginary psychology"—it is able to represent people as we are never able to know them in life, in terms of their most intimate thoughts, feelings, and experiences.[3] She reads this into the context of its realism: out of these imaginary minds, the novel builds a world that feels real, paradoxically by way of something that cannot be known in reality. In view of this conception of novelistic particularity, in my reading of Lukács and James, I see the novel as allowing us to think about its forms *for* consciousness in terms of their various productions of *different* possibilities for our experiences of thinking about what it might mean to us to inhabit another psychology. *That* such differences might exist then comes to be a constitutive part of a larger conception of "reality" (which does not need to be totalizing), as something that has been *experienced* through the novel's form. Rita Felski presents a similar understanding of the phenomenology given in a novel by Edith Wharton: she sees in it a "literary rendering of how worlds create selves, but also of how selves perceive and react to worlds made up of other selves."[4] This I see as a contrast to Cohn's approach, which tends to homogenize such effects by thinking of them in terms of their *overall* experiential realism.[5] The novel's forms that Cohn reads ultimately refer to these effects as representational strategies rather than poetic—the techniques tend to vary in terms of representational access to experience for the reader, rather than the qualitative differences among these experiences. More recently, Alan Palmer has argued that narratology, in its tendency to consider fictional minds by way of "focalization" (which considers the difference between the representation of the fact *that*

[3] The term she takes from J. Ortega y Gasset, *The Dehumanization of Art and Other Writings on Art and Culture*—"the psychology of possible human minds" is the material "proper to the novel" for him. 92.
[4] Felski, *The Uses of Literature*, 91.
[5] However, it is worth noting that Cohn hints at the experiential effects of what it may be like to have *too* many minds, represented in their experiential interiority, in one novel: she briefly hypothesizes that there might have been a generic change—a turn towards a focus on only a few consciousnesses in the early 20th century—when the novel world had begun to feel "too cluttered" in the 19th century, with its increase in the number of characters included. (Cohn, *Transparent Minds*, 9)

the person is thinking and the content of that person's thoughts), has been unable to consider a wider range of mental events (to use his examples: perception, sensations, mood, tone, emotions, and so on). In amelioration of this problem, Palmer has presented what he calls an "intersubjective first" position, by which consciousness is understood as constituted in terms of its dialogic engagements and the cooperative processes in which it is participating.[6] I read Lukács and James as likewise engaged in such a project: their understanding of consciousness views its constructing activities in terms of its social engagements and experiences, and the novel helps present this socialization. Whereas Palmer, in his effort to capture a better descriptive language for the construction of fictional minds in general, takes his models for what consciousness "is" from cognitive science and from Russian social psychologist Vygotsky (who is also known for his influence on Bakhtin), this dissertation explores two critics who try to have a social view of what consciousness *could become* from within their *personal* phenomenological explorations of the novel.

Novel Theory as a Social Practice

Any comprehensive history of novel theory in the Western tradition would necessarily be incomplete without the presence of these two prominent figures, Henry James and György Lukács. Both are considered founders of a tradition of literary criticism that seeks to define the novel by thinking about it as an aesthetic form—or, to be more comprehensive of the legacy of Lukács, "aesthetic" form, when the aesthetic itself is understood as a historically-generated category that serves a proxy and disguise for ideological form. The two works addressed in this dissertation have become canonical to theories of the novel—James's *New York Edition Prefaces*

[6] Palmer, *Fictional Minds*, 5.

and Lukács's *Die Theorie des Romans;* they were published approximately contemporaneously, in 1907-1909 and in 1914, respectively. Both of these seminal works bear marks of the burgeoning self-consciousness of thinkers who were coming to grips with modernity, recognizing their historical situation for its rupture with traditional value systems and loss of past metaphysical assumptions about reality.[7] But James's publication of the *Prefaces* was intended for an American public; while it has been understood as an effort at self-expression of an author who had come towards the end of his career, it was also intended for profit and fame in a commercial climate not known to value the "literary."[8] Lukács wrote *Die Theorie des Romans* as a young scholar disappointed by his peers and mentors after the outbreak of war in the Austro-Hungarian Empire; he intended to make the essay part of a large and extended project on Dostoevsky, but it was never completed. Its early reception, which gives us a sense of how limited its intended audience was, is generally narrated in terms of its absolute rejection by one of Lukács' mentors, Max Weber, and praise of its genius by Ernst Bloch.[9] Given the very different cultural and intellectual contexts in which they found their audiences, placing them together is unlikely to demonstrate some new understanding of their social embeddedness. While I hope that each of my readings of Lukács and James would not be antithetical to more specific historical elaboration as to what could be meant by the "social" for both of them, my

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[7] Or at least some critics have read both of them in such terms. Ross Posnock has revised the understanding of James as more bourgeois in his mentality than modernist; he sees him as defined by his curiosity and openness to the kind of change which characterizes modernity. See *The Trial of Curiosity.* As for Lukács, his intellectual engagements have been understood in terms of the problems he saw in the liberal culture of his bourgeois modernity, characterized by its distinction from the social structures of the past; his writings were efforts at transcending the problems that he saw in this culture—many of them are very personal in nature, and he inherited an aesthetics that still emphasized the accomplishment of the aesthetic in terms of the self-expressivity of a "genius." See Mary Gluck*, Georg Lukács and his Generation (1900-1918)* and Lee Congdon, *The Young Lukács.*

[8] Michael Anesko discusses how the *Prefaces* express competing ideals: James both wanted to establish himself as an author who was superior to the standards of the marketplace and he wanted to be commercially successful. Anesko allows business aspects to be read into specific works, showing how this friction manifests in his fiction. See his work,*"Friction with the Market:" Henry James and the Profession of Authorship.*

[9] Gluck, *Georg Lukács and his Generation (1900-1918)*, 187.

own study, in trying to highlight some similar commitments in their phenomenological-hermeneutic engagements and their conception of the novel, primarily understands the "social" as a formal gesture of openness and dependence taken on by a self-expressive consciousness; this consciousness becomes social in its appeal to a novelistic world of consciousnesses.

We tend to employ very different understandings of theory in respect to the legacy and impact of each of these thinkers. As indicated by the scare quotes in my mention of Lukács' conception of the "aesthetic," their approaches are often seen as fundamentally irreconcilable in the stance they take towards the literary object. James is associated with formalism: the effort to consider the literary object in its particularity, and to speak of its forms in terms restricted to linguistics[10] or aesthetics.[11] Lukács, in contrast, is linked to literary analyses that impose social theories on or historically contextualize novels to read the meaning of their "form."[12] This tradition of theory understands the novel as a potential ideological tool masquerading as art; it is a paranoid theory, distrustful of the novel's power to produce the illusion of the subject's

[10] I mean to indicate here his ubiquitous presence in studies which seek to speak of the novel and narrative as objectively consisting of forms that can be talked about in descriptive terms: from the structuralism of Todorov's *Poetique de la Prose* to narratological studies as in Dorrit Cohn's *Transparent Minds*. But linguistic formalism can also include poststructuralist studies that are phenomenological in their approach—where language is spoken about as if it were a universal structure of the mind, or constitutive of human experience in a way that sees its operations best when it is reduced into linguistic terms, such as in Shoshana Felman's "Turning the Screw of Interpretation" and J. Hillis Miller's "Figure in the Carpet."

[11] I mean to designate New Criticism here: efforts to illuminate the "form" of the novel such that it could be privileged for some aesthetic value, such as its architecture (as in Leon Edel's reading of the *Prefaces*, in his article "The Architecture of Henry James's 'The New York Edition'") or its lifelikeness (as in Percy Lubbock's *The Craft of Fiction*).

[12] I refer to not only those who study the novel in terms of its reflection of the social consequences of an economic reality—as in the Marxist theory of Fredric Jameson and Terry Eagleton—but also to those who associate the novel with a subjective view of other understandings of reality, and therefore in terms of a certain set of assumptions and values—an ideology. In the latter branch, Ian Watt, Mikhail Bakhtin, and Michel Foucault (by way of D.A. Miller) tend to be used more often as theoretical reference points than Lukács. Even as these theorists would probably disagree on the ways to best describe the social reality in which the novel is made meaningful, they nevertheless share similar understandings of how its form is meaningful. Notably his association with this kind of novel theory understands him usually through his works on realism in his later Marxist phase from the 1930s to the 1950s; here, he sees stylistic choices in literary works as reflections of the author's *Weltanschauung*—ideological assumptions are made evident by way of reading the "form" that the novelist gives to the "reality" reflected in the novel. Such form tends to be understood by way of the course of a protagonist's life, his integration with an environment, the causality linking events, the patterns of description used to refer to and represent things and people, the flow or lack of flow given in representation of subjective, temporal experience, and so on. See his essays on realism in *Probleme des Realismus*.

freedom and autonomy. Such ideological studies of the novel have taken Henry James, and formalism in general, as a target:[13] the sociohistorical-oriented theorist critiques the formalist for his false claims to immanently-derived knowledge of the literary object, which he then reveals are symptomatic of the formalist's lack of self-awareness of his own position within a larger social structure. So, for example, Fredric Jameson, emphasizing the centrality of Lukács' conception of totality for "demystifying… strategies of containment," reads the articulation of Jamesian point of view and the "development around it of a whole aesthetic" (in James's novel theory) as "part and parcel of a whole ideology."[14] By way of Lukács, Jameson can reveal to the formalist what he did not know about what he was *really* doing when he was talking about novel form: James's privileging of point of view in his construction of novelistic aesthetics is then exposed as a "containment strategy" made legible by the historicist as he contextualizes the practice of aesthetic theory in the social constructions of nineteenth and early twentieth century bourgeois ideology.[15]

Recent criticisms of ideological studies of literature have noted that the professional ubiquity of the "hermeneutics of suspicion" (as Eve Sedgwick, after Ricoeur, has called it) has left little in the way of positive assertions in academia about why we ought to read literature at all.[16] (The "hermeneutics of suspicion" is not limited to ideological studies, but such scholarship

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[13] This critique is most pronounced as an accusation against the "criminal continuity between art and power" in Mark Seltzer's *Henry James and the Art of Power*, which appeals to a Foucauldian understanding of power and the techniques by which ideology is policed in novelistic subjectivity. Seltzer does not mention Lukács directly, but he is influenced by Jameson.

[14] *The Political Unconscious*. p. 52 and p. 221.

[15] Jameson generally uses Lukács' later work *History and Class Consciousness* for arguing that the concept of totality can be used as a "methodological standard" in *The Political Unconscious*, while, in *Marxism and Form,* he reads *Theory of the Novel* as anticipating some of his later ideas, while it also, as a text in its own right, demonstrates some problems which Lukács could only work through once he had adopted a Marxist perspective.

[16] This critical realization is most often associated with a "turn to ethics," although the explicit reference that I make here to the "hermeneutics of suspicion" is about the repercussions of a particular methodology—a more narrow focus within the movement. See *Mapping the Ethical Turn* for an overview of the different considerations involved with literary criticism's renewed focus on the values of literature.

serves as a common example of a lack of concern with positively articulating the value of reading literature.) As Sedgwick has argued, there is no particular reason that this hermeneutic needs to dominate our literary critical methodologies as much as it does: nevertheless, at times our professional culture has made it appear as if the work of the literary analyst can *only* be that of unveiling some secret knowledge which the theorist, exclusively, can decipher beneath the concealing surface of the text. This methodology, which is characterized by Sedgwick through its effort to anticipate and minimize the impact of negative affects, leaves other kinds of engagements with texts unexplored, while diminishing the status of the literary object—the theorist tends to discover in the text only whatever pessimistic vision she had already projected onto it.[17] In efforts to ameliorate the over-representation of this paranoid hermeneutic in literary practice, many critics have begun re-considering the different phenomenological modes of engagement that texts might offer or that readers might enact—a way back into thinking about aesthetic and first person experiences, with fuller attention to subjective, experiential states, but in such a way that is not ignorant of the social assumptions and habits that we bring with us to the text.[18] In particular, consciousness, in its interaction with literature, is being approached as something that, while having habits, thoughts, and experiences that it feels are its own, forms itself out of its social dependencies and interactions; it is an intersubjective phenomenon.[19] My dissertation discovers different forms for consciousness in James and in Lukács which resonate

[17] Sedgwick, "Paranoid Reading and Reparative Reading, or You're So Paranoid, You Probably Think This Essay is About You."
[18] See for example Charles Altieri's *Toward a Phenomenology of Value* and Rita Felski's *The Uses of Literature.*
[19] Rita Felski emphasizes that her own phenomenology has little to do with the "ideal reader" of Wolfgang Iser and Roman Ingarden's phenomenology: their approach is characterized by a "transcendental reduction" that strips the experiencing consciousness of its cultural and social implicatedness to reach some "core" of selfhood. Instead, she considers how there might be "intersubjective relations" that are prior to subjectivity: "We are fundamentally social creatures whose survival and well-being depend on our interactions with particular, embodied, others. The other is not a limit but a condition for selfhood." *The Uses of Literature*, 31.

with this current question of how consciousness might be intersubjective and how literature might offer particular opportunities for it to operate in different ways. While we may find elements of the "hermeneutic of suspicion" in Lukács' *Die Theorie des Romans*, it is notable that it has been precisely those elements of the text that seem to wallow in the melancholic experience of its subject's own theorizing tendencies (as opposed to minimizing the impact that such negative affect could have) that have been least explained. My reading of him considers the alternative kind of engagement with the novel in his practice of criticism that he is presenting by way of this strange approach to his object of study.

General Overview

I do not indicate explicit points of similarity and dissimilarity between the two thinkers in this dissertation; the chapter on Lukács can be read in isolation from the two chapters on James, and vice versa. Instead, by putting these two seminal figures of competing traditions of novel theory side by side, I mean to suggest that their work might be interesting for us today less in terms of what they "know" about the novel, but rather for the practices of literary criticism they engage, which "answer" the question of "knowing" by trying to think and offer their own experience from within particular forms for consciousness. In other words, for both of them, the site of epistemological concern and aesthetic judgment from which the literary critic-turned-theorist performs his novelistic thinking is not defined by concepts or principles; it is instead, generated from within an experience of the thought taken from the work, and it is understood as a setting which might become the very grounds from which the critic speaks. Notably, because I see James and Lukács's projects as more poetic experiments than knowledge claims, the understanding of consciousness between the two chapters is not the same. The terms that I have employed for Lukács are not directly translatable into those used in the James chapters. In my

discussion of Lukács, self and self-consciousness are the operative terms. The "self" is generally understood in terms of the Kantian "intelligible self," who, as the moral subject living on the "value" side of the fact/value divide opened up by Kantian thought and speaking in terms of what "ought" to be the case, is distinguished from the "empirical self," wherein lie the sensory contents of experience and, for Lukács, an individual's continuity with everyday bourgeois life, his implication in a larger social structure. The "intelligible self," however, is itself an abstraction—abstraction being for Lukács characteristic of the way the modern subject thinks, a form for capturing experience that, when reflected upon *as* a form, empties itself of the content of experience. For the early Lukács, the novel allows the search for self-consciousness by way of abstraction to be distributed *across* characters; in constituting its world of characters who engage in what I call an "intersubjective mistake" of applying their abstractions about the self to others, a glimpse of the self's implicatedness in its social engagements and its participation in constituting the world it lives in can be had. In my reading of James, the operative term is consciousness—based on a pragmatic approach, it is constituted *of* experience and exists only in its continuity with an environmental context that actively makes it into whatever it is in the process of "being"—unlike Lukács' understanding of self-consciousness, it is not defined by its paradoxical diremptive mediations. It takes on "form" by way of a process of selecting and re-arrangement of an experience among an infinite number of relational possibilities.

In Chapter One, "The Thinking Novel and the Practice of Self-Consciousness," I discuss Lukács' *Die Theorie des Romans* in the context of his earlier work, *Die Seele und die Formen*. In this earlier collection of essays of literary criticism, Lukács declares that he who writes about literature ought to express what his own thinking activity has been like as an experience in its own right, given his status as someone who has been able to "glimpse" the "destiny" of the

author in the aesthetic work. (*SF* 11) In his "essay" on Laurence Sterne then, the form that Lukács' own thought can be understood as taking, given his reading of Sterne's novels, is that of two characters who reproduce among themselves, as the setting of sociality in which their thoughts are motivated and made over into a kind of experience, what they indicate is a novelistic, hermeneutically-complex space. This novelistic social space is understood as constituted of interpreting, creative form-givers (Kantian intelligible selves) who can never be assured of shared or stable meaning amidst the flux of what Lukács calls "life possibilities." When these characters themselves are read in terms of the version of self that they use as an aesthetic standard to judge the novel, their own attributed practice of self-consciousness—which seems more to be performed from the perspective of the essay itself—demonstrates the insufficiency of their abstractions about the self. But, the potential that Lukács here sees is that one character's practice of self-consciousness *would* complete the other; the intersubjective mistake by which one character believes his own forms to be usable to understand another consciousness—the mistake that generates the social space of the novel—actually has the potential to create a glimpse into the sociality of the dynamic of abstraction. However, this social glimpse gets folded back into a process of self-criticism and comes to be attributed to the activity of one, authorial consciousness; in my reading of *Die Theorie des Romans,* it is only in the willingness of the Novel, as the speaking voice of the text, to submit its own thoughts to a similar process of its own self-critical abstractions that it is able to demonstrate the sociality of the intersubjective practice of self-consciousness *for* the author; in seeking to help complete the sociality of authorial self-consciousness, this consciousness sacrifices the legibility of itself from its own perspective. In doing so though, it can be read as holding out its own practice of self-consciousness as available for the intersubjective mistake of its reader.

Chapter Two, "Experimentation with Forms of Consciousness and *The Golden Bowl*," argues that James experiments with different forms for consciousness by way of his characters, who are also engaged in representing one another to themselves; he is interested in seeing what sort of experiential consequences a representational practice of consciousness can be seen to have in the context of other consciousnesses—how, given the way a particular character tends to think (understood as a formal practice of representing experience, particularly in its representation of its experience of other consciousnesses), he or she is in turn able to figure and subsume another's thinking activity within his or her own experience. In my reading of Adam Verver and Prince Amerigo's consciousnesses, I see James developing a social problem for consciousness that reflects the same issues that he had seen as the challenge for novel form--I demonstrate how the forms of consciousness that Amerigo and Adam exhibit come to manifest in the novel as the insignificance a of other people as *having* consciousnesses at all. In Chapter Three, I continue my reading of the novel and analyze Maggie Verver's form of consciousness—insofar as she is understood as creating the social value of Amerigo's consciousness for herself and presenting the possibility of his value for her allows her way of thinking to present a possible resolution for the same burden as the one that James articulates for novel form. Reading these three characters' consciousnesses as interacting with one another and coming to experience their thoughts of one another then sets me up to read the *Prefaces* as gesturing towards this issue in its practice of consciousness. Some of the enigmatic qualities of the *Prefaces* then come to be illuminated in terms of this social setting that we can see within the novel; the practice of theory thus engages in a question of how the author can lend his own experience as a means for the expression of the value of another's consciousness, while he also expresses the potential value of his own consciousness in the novel.

While I see James and Lukács as differing in their understandings of what novelized consciousness entails, I bring these two often opposed thinkers together because of a commonality I see in their views of the sociality of the novel, at least insofar as such views come to be embodied in their respective "practices" of theory. They both perform what they have seen *in* the novelistic world of characterological consciousnesses *on* their readings of the novelist's act of composition in their "theories of the novel": they both implement a search for the novel's "form" as if it were a matter of the author's effort to socialize his own consciousness through what comes to be perceived as a social relationship to a character, even as this character may merely be a fictional projection of the author's thought. This has the effect of inscribing the meaning of the author's act of composition into the setting of sociality seen as given in novels by way of characterological consciousnesses, making the author appear, as James puts it, to "live and breathe and rub shoulders and converse with the persons engaged in the struggle"—that is, as one of the members of the plurality of consciousnesses constituting the novelistic world. (*AN* 328) "Theory" in this way elaborates not only on what it has seen *in* the novel, but it also considers what consciousness *from* the novel might be, in its understanding of the author, as a real consciousness who has formed himself in his engagements with novels; further, elaborating on this consciousness developed *from* the novel comes to be an act of considering that consciousness as if from within the novel. Finally, these two thinkers have in common that their respective presentations of their own novelized consciousnesses (for James, the speaking subject of the *Prefaces* as a prefacer who distinguishes himself from his authorial self and considers the "art of representation"; for Lukács, the Novel's theory about itself) suggests that it be read on similar terms—that is, the social interactions between characters, and the relationship posited between author and character, in turn help define the hermeneutic form through which we are to

read these theorists' own phenomenological constructions. In sum, I read them both as acting out their understanding of the sociality of novelistic consciousness by way of similar performative acts in their descriptions of aesthetic composition—and this similarity in their practices of "theory" ultimately demonstrates their common desire to make the world experienced in novels as in part constituting the referential ground upon which they seek to communicate the social engagement and experiences of both authorial consciousness and their own novelized consciousnesses.

Chapter One: The Thinking Novel and the Practice of Self-Consciousness

Lukács' *Die Theorie des Romans (TR)* is novelistic in its presentation. It is not merely an external, "theoretical" exposition of the novel, but rather it takes on the style and form which it declares are the novel's own. De Man has perhaps best captured, although not addressed, the overriding effect of the text on its reader, in a way that highlights some of its stylistic anomalies:

> … with a deliberate tendency to substitute general and abstract systems for concrete examples, *The Theory of the Novel* is by no means easy reading. One is particularly put off by the strange point of view that prevails throughout the essay: the book is written from a point of view that claims to have reached such an advanced degree of generality that it can speak, as it were, for the novelistic consciousness itself; it is the Novel itself that tells us the history of its own development, very much as, in Hegel's *Phenomenology*, it is the Spirit who narrates its own voyage. With this crucial difference, however, that since Hegel's spirit has reached a full understanding of its own being, it can claim unchallengeable authority, a point which Lukács' novelistic consciousness, by its own avowal, is never allowed to reach. Being caught in its own contingency, and being indeed an expression of this contingency, it remains a phenomenon without regulative power; one would be led to expect a reductive, tentative and cautiously phenomenological approach rather than a sweeping history asserting its own laws. By translating this work in a less exalted language, one loses its moving and impressive philosophical pathos, but some of the preconceptions become more apparent.[1]

De Man's study is intended to "translate" the so-called "theory" into its "preconceptions" – its basic ideas and assumptions. Nevertheless he recognizes that this approach fails to account for a palpable quality of the work. He makes passing reference then to certain characteristics of the text's presentation: the "deliberate" use of the abstract where concrete example is expected or desired, "exalted" language and "philosophical pathos" which obscure and complicate the text's ideas, its ability to "move" the reader, the novel's portrayal of its "own voyage," and the novel's explicit (and contradictorily authoritative) disavowal of its own authority, and a "strange point of view" attributable to the genre of the Novel itself as if it were a consciousness in its own right.

[1] Paul De Man, "Georg Lukács' Theory of the Novel," 528-9.

What are we to make of the Novel's mode and form of presentation? What relation might it have to the ideas, the "preconceptions" which we can derive from the text? What are we to make of the text's affective resonance, its ability to *move* us?

In this chapter, I borrow the insight from Paul de Man that the speaking voice of *TR* can be understood as the *consciousness* of the Novel presenting itself; this subject projects itself into the novel as if the genre itself were a thinking and experiencing entity whose perspective it could identify with. I argue that this presentation of the Novel, which is characterized by its tendency to think by way of abstractions about other literary genres and its own historical manifestations (both in its typology of novels and in its discussion of particular novels), works as part of a gesture of self-consciousness, by which the speaking subject self-critically recognizes its lack of justification for that which it has conceived of as its social world, coming as it does repeatedly to an affective awareness of the distance it creates between itself and its perceived objects of study. This gesture though points to the speaking subject's own incompleteness and dissatisfaction as a potential site in which the reader's consciousness can help socialize this presented consciousness in his engagement with it. The speaking subject of the text refers to this setting of sociality that is yet to be fully instituted as such insofar as its gesture emulates that which it has spoken about: the Novel's practice of self-consciousness repeats that which it claims the author has had to experience and recognize of his incompleteness in his intersubjective effort to provide a setting of sociality for his characters' consciousnesses. The Novel emulates what it conceives of as the author's relationship to a character, only it exercises it *upon* the author, such that its own practice of self-consciousness is actually initiated in an intersubjective activity, by which it creates another setting of sociality within which the author's consciousness can appear to have participated in. In having allowed its own consciousness to serve as the context in which the

author's abstractions have attained some meaning, it points to the potential for its own reader's consciousness to serve as the setting for *its* sociality.

What is conceived of as the "social" in this chapter should be distinguished from the usual understanding of Lukács and the social theories with which he tends to be associated. In the more typical narrative of Lukács, he employs sociological assumptions and references of particular theorists (such as Georg Simmel, Max Weber, and Karl Marx) who focus on the consequences, productive forces and institutional structure of capitalist modernity—in this narrative, Lukács' own works of literary criticism and analysis tend to be understood as importing (and sometimes revising) ideas about modern society from these thinkers to better understand literature as a kind of symptom and as a site for reflection.[2] The social element of literature, in this view, tends to be understood as its capacity to make visible the larger ideological, economic, and historical forces that promote and inculcate the bourgeois values of capitalism, and which create the experience of modern alienation. In contrast, I emphasize a kind of sociality that seems to be created from within the experience of the novel for Lukács. In my reading of his works, the "social" is constructed of a handful of hermeneutic-phenomenological engagements between individual consciousnesses experiencing the consequences of their own thought, perceptions, and interactions with others. More specifically, these individuals are the particular characters from the novels he references, the authors of these novels, and, more idiosyncratically, the created character-like figure of the Novel as a speaking subject of *Die Theorie des Romans*. The social, as I employ the term for Lukács, is a momentary

[2] Critics have often used Lukács as a representative of a naïve reflection theory, a theory in which the task of literature is understood in terms of its mirroring of a social reality presumed to exist separate from the consciousness that conceives of it. Their complaint is that Lukács underestimates the mediated nature of this representation—see for example, Porter, Carolyn, *Seeing and Being: the Plight of the Participant Observer in Emerson, James, Adams and Faulkner.* But, actually, Lukács thought that realistic art had to be inclusive of the values and passions of their author, as opposed to being a neutral reflection of an objective, distant reality.

glimpse of possibly imagined continuities between these individual consciousnesses. However, the movement by which this intersubjective sense of the social is attained (in, as I will show, the abstractions of consciousness about itself) is also characterized by a dynamic of self-critical negation—its lived experience, much like what Lukács would say about the lived experience of modernity under the institution of bourgeois capitalism, tends to result in loneliness and a sense of alienation. Thus, my conception of the social need not be understood as entirely divorced from the emphasis on the ideological and historical forces of nineteenth and twentieth century bourgeois modernity that tends to be more often associated with Lukács' works from 1918 onwards.

My reading of Lukács in this chapter accords with other criticism that focuses on the more optimistic sense of the social in the glimpse provided by *Die Theorie des Romans*; the narrative of Lukács into which my understanding of his "transitional" work *Die Theorie des Romans* best fits has been the less dominant one in the history of his scholarly reception. My reading in this chapter resonates with the narrative of his career that sees the 1914 work in more continuity with the earlier writings of his neo-Kantian and Romantic phase, rather than his later Marxist critiques of modernist literature and bourgeois philosophy.[3] According to this version of Lukács, his earlier life was characterized by his effort to discover more authentic cultural experiences—one that could lead to an "aesthetic culture"—than were available to him in his own liberal, bourgeois culture of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. While his writings from this time were more experimental in rhetoric (compared to his later didactic and categorical tendencies), their politics

[3] In reading him as more optimistic in his relation to modernity, I depart from the more common critical tendency which sees *Die Theorie des Romans* as a pessimistic commentary. For examples of those who see Lukács' reflection of modernity in *Die Theorie des Romans* as negative and hopeless, see Martin Jay's *Marxism and Totality* and Rachel Schmidt's *Forms of Modernity*. For an example of a critic who sees Lukács' relationship to modernity in positive terms (in his writing of this particular work), see Susan Derwin's *The Ambivalence of Form.*

were more reformist than radical. He sympathized with the humanistic goals of his dominant contemporary social milieu, even as he saw as insufficient the rationalistic and positive method embedded in their approach to social life.[4] His early works can be read as critiques of the inadequacy of what seemed to be available for meaningful lived experience in the social world of everyday life and bourgeois culture, but they were also characterized by an effort to reform and extend the given by way of a potential "inner revolution" enabled by aesthetic experience.[5] The desire to constitute a communal culture by which the forms of art could be made meaningful within a social system—his quest for an "aesthetic culture"—defines his entire career. One characteristic that helps us categorize his work into its various phases is the status that this conceived of aesthetic culture would have relative to the liberal, bourgeois society in which Lukács lived.[6] However, even this earlier intellectual biography has been understood to be characterized by its own discontinuities, because he engaged in thought experiments in his writings by inhabiting opposing theoretical positions and methodological approaches as a means

[4] Mary Gluck draws a parallel between the cultural atmosphere in which the internal contradictions of Hungarian literary modernism (from 1900-1910) are legible and the intellectual community which served as a setting for the personal problems Lukács seemed to be working through. These modernists were sympathetic with the humanistic goals and reformist politics of the once dominant liberal culture much more so than they were with the metaphysical idealism of anti-capitalist (and often anti-Semitic) conservativism which turned to the medieval past for its idealization of social bonds. But they were also critical of the rationalism of liberal culture and its deafness to the inner lives of individuals; they thought of the literary (in its attention to subjective experience) as a place in which an "aesthetic culture" could bring people together in new ways, help establish new values. The failure of liberal culture would bring with it for Lukács, around 1911, a pessimistic sense of what could be accomplished in common aesthetic experience; she reads Lukács' subsequent pre-Marxist phase as characterized by a more mystical longing for transcendence, but also gradualist in its move from rationalism to irrationalism. See her book *Georg Lukács and His Generation, 1900-1918*.

[5] Critics have taken differing stances on how "revolutionary" this "inner revolution" might be. My work aligns itself with readings that see his early search in terms of his desire for an ethical intersubjectivity; through hermeneutic exercises, he sought to discover the ethical significance of art in his personal life. For critics who take a similar approach, see György Markús' "Die Seele und das Leben: Der junge Lukács und das Problem der Kultur," and Dennis Crow's "Form and the Unification of Aesthetic and Ethics in *Soul and Form*." For examples of critics who see the creation of a "new culture" as a project intended to be more radical, see Andrew Arato's "Georg Lukács: 1910-1923: The Search for the Revolutionary Subject," and Paul Breines, "Notes on Georg Lukács': 'The Old Culture and the New Culture.'"

[6] As Frédric Jameson points out, the myth of his career is often given legibility by way of his different "phases," while the transition from one phase to another seems to exceed our ability to grasp its continuity, as if his life consisted of a series of "self-betrayals." He argues against this tendency, but it is notable that making his earlier thought amenable to Marxist theory makes it more difficult to account for its experimental tendencies. "Georg Lukács," *Marxism and Form,* 163.

of feeling out their insufficiencies and achievements. As György Markús puts it, the choice between standpoints for Lukács appears as a *Hiatus irrationalis*; "overcome only through an arbitrary decision."[7] What interested the young Lukács were the commitments and experiences he could have upon having taken on such views, and how an aesthetic culture might thus be constituted by way of such a choice. So it is that his proposed solutions and the assumptions he used to implement particular methods were often in contradiction with one another, from essay to essay, even within the same work. Thus, even as my reading of *Die Theorie des Romans* accords with some of his ideas from *Die Seele und die Formen*, I read it mostly in isolation from his other works, among which we would surely find some opposing solution to the problem of aesthetic culture.

I begin my argument in this chapter with a reading of what Lukács thought could be expressed by way of characters interacting in a social situation determined by their thoughts and feelings about a particular novelist and his characters—in one of his "essays" from *Die Seele und die Formen*, Lukács engages two fictional characters of his own invention in a dramatic dialogue about the value of aesthetic form and its relation to the expression of an authorial self, with a particular focus on the novels of Lawrence Sterne. On the one hand, insofar as this dialogue is included as part of the "unity" of the book of essays, it appears to be part of Lukács' project of expressing "the incarnation of a life which someone has seen in a man, an epoch or a form"[8] (what the critic has read of the author in his literary works) as a constitutive element of the critic's own project of coming to self-consciousness.[9] Each character of the dialogue is, in a way,

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[7] As Markús puts it, "*nur durch eine letzte Willenentscheidung überbrückt.*" The translation is mine. "*Die Seele und das Leben: Der junge Lukács und das Problem der Kultur*," 100.

[8] "*Auch hier ist ein Kampf um die Wahrheit, um die Verkörperung des Lebens, das jemand aus einem Mensch, einem Zeitalter, einer Form herausgelesen hat.*" (23-4)

[9] He uses the term *Selbstbesinnung*, which is taken from Dilthey. Kant calls it "transcendental reflexion." [*transzendentale Reflexion*]

an expression of a viewpoint with which Lukács had intimately identified with—that the two characters disagree so thoroughly about the value of Lawrence Sterne's work, and his achievement of form, evinces the ambivalence that Lukács himself felt towards Sterne's work. On the other hand, the fact that he represents his ambivalence by turning different abstractions about the self (as it is expressed in the literary form of the work) into a social relation between characters—one which the characters themselves recognize as re-instantiating the dynamics of a world experienced *in* the novel—tells us something of the potential he saw for novelistic social space to "say" something unable to captured by way of abstractions about the self. His own "essay" reproduces for experience this novelistic sociality in *its* use of characters engaged in a dialogue, but it does this by way of the dynamic *between* thoughts of possible forms for the self. This dynamic comes to be instituted by way of what I call the mistake of intersubjectivity.

The intersubjective mistake presented between characters though is loaded with the potential to complete the activity of *one* self-consciousness, as I understand it in my reading of *Die Theorie des Romans* in Section II of this chapter. Lukács appeals to the presentation of authorial thought in terms of such a created novelistic social space constituted of characterological consciousness to demonstrate the possibility of a motivating intersubjectivity of consciousness, which keeps alive the social origins and aims of thought. In Section II of this chapter, I turn to a reading of *Die Theorie des Romans* to show how the authorial act of novel composition evinces a commitment to this sociality in the way it constructs a relation between an author and his characters. Section III demonstrates how the Novel itself is presented along the terms established in Section I and II through the social practice of self-consciousness. Intersubjective possibility becomes that which the practice of novelistic consciousness maintains in its search for its own self-consciousness.

The most extended analyses of the presentation of *Die Theorie des Romans (TR)* and its suggestiveness as a "practiced" theory of consciousness can be found in J.M. Bernstein's *The Philosophy of the Novel* and Susan Derwin's *The Ambivalence of Form*. Both of these critics employ analyses of some stylistic tendencies of the text to consider Lukács' project as a whole, particularly in his understanding of the modern subject's relation to its object. They both argue that *TR* is not intended as a philosophy that can simply know its intended object of inquiry from a distanced perspective, but rather it expresses a methodology for hermeneutic inquiry in a modernity in which the subject-object distinction cannot be taken as given. For Bernstein, the methodology performed and expressed in *TR* can allow us to reconstruct the historical, social and philosophical conditions in which the practice of novel writing takes place, allowing us to see the composition of novels as marked by a close relation to modernity. Derwin critiques Bernstein for too quickly wishing to return to a clear picture of concrete social conditions: what modernity can be "reconstructed" for him is already pre-determined by his reading of Marxist terminology in the later Lukács. Her analysis is valuable for what it tells us about the process of identity construction of the modern subject as it is performed and expressed in *TR*. She sees *TR* as celebrating the dynamic vitality of the modern subject, as it comes to be inscribed in *TR* as a process inextricably weaving a relation to the Other into its own understanding of itself. My work here can be seen as extending elements of Derwin's work, with a similar approach to Lukács' understanding of the construction of self-consciousness through its social relation to an Other. Unlike Derwin though, I consider the way social relation*s* (emphasis on the plural) implicate one another in the presentation of the self-consciousness of the Novel in *TR*.
Along the same terms, such novelistic social space is created between the speaking voice of *TR* (as the "consciousness" of the Novel itself) and its general conception of authors of the novel,

and these relations in turn can be used as a model for how we, as readers, are to approach *Die Theorie des Romans*. I will explain how social relations between these people (in, from, or engaged with the novel) come to be claimed by the singularity of one consciousness which articulates its responsibility for the differences between these people—this consciousness self-critically comprehends social relations as having been invented through the dynamics of its own self-difference and its own form-giving activity. This consciousness is then read as expressing itself and creating itself within novelistic social space. However, as I argue, this consciousness given in the novel is captured by Lukács as existing only through its continued *practice,* a practice that can be maintained only in an emulation of it and in a social approach to it, rather than in any encompassing "idea" or "theory" that would com-prehend it in an abstraction. To understand how consciousness is represented *in* the novel is inextricable from an enactment of consciousness derived *from* the novel.

In Section II, I show how Lukács seeks to maintain the sociality of authorial consciousness, as he comes to read the authorial composition of character along the same terms as characters were read vis-à-vis one another; the author participates in novelistic social space. However, this approach, like the author's approach to characterological relations in Section I, also comes to be claimed as the activity of a consciousness that has created the glimpsed social relation between author and character out of the movement of its own self-difference and form-giving activity. As I explain in Section III, the character-author relation is claimed as having been generated by the "consciousness" of the Novel, as if the genre were itself a living and thinking entity which could claim responsibility for the author-character social relationship as evidence of the movement of its own mind in its inventiveness. On the one hand, the Novel appears to repeat the problem that the author created for himself, insofar as it undermines the reality of the social occasion

(glimpsed between author and character) that initiated the activity of its consciousness. It appears to assert its asocial autonomy as the only thing that can be said about its own self. On the other hand, because it recognizes its own journey toward self-consciousness is incomplete from its own point of view, the Novel can also be read as opening out the practice of its own self-consciousness to be read in a way similar to how it opened up the author's practice of self-consciousness, as legible only in a social engagement with it. This consciousness, even as it claims the constitution of a social world *within* itself as part of its journey towards self-consciousness, gestures towards the intersubjectivity of another as that which is necessary for *its* completion as a self-consciousness.

I. The Abstractions of Characters and Novelistic Social Space

In his opening "essay" to *Die Seele und die Formen*, Lukács wonders if the individual writings constituting the whole of his book have "unity" of "form"—whether the genre of the essay of literary criticism can itself be considered an "art" of its own. What is at stake for him in this question is his ability to express the whole of what constitutes his own self and his attitude towards life, and to communicate it to someone else—here, in particular, a personal position for a reader is marked out in advance, insofar as this "essay" is actually titled a "letter" to his friend Leo Popper. In other words, for the essay to establish itself as a work of art, it would have to be capable of the expression of the whole self for Lukács—an expression whose success seems to be at least initially evaluated in terms of its constitution of a communicative bridge to his friend. While he leaves open as a question whether, by his own judgment, he has achieved this goal,[10] he

[10] In the publication of *Die Seele und die Formen* itself, that is. As he wrote in a private letter to Paul Ernst, he ultimately came to see that the value of the work "consists in my self-recognition, my coming-to-myself; what I have been to form, that is what I am; I cannot know it, only search for it, still I: I am the search." (my translation) [… *besteht in meiner*

says that, because literary criticism is in danger of losing its connection to "life-values," [*Lebenswert*] the modern essayist's path must consist of his endeavor to come to self-consciousness. "The essayist must now become conscious of his own self, must find himself and build something out of his own self,"[11] he declares. (*SF* 15) But what Lukács is able to say about the "self"—arrived at in this instance by his understanding of the two different "realities" of the "soul" [*zwei Typen der seelischen Wirklichkeit*], one experienced in the conceptual questions that art makes the critic ask, the other, the "concrete experience" of the work that has led to those questions—he comes to self-critically declare are both only "empty abstractions." A consciousness endeavoring to account for itself in terms of such empty abstractions instead threatens to distance itself from life values for him, having become "too intellectual and too multiform to acquire form out of its own self."[12] That the product of the quest for self-consciousness on the part of the critic appears then in terms of empty abstractions threatens the achievement of the "art" of the essay, and it makes questionable Lukács' capacity for successful self-expression. Yet, even as the project of self-consciousness from Lukács' own perspective is left open to this criticism in terms of its inability to establish "form" and thereby allow the essay to achieve an artistic expression of the literary critic's whole self and his attitude towards life, something that resembles this quest for self-consciousness nevertheless is carried forth in two ways. The essayist, in this collection of works, composes himself out of the question of form that he poses to the life work of different authors, appearing to speak "about" their work, such that even if his self-critical point of view retrospectively claims that he has imposed his own

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Selbsterkenntnis, dem zu-mir-Gelangen; was mir zu leisten gestaltet ist, das bin ich; wissen kann ich das nicht, nur es suchen, doch ich: ich bin eben das Suchen."] (*Briefwechsel 1902-1917*, 175.)

[11] "*Jetzt muss der Essayist sich auf sich selbst besinnen, sich finden und aus Eigenem Eigenes bauen.*" (*dSF* 34)

[12] "*… zu reich und zu selbständig geworden, zu geistig aber und zu viel gestaltig, um aus sich heraus eine Gestalt zu bekommen.*" (*dSF* 34)

version of "self" as a standard of judgment for these authors (or versions taken from his philosophical predecessors, particularly Kant and Schlegel), he portrays himself as experiencing something new about these "abstractions" from within the perspective of another. So it is that he claims that the essayist is expressing "the incarnation of a life which someone has seen in a man, an epoch or a form." (*SF* 11) Second, Lukács asserts that it is not the arrival at self-consciousness that matters for the essayist, but the longing [*Sehnsucht*] that the quest for self-consciousness expresses on its never-completed path—a journey which asks to be given "form."[13]

The essay "Reichtum, Chaos und Form: Ein Zwiegespräch über Lawrence Sterne," [*Richness, Chaos and Form: A Dialogue on Lawrence Sterne*] works through the abstractions that Lukács had about his conception of the self, applied as a standard for aesthetic judgment (even if judgment is made to appear insufficient), apparently (if we take the dialogue presented in this essay as adhering to the self-expressive principle of the essayist) given Lukács' own reading of the novels of Lawrence Sterne. In it, two fictional characters of Lukács' own, Joachim and Vincent, argue over the question of the aesthetic value of Lawrence Sterne's works and the

[13] "Form" is a loaded term for Lukács; it is employed across seemingly irreconcilable methodological approaches from one work to another, throughout his career. As I read him, there are two basic understandings of form that he tends to use, but they then get employed in a variety of contexts, even as sometimes we only vaguely know which context he is invoking (or, sometimes, he seems to be using more than one at the same time). The first understanding of form that Lukács applies is one that is achieved from within, as a kind of dynamic and sustaining integration of heterogeneous parts into a homogeneous whole; in this model, "form" is a founding principle of existence. But the various contexts in which this version of form gets employed make it look like several different conceptualizations of form. In the context of aesthetics, Lukács associates form with the achievement of perfect expression of that which is "in" contents or materials. In Romantic philosophy, this kind of form is associated with the achievement of a metaphysical Idea—the underlying essence of all things. In Kantian philosophy, it is associated with human nature in its cognitive capacities, its status as a form-giver. In the social structures of the classical age, it is associated with the "totality" of the epic—which, as Lukács puts it, answers men's questions before they are even asked, as if the whole of the social structure creates the functions of the parts, determines what can even be seen as a "need" which makes men go along their path towards "destiny." The second version of "form" refers to *creative* human activity—which is not pre-determined "in" what exists, but instead is constitutive of the reality within which we live. It is a form though that can easily become formless, insofar as a human action can only be "completed" when its meaning is stabilized in a larger social structure for Lukács. But that we can see that it exists at all seems to be a matter of differentiation from other forms. This version also tends to be interpreted in different contexts, but it at least seems to be regularly associated with modern social life.

tastefulness of reading Sterne right after reading Goethe; they appear to serve as mouthpieces for two different approaches to aesthetics which we can think of as representative of the thoughts "occasioned by" (*SF* 15) the work for Lukács himself. But even as these thoughts seem to invoke some inherited "abstractions" about the self that would have come from Lukács' background in neo-Kantianism and Romanticism, such abstractions come to be embodied in the form of characters, which I argue is a way of presenting what Lukács has seen as an experience of novelistic social space. The discussion between the two characters takes on features of what they both understand as the novelistic (as the characters themselves admit) in *Tristram Shandy's* portrayal of two characters who speak at cross-purposes. These characters then not only theoretically express abstractions about the self in the novel through *their* reading of characters and of the authorial self, but we can also see, in *them* as characters themselves, some of the ideas that Lukács had about how these abstractions about the self, as practiced in novels by way of character, could extend beyond the novel into the critic's own expressed sense of the social experience of novels. While these characters are arguably once removed from the representation of the self by way of characters in the novel (since they themselves are not "in" novels), there nevertheless is evidence that we can treat them as characters who take on the situatedness of novel characters as their own, such that an exploration of *their* consciousness also serves as an exploration of what Lukács had to say about the consciousness of novel characters. Lukács' effort to create his own novelistic social space in this "dialogue," in turn, works as a kind of reflexive critique (from the perspective of novelistic experience rather than a finalizing judgment) of abstraction, one that helps implicate the abstraction as a product of a thought process in the setting of sociality on which it depends. So my analysis here will be double: I lay

out what Lukacs' characters in this dialogue say about consciousness of characters and the author *in* the novel, and what they represent of the extension of consciousness *from* the novel.

In this dialogue, the character Joachim is a representative of a neo-Kantian approach to aesthetics. "Kant distinguishes between the intelligible self and the empirical self… an artist may express his whole self—indeed he must do so—but only the intelligible one, not the empirical one,"[14] he says. (*SF* 141) It is according to this standard that he judges Lawrence Sterne's work to be "formless": if Sterne has communicated anything of himself, then it is only his own weakness, his inability to "compose" [*komponieren*], he tells the other primary participant in the conversation, Vincent. In making this distinction between the intelligible and empirical selves, he operates on the basis of a dualistic conception, in which the capacity of the mind to order and arrange its heterogeneous "content" (its sensations as that which is given to it in "intuition") is distinguished from the matter that constitutes the self. The Kantian "empirical self" describes both the content of experience (our sensations) and the body's existence as a natural object—this part of the self's continuity with the empirical realm, the world of phenomenon which we can know through its appearance to us in sensation, allows the study of this self to be relegated to science (as Lukács describes the task of science in his first essay—interested in "facts" [*Tatsachen*] and "contents," but not "form" or "value," *SF* 3). The intelligible self, meanwhile, as that which is capable of giving "form" to make sense of disordered and heterogeneous matter (making it "intelligible"), is not only that which makes knowledge of the natural world possible for Kant, but it also comes to be tasked with *self-consciousness*: an awareness of how the mind relates to matter by giving it form through its

[14] "Kant macht einen Unterschied zwischen 'intelligiblem' und 'empirischem Ich'… der Künstler darf das ganze Ich ausdrücken – er muss es sogar – doch nur das 'intelligiblem Ich,' nicht das 'empirische.'" (dSF, 302)

cognitive activity. The capacity for the intelligible self to become aware of its own activity would make possible not only an analysis of whether knowledge achieved by way of science was warranted,[15] but it would also allow for an account of human freedom, insofar as at least some of the "forms" the self uses to make the world intelligible could be seen as a product of its own creation rather than determined by natural law. Further, distinguishing the invented and creative forms (for which the intelligible self is responsible) from the universal (as that which all humans would have been given) would allow for an account of the particularity of the self, in its distinction from other selves (or societies).[16] It is for the latter possibility that Joachim employs the intelligible self as a standard by which he judges the author: for him, the artist's unique form-giving capacities, his particularity, make his expression worthy of being put into a work of art—so Joachim complains that there is nothing in Sterne that can add "something new to our life!" (*SF* 127) However, Joachim also believes that this original expression also needs to reference something universal and stable enough to become a communicable life value that others could recognize for themselves.

Against the background of Lukács' other essays in *Die Seele und die Formen*, we can see to what extent Joachim's demand for particularity and his understanding of the self as a creative form-giver comes to be problematic when it endeavors to communicate itself: it is a problem that comes to be reflected in terms of what Joachim's version of the self would create as the world of the novel, as well as in his own experience of thinking on such terms, in his social setting in which he makes his aesthetic judgment. As such, it becomes a hermeneutic issue that stems from the question of how universal or even communal value was possible in a world lacking a

[15] For a description of how Kantian self-consciousness justifies epistemology, see Dieter Henrich's *Selbstverhältnisse*, particularly pp. 176-183.

[16] For the association of Kantian aesthetics with self-consciousness, see Andrew Bowie's *From Romanticism to Critical Theory: The Philosophy of German Literary Theory*.

transcendental authority figure and constituted of intelligible selves, none of whom can be assured that the forms that they themselves have generated in thought are shared by anyone else.[17] Lukács had seen the problem embodied in the social reception of literature by way of a common criticism of the modern drama: its characters, understood as "intelligible selves" by him, end up producing a "vacuum between human beings" [*luftleeren Raum zwischen den Menschen*] amidst the "flux" of possibilities for the form through which they could interpret another's intentions. This is what Lukács calls "life" in many of his other essays: a situation in which, as Dennis Crow has identified it, a "distinction is to be made between the bare fact of personal existence and the form or value through which life becomes meaningful." Crow sees Lukács' as formulating the problem by way of Dilthey: he constructs his ethics out of the relationships he can establish between himself and literary texts, which are read as manifestation of personal efforts to create a form of "living," within a larger social world constituted of other intelligible selves.[18] That is, rather than understanding the larger social reality to which Lukács refers (as "life") in terms of the alienating structures of nineteenth-century bourgeois culture or the vitalistic irrational, incommunicable psychic flow of a lived experience purified of all conceptuality, I read him (like Crow) as implicitly referring to the constitutive nature of a hermeneutic problem. In the dialogue on Sterne, the problem of communication due to the inability to confirm the stability or shared understanding of forms is linked both to what Joachim has to say about the novel (in his judgment of the author and his work in terms of the intelligible self) and to what form he may be giving to his own action, the assumptions he is making about his own social setting and also therefore acting *upon*, given this judgment.

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[17] As J.M. Bernstein has noted, Lukács tends to focus on *only* creative subjectivity, rather than what might be universal to all subjects. See in particular, *The Philosophy of the Novel*, pp. 55-59.
[18] "Form and the Unification of Aesthetics and Ethics in *Soul and Form*," 163-165.

The social situation in which Joachim communicates his judgment about the lack of "intelligible self" in Sterne reveals the insufficiency of his abstraction about the self—when, that is, we understand Joachim as applying his version of the "self" to another (the author of the novel) in a movement that will have to be held to the standard of his own search for self-consciousness. Joachim wins the argument over his interlocutor, Vincent, who proposes a Romantic understanding of self-expression as the basis for aesthetic value. However, if Joachim's ideas ultimately assert their dominance at the end of this fictional dialogue, his situation in the conversation reflects the problem of his model of consciousness as he puts it into practice as his own self-understanding within a social context. The dialogue is set up like a play, with interspersed parenthetical comments giving insight into each character's feelings and thoughts about their social relations to one another. The entire debate takes place before a third character, a nameless girl, for whom the intellectual posturing is performed – we learn, in the provided parenthetical commentary, that both men desire to impress the girl, and they worry when they exclude her from the conversation. Joachim, in winning the argument, does not win the girl; he instead alienates her with the coldness of his philosophical criticism, his disregard for the supposed "richness" of feeling present in Sterne's novels. At the end of the conversation, we are told in parentheses, that Joachim feels as if he did not even need to speak in the first place, for he believes he has not been understood by his conversation partners. He is "wasting his time, since nobody is listening to him anyway."[19] (SF 150) He decides to leave the room. From Joachim's point of view, the final situation resembles the drama's reception as a "vacuum between human beings" [*luftleeren Raum zwischen den Menschen*] (SF 152) [328]. To use the

[19] "Joachim deutet das Schweigen doch unrichtiger… dass keine Antwort kommte, deutet er also folgendermassen: ich rede hier sowieso umsonst, man hört mir gar nicht zu." (dSF 321)

terms from this other essay in *Die Seele und die Formen,* "*Metaphysik der Tragödie: Paul Ernst,"*: rather than recognizing the continuous "flux" [*die Flute*] of possibilities between two people, whereby each person can assign an infinite number of meanings to another's words, allowing the richness of possibility to reign, Joachim's judgment using his standard of the self in the novel allows its "life" to become "lifeless and rigid" [*erstarren*]. That is, each person can assign meaning for themselves, but the ultimate problem for Joachim is that, as *creative* form-givers, one person can never be assured that the forms he uses to comprehend and communicate experience are the same as another person's.[20] Rather than seeing the infinite possibilities for form-giving which exist between people as an indication of the richness of experience (as we will see Vincent does), Joachim understands this "flux" negatively: it demonstrates the truth of the "eternal distance, the unbridgeable void between one human being and another [*die ewige Entfernung, die unüberbrückbare Leere zwischen Mensch und Menschen an*, 232]." (SF 107)

So while Joachim's argument about consciousness holds up in polemical territory, it is nevertheless the loser in the social realm, the "personal" [*das Persönliche*] space that has been constituted between them in the course of the conversation. The problem though is not just that Joachim's model of consciousness arrives at an antisocial conception of the world. The issue is that, if we view Joachim as not only expressing what this version of consciousness *is,* but also *putting it into practice as the way he himself makes sense of the work*, any kind of conclusive *self-consciousness* he could have—any kind of judgment he might make about his final situation and communicative efficacy—can in actuality only be considered *incomplete*. So notably his own interpretation of the silence at the end of the conversation is inaccurate [*unrichtig*]. He acts

[20] His earlier work*, Soul and Form* (*SF*), provides more examples as to what is meant by this, whereas *TN*, because of its abstract style, references the lack of authoritative models for interpretation as the historical condition of modern man, the "age of absolute sinfulness" without providing a good view of what this might mean.

out the version of consciousness he had expressed insofar as we can see him relating to the work only on the basis of his "theoretical point of view" [*allzu theoretischen Gesichtspunkt, 286*] as Vincent says (SF 133). He imposes concepts on the novel that are really evidence of his own, form-giving activity. At the end of the conversation, he casts about for evidence that this form-giving activity has been efficacious, communicating his ideas to these two other people – he seeks *self-consciousness* in this context. He concludes that it has not. Notably he is then susceptible to the very critique he lodges at Sterne: that Sterne has not even managed to *communicate* his "intelligible self." If we read him as desiring to see a view of his self – his ideas within the world -- Joachim's dissatisfaction with the results demonstrates that the activity of the intelligible self does not stand alone as that which is sought *through* the self's ideas, for he measures his success on the basis of others. (Kant likewise understood the self as consisting both of an intelligible *and* an empirical self: even as the intelligible self was employed to comprehend the unity of the self, the unity was to have been the basis for his knowledge of the empirical world, inclusive of the empirical self.) In *TR,* Lukács points to the criticism that this Kantian version of consciousness, turned into a quest for self-consciousness, could never be complete: "We have invented the creation of forms [*das Gestalten*]: and that is why everything that falls from our weary and despairing hands must always be incomplete."[21] In Joachim's

[21] If the essence of the intelligible self is defined only as that which invents *new* forms, it can never fully attain a view of its own self, because each attempt to account for itself will always invent another form that is yet to be accounted for as part of the self's activity. So, J.M. Bernstein has pointed out, in the context of reading *Theory of the Novel:*

> … for any time *t*, in any act of judgment, there is an asymmetrical, non-reversible relation between knower and what is known; the knower can only become known in another act of judgment at some later time $t + n$; but this act of judgment involves the existence of a knower non-reducible to its object, thus maintaining the original asymmetry. (207)

A subject striving to objectively know the world as it exists discovers that he can only know such a world through the *imposition* of invented formal categories upon that world rather than pre-existent ones, and he then tries to account for this imposition as his own self-creation. This first of all makes the new object of the search, the self, impossible to complete, because if a self is to be accounted in terms of all its form-giving activities upon the world, the act of trying to *know its own activity* will always impose yet another form upon the world that is not yet accounted for as its own. The performed activity that it tries to claim as its own can never be temporally coincident (and therefore never identical) with

situation as a character, we see this criticism at work, insofar as his version of consciousness, turned towards its own self, fails to account for the motivation of sociality which set it into motion. His relationship to the girl, and his desire to impress her, give him the *occasion* for his intellectual discourse and promise a view of himself as a social self (which I read as similar to the Kantian empirical self, although delimited within a more explicit context of what I read to be Lukács' understanding of "life").

Not only does Joachim's model of consciousness fail to consider the original social motivations of thought, but it also is unable to account for the effect such thought might have on the world – how it might serve to *create* a social situation or experience. (And how it might encourage *others* to believe that they have understood him.) The way he views consciousness fails to account for the fact that his formal impositions on the world are returned to him as experience. The way he *thinks* has actually produced his resultant loneliness – he does not recognize his own responsibility in the experience he yields from the conversation. And the parenthetical comments seem to make clear, in Joachim's judgments of the conversation, that it was self-consciousness which he had sought in engaging with these other characters – he had opened up the subject of Lawrence Sterne's novels because he had sought an opportunity to, at the very least, see himself, *both* as a thinking entity and as a social participant. He wanted to see his ideas exist in the world and for others. Like another of Lukács' readings, in which he considers the dialogues of Socrates in *Die Seele und die Formen*, the search for the self which manifests as the desire to impose philosophical discourse on others coincides with Joachim's

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the activity that tries to abstract this activity into an understanding of its own essence, since the last activity cannot be accounted for in the abstraction. There is a temporal lag in that the forms one uses to generalize about the heterogeneity of experience can never be accounted for *by* that same form, so there must be yet another effort that accounts for one's previous impositions, but then that second effort produces yet another imposition to be known, and so forth.

disguised longing for the nameless girl, in what Lukács calls *Sehnsucht.*[22] So, in Joachim, we have one character who seeks an awareness of both his social and intelligible selves, even while his method of discovery is carried out insofar as he defines consciousness as purely formal. He, ultimately, in applying this version of consciousness to see his own self in his final judgment of the conversation, fails to completely account for that which constitutes his "self": his social engagements, and the products of his own thought in his experience of a situation.

The other character, Vincent, likewise discusses consciousness in his judgment of Sterne's successful self-expression. Vincent presents the arguments of a Romantic tradition which inherited Kantian terminology. In an earlier essay from *SF*, Lukács characterizes the Jena Romantic movement as founded "on a social basis" [*auf gesellschaftlicher Basis, dSF 98*]: all its members were "thirsting for culture and intellectual communion" (SF 44) after Kant. Likewise,

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[22] Admittedly this reading is not entirely justified if we read it narrowly in terms of what we know from this particular dialogue. However, the idea that erotic longing is actually a search for one's own other half – and therefore is a search for a *full* consciousness of one's own self – is given in an earlier essay of *Soul and Form.* This is what Lukács calls *Sehnsucht*:

> Who is the lover, and what is loved? …. Aristophanes found the most telling image to express it: once, all living creatures were double what they are today, but Zeus cut them in half and they became men. Longing and love are the search for one's own lost other half…. But whoever has glimpsed the great duality of life is always with another, and for that same reason always alone… One never longs… for what is already one's own. Longing makes a link between those who are unlike one another, but at the same time it destroys every hope of their becoming one; becoming one is coming home, and true longing has never had a home. (SF 94)
> [Wer ist der Liebende und was wird geliebt? … Aristophanes fand das schönste Sinnbild dafür: einst waren die Lebewesen das Doppelte der heutigen, aber Zeus zerschnitt sie zu Hälften, so wurden sie Menschen. Und die Sehnsucht und die Liebe sind das Suchen nach der eigenen verlorenen Hälfte… Wer die grosse Zweiheit des Lebens erblickt hat, ist immer zu zweit und darum immer allein… was einem fremd ist, wird man nie ersehnen und niemals das, was einem zu eigen ist… die Sehnsucht verbindet die Ungleichen, aber vernichtet zugleich jede Hoffnung auf ihr Einswerden; Einswerden ist ein Heimfinden, und die wahre Sehnsucht hat nie eine Heimat gehabt. *dSF* 199-200]

The confusion between subject and object (who is the lover, and what is loved?) encompasses the contradictions of *Sehnsucht*: the self believes that it must connect with another, "make a link," to complete its own self, so it perceives itself in its completed form as a "living creature" with a "double nature." It believes it will find fulfillment in another, even though its existence as a "man" is defined insofar as the self *is* a half ("Zeus cut them in half and they became men.") To embark on the search, to start longing for another and commit to the confusion between subject and object, though is to recognize the difference of one's own self and that other; it is to "glimpse the great duality of life," since "one never longs… for what is already one's own." (SF 92) In this way, to act on the difference between subject and object but to confusedly approach this difference as the objective possibility of their being unified is to unwittingly fulfill the definition of "man" as a "half." The search for one's own self then would have to encompass both this confusion *and* the search.

Vincent says that the works of Sterne are held together by a "communion of feeling" and a "communion of experience." (SF 144) These German Romantics did not reject Kant's intelligible self, but instead they saw themselves as going *through* it. Similarly, Vincent believes that Sterne is engaged in form-giving activity, and he does not disagree that the intelligible self ought to be represented in Sterne's works – he just thinks that the intelligible self is only part of what can be included *as* the self. For the Romantics, it was assumed that evidence of the self's form-giving activity could provide evidence of the self's continuity with the world and with others, as opposed to Joachim's comprehension of the "vacuum" between people; a line could be forged from the intelligible self to the empirical self. This was understood to take place in the individual *failure* to create lasting form in the world. For the Romantics, failure to attain a goal—such as the failure of the intelligible self to completely recognize its own self—actually coincides with fulfillment. This is so because the seeker (looking for his own "essence" and trying to impose his own "idea" on the world), upon his failure to completely grasp his own self in its totality, realizes that the object of his search was in fact the act of seeking itself, a seeking which re-presented the inaccessibility of the essence of the world (and the self as existent within it) *through* its failed activity.[23]

So Vincent argues that Sterne engages in form-giving activity, but Sterne does so to demonstrate the *failure* of these forms of the self to contain the communion of feeling which they then are supposed to re-present. What Joachim negatively recognizes as the "void" between people in which meaning cannot be communicated actually demonstrates, for Vincent, the

[23] For more on this, see Ute Kruse-Fischer's *Verzehrte Romantik: Georg Lukács' Kunstphilosophie der essayistischen Periode (1908-1911)* and Rachel Schmidt's *Forms of Modernity: Don Quixote and Modern Theories of the Novel.* They both link Lukács' interest in Romanticism to Schlegel in particular, seeing the Romantic influence in Lukács' understanding of irony and the arabesque form of the novel. The association of Sterne and *Don Quixote* with self-reflexivity, in particular, would have come from Schlegel, who saw Sterne as presenting a kind of subjective version of the infinite mirroring of *Selbstbespiegelung*. See Schlegel's *Athenaeum Fragmente* 238 in *Dialogue on Poetry and Literary Aphorisms.*

infinite richness of interpretative possibilities within which we all participate. Vincent believes that what is revealed when one person's forms fail to encompass meaning is that *everyone* participates in the "sense of belonging together" [*Zusammensein*] and that we are participants in this "continuity" [*Kontinuität*] in which what one knows about "another is only expectation, only potentiality, only wish or fear…"[24] (SF 107-8). The essence of the world is perceived as inaccessible because it is constituted of such formless ephemera, which could never be contained in form. In other essays from *Die Seele und die Formen*, this version of that which exists between people is given as the "atmosphere" of "life": it is a modern situation in which there is no interpretative authority, no God; it is a world consisting of a multiplicity of possible interpretations by autonomous individuals, in which "nothing is ever completely fulfilled" because "new, confusing voices always mingle with the chorus of those that have been heard before."[25] (SF 152-3) Sterne's form-giving then is a re-presentation of all the "life-possibilities" – all the interpretations – which people *could* give to particular events. The fact that the characters in the book *fail* to communicate with one another is what enables the reader to have an "inner identification" with the characters and the author of the book. (SF 130) This inner identification is allowed to come about because the subjects are actually *already* seen as continuous with the world and with others, even if their form-giving activity makes them interpret their distance from it. As constituent parts of this world who create richness through their ongoing form-giving activity, such subjects, in their endless creativity, are actually what makes the world so formless. Once a subject's forms demonstrate failure, so the logic of

[24] "… denn alles, was man von einem andern wissen kann, ist nur Erwartung, nur Möglichkeit, nur Wunsch oder Angst, nur ein Traum, der irgend eine Realität erst durch ein späteres Geschehen bekommen kann, und auch dies zerrinnt gleich wieder nur zu Möglichkeiten." (*dSF* 222)
[25] "Alles fliesst und fliesst ineinander hemmungslos, in unreiner Mischung; alles wird zerstört und alles zerschlagen, nie blüht etwas bis zum wirklichen Leben." (*dSF* 328)

Romanticism goes, the perception of distance dissolves and the self can realize its implicatedness in the world it had conceived of as other.

Rather than embarking on the infinite path of self-seeking whereby the failure to fully recognize the self as pure activity is repeated again and again (as given by Joachim) without any satisfactory results, Romanticism recognizes this repeated failure in its experience of it and views it ironically. In *TR*, Lukács identifies this recognition as the "negative mysticism" of irony (*TR* 90): through the negating and exposing as absent the thing which one was seeking, one dynamically re-presents that which is beyond representation, insofar as one enacts how unrepresentable it is. One imposes form so as to capture a world which one cannot capture, and it is this very failure to capture which produces an experience of the infinite, unknowable transcendental nature of the world—of that which not only lies *beyond* the individual and its own form-giving selfhood, but which is also continuous with it. This "negative mysticism" points to the continuity of the self with "the All" [*der All-Einheit*, 343]—the transcendental essence of the world—as Lukács puts it in another essay from *SF* (160). I read this to mean that the self as a social participant in the world – the self's "social basis" – would then be able to be experienced from this ironic perspective, because the self's continuity with the world is experienced by it in its perception of its failed form-giving activity, its failed communication. The self comes to recognize it is just one of the constituent parts of the world, creating more possibilities within it through its ongoing interpretations, and thus it helps create the world as formless.

This version of self-consciousness, whereby a self attains an *experience* of its fundamental "social basis" through its ironic recognition of its *failure* to capture its "intelligible self," as well as the intelligible self's failure to impose forms that have permanence and universality, is at work in Vincent's conception of authorial consciousness in the way it relates to character in Lawrence

Sterne's novels. First though, a look at Vincent's reading of Cervantes allows us to see his criticism of what Joachim's model of the "intelligible self," applied to the consciousness of authors and characters, creates as the social world of the novel and of the novelist. In Cervantes' work (according to Vincent's reading of it), an author projects his idea into the world—trying to give form to that world—*as* a character who exists in a fictional life. So Cervantes created the character Don Quixote. He projects another intelligible self, as if to see his own, but he only creates a version of himself that likewise fails to assert form in his own social world, and who likewise fails to attain self-consciousness because of this social failure. As if condemned to repetition, he creates other characters, such as Sancho Panza, whose consciousness is similar to Don Quixote's. Each character is understood as a formal construct that is a pure imposition; like an idea that has no realm to rule, each character, existent in itself, is not understood as created by or changed by the fictional world around him. Each character is incapable of recognizing his social existence as that which motivates him or shapes him, since this character is constituted only of the authorial insistence of the self as essentially a form-giver. The character (like Joachim) is unable to even *experience* his failure to impose form on the world, because he is only a pure insistence of form. As Lukács puts it in *TR*, this kind of character is defined by an inability "to experience distance as realities" (*TR* 97).

Because each character is attributable to the author, and is in turn only a formal construct that is not changed on the basis of the world around him, the author will never attain any "self-consciousness" in his work, according to the standards that we saw Joachim putting into practice in his own judgment of his participation in a conversation. The author is unable to see his own social impetus behind his creation of character and his imposition of form, and he is likewise unable to see his form-giving activity, now turned into the existence of different characters, *as*

productive of a social situation. The author's search for self-consciousness then will be incomplete, and he will be unable to recognize his own failure to attain self-consciousness, condemned as he is only to the repetition of form-giving. Here we have the repetition of the same within each character, but without any perspective that could recognize their commonality. *Don Quixote*'s characters exemplify the pathway of the intelligible self, which, like Joachim, cannot be aware of either its own participation or its own social motivations. The novel recreates the same situation which Joachim faces in the conversation: taken together, all these characters create the social space of the novel as the abyss between human beings, an "image of the hopeless inadequacy of the relationship between human beings" [*ein Zerrbild der nie zu lösenden Inadäquatheit des Verhältnisses der Menschen untereinander,* 238] (SF 129) since characters are generated as form-giving entities without efficacy in a social world. This understanding of the self as conscious activity, without a view towards the results of such activity in the world, produces a world without human relationships for Vincent. (And this is also demonstrated in the dialogue, insofar as Joachim's views serve to isolate him.) So Vincent believes that *Don Quixote* recognizes only discrete individuals as formally differentiated characters, who constitute a fragmented social world. Following the logic of such a reading, this space between characters reproduces as its social world what the author believes to be his *own* reality: what is outside the self is understood as a "sluggish, formless meaningless mass," (*TR* 100) "bewitched by evil demons" (*TR* 97). (Notably, in *TR*, the reading of *Don Quixote* as presented in this dialogue comes to be applied to chivalric romance instead, while *Don Quixote* itself is recuperated because of what Lukács can read into the author.)

Vincent then compares the characters of *Don Quixote* to the characters in *Tristram Shandy*. In Sterne, characters are quite similar to those in *Don Quixote*, insofar as they are understood as

seeking to impose their ideas upon the world; they are products of the intelligible self of the author. Vincent reads these characters in the following way:

> The brothers Shandy speak with one another, not to one another; each pays attention to his own thoughts and receives the other's words, but not his thoughts of feelings. Every word which relates distantly to the thoughts of one of them sets those thoughts in motion again, and the other proceeds in the same way. Here the play on words makes intersecting paths on which the two men, eternally looking for one another, cross each other, unrecognized. [*Die Wortspiele sind hier Kreuzwege, wo die einander Suchenden schmerzvollunerkannt an einander vorübergehen.*] (SF 131) [281]

From their own points of view on themselves, these characters are still like Joachim: formal representations of intelligible selves which fail to attain self-consciousness, they are unable to claim the *experience* of their failure – instead, like Don Quixote, they only blindly insist on their own impositions, believing their own "thoughts of feelings" to be attributable to the other's words. So, on the one hand, the novelistic space of *Don Quixote* in which there is an abyss between people presides here. On the other hand, Vincent claims there is also a depiction of the "richness" in the relationship between the brothers, a "sense of inner identification [*das Gefühl einer inneren Gleichheit*]—at a depth inaccessible to thought." (SF 130) [280] This occurs in the way one brother interprets the other. One Shandy brother can see his counterpart's failure to attain self-consciousness and to impose form on the world insofar as "each tries, from time to time, to share the other's quixotry, and at other times attempts to cure the other of it—the very content of his life." (SF 130) This is what I understand as a moment of intersubjective projection: even though novelistic space here rules and each character cannot *really* have another person's experiences, these brothers are given an imaginative moment in which they believe they project themselves into one another. It is in this projection that each character provides to the other what the latter's own search for self-consciousness is missing: so one brother sets his own thoughts "into motion"—employs the forms that he knows of his *own* ideas—in service of what

he imagines his brother's thoughts to be, and in turn the former brother sees how these forms, now attributed to the latter, fail to mean in the world – since he himself ought to be part of the context within which they mean. However, each character does not know this failure as his *own*, but rather he knows them as if they were the experienced failure of the self-consciousness of the other brother. Each character is meanwhile oblivious to the fact that this "quixotry" which he sees in his brother is the "very content of his life."

Each individual character in this way is deprived of an attainment of his own self-consciousness (as experience, rather than cognition) on Vincent's terms – through the failure of form. These characters, like Joachim, cannot experience their own failure and they are only projecting this failure for the other. They do not seem to recognize that they are committing a mistake of intersubjectivity, and imposing their own forms in service of another's experiences, which they cannot actually have for themselves. Nevertheless, the fact that they are *both* engaged in this intersubjective projection demonstrates, on the level of the novel itself, that there is actually an "inner identification" [*eine Zusammengehörigkeit*, *das Gefühl einer inneren Gleichheit*] between the two men. (The German emphasizes that this "feeling" is constructed from within as the position within which they find themselves vis-à-vis each other.) The commonality amongst these men, as we see each individual engaged in form-giving activity and an intersubjective mistake, allows us to see these men as part of the "all-embracing richness of the circle" (SF 130), as Vincent puts it. This richness between characters in turn becomes the ground for Vincent's argument that the *author* has expressed himself in the work, and that there is aesthetic value in his novel, in the achievement of the author's successfully expressed self-consciousness. For, as it was in *Don Quixote*, each character was originally only an idea of the author, and so all the products of *their* thought can in turn be attributed to authorial

consciousness. If one character, through his intersubjectivity, projects himself into another and thereby *experiences* the failure that would properly provide this other with a completed self-consciousness, from an authorial perspective that can take responsibility for *both* these characters as the movement of his own, authorial consciousness, one could say that self-consciousness has been achieved. By projecting his thoughts as the social activity and miscommunication that takes place between characters, the author can be said to attain an experience of his failure to impose form on the world, since each character (each a figure of the author's form-giving intelligible self) recognizes the other's failure. The author, through this ironic distribution of himself into characters who both oppose and complement one another, thereby attains an experience of his continuity with "the All" [*die All-Einheit*] and the recognition of his "communion of feeling" and "inner identification" with others.

Vincent's position in the dialogue emulates this version of self-consciousness given through the Shandy brothers, and if we view Vincent as taking on, as his own, this version of self-consciousness, we can come to see where Lukács is critiquing it as a practice. So far I have noted the following characteristics of Romantic self-consciousness: it assumes from the outset that the social feeling of the self is the truth of that self's continuity with the formless All of life's possibilities, it takes the pathway through the intelligible self in order to re-discover this feeling, and it sees the *failure* of the intelligible self to impose form on the world as containing the potential for its *experience* of its social communion with the All. Vincent is already, from the outset, *with* the girl whom both the men desire and he can therefore be read as already "in continuity" – a part of the social world. The significance of the intelligible self as his pathway is demonstrated through Vincent's interaction with Joachim. The dialogue opens with a scene in which Vincent is reading from Lawrence Sterne to this nameless girl. However, when Joachim

arrives, Vincent allows him to set the terms of the dialogue, as the two men try to impose their thoughts on the social space existing between all three of them. Vincent comes to alienate the girl as well in this process, even though he tries to include her by referencing particular concepts with which she would be familiar. At the end of the dialogue, Vincent loses the argument, once Joachim turns it to a personal level, implying that the way Vincent reads Sterne indicates Vincent's own impotence. This then completes the Romantic process of self-consciousness, insofar as Vincent is given an experience of his own failure to assert his ideas against the "strength" of Joachim's ideas (SF 150). He has an experience of his failure of form on a personal level.

So, on the one hand, Lukács would seem to gesture towards Vincent's Romantic success (at failure) in the conversation: for it is only Vincent who can claim an experience of the fruits of his intelligible self, as he who has tried to conceptualize the world. But such an experience is produced only through Joachim's final destruction of those ideas. The positive nature of this experience is portrayed in the kiss between Vincent and the nameless girl in the end. Vincent is allowed the *experience* of that which the conversation had sought—the sociality of epistemology, the goal of *Sehnsucht*—because his ideas are returned to him in terms of Joachim's resistance, and the experience of his own impotence. On the other hand, Joachim is still the winner of the intellectual debate, and Lukács seems to be critiquing Vincent's Romantic view. For if the whole debate took place to win the girl through a demonstration of each discussant's intelligible self, as that which, like Vincent's reading of Sterne, is expressed successfully, it does not seem to be the case that the debate was useful for this result. The girl does not seem to understand the argument. Instead she only feels an intense dislike for Joachim. When the girl and Vincent kiss at the end, the entire conversation is viewed as only a "highly

unnecessary preparation [*eine höchst überflüssige Vorbereitung*]." (SF 151) [323] Thus, his social victory, in which the girl gives him a final kiss in the end, is bitter sweet. This is so because if Vincent is understood to take on a Romantic version of self-consciousness that experiences its participation in the world through its failure to impose form on it, he can do so only from a very *impersonal* perspective.[26] The Romantic self longs to see itself as part of the world, but in order to do so, it declares all its created forms—its very mode of acting within that world—to be inessential. For, the specificity of the way one leads one's life, the play with interpretive possibilities that constituted Romantic seeking, shows itself to be insignificant in its details; the exact forms with which the imagination played are only random parts of the whole, and the form is only significant for its product and end goal, the negatively reflected transcendent infinite. The implication is that once the experience of the transcendent infinite is had through feeling, the pathway and specific forms one employed to get there are no longer necessary. Everything that leads up to the experience of the infinite then is rendered insignificant; only the end product is important. But the end product then itself is left without a place of meaning in which it can express itself as an essence, as it leaves everything that could determine it in ruins.

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[26] The problem resembles what Lukács said about the mystic in "Die Metaphysik der Tragödie": "The real existence of the mystic begins only when all differentiation has vanished forever; the miracle which his world has created must destroy all forms, for his reality—the essence—exists only behind the forms, disguised and concealed by them." (SF 160) [*Erst wenn jegliches Unterscheiden für immer verschwunden ist, beginnt das wahre Dasein des Mystikers; das Wunder, das seine Welt erschaffen hat, mufs alle Formen zerstören, denn nur hinter ihnen, von ihnen verdeckt und verborgen, lebt seine Wirklichkeit, das Wesen. dSF* 343] In other words, the "real existence of the mystic" must, in order to *be real*, have an experience of itself as existing within the formless reality of "life." In this essay on Paul Ernst, the mystic experience is explained and this "life" is described as that which consists of the contingent events of historical reality and the many interpretative possibilities of other individuals, who provide more form-giving impositions on the world which are not guaranteed to coincide with those of others. Therefore, if the mystic is to have an experience of itself as a participant in the world, it must experience its continuity with a conglomerate reality of existent individuals who are also interpreting entities, imposing form upon the world. However, for the mystic, the problem is that this perception of itself as continuous and undifferentiated from the world around it actually destroys "everything distinctive about itself" such that it becomes a mystery how its approach can "retain a self to experience this cancellation of the self." (SF 160) [*dennoch eine Ichheit zum Erleben dieser eigenen Aufhebung bewahren konnte*] The possibility of the value of selfhood and its inner experience, the sense of individuality and the development of self-consciousness, which had seemed to be the pathway of the German Romantic as it inherited the philosophical search for the self, is in fact negated. So Lukács declares that German *Sehnsucht*—which can be understood as associated with German Romanticism--"destroys all form." (SF 91)

Likewise, the problem which Vincent faces in the end is that, while he has had an experience of the *failure* of his ideas in the world, the girl does not seem to recognize his individuality – the way through form was unimportant. Nothing is *achieved* between them, except that which was already there. The final resultant self that ought to be recognized as his own – his unique and creative form-giving activity, his intelligible self – is threatened with the insignificance of formlessness. This is how Joachim ultimately wins the argument over Vincent – he points out to him that his model of self-consciousness, as Vincent claims it is expressed by Sterne, presents only "chaos" and therefore communicates nothing. "Only in something that is formed do we feel the metaphysic of formlessness!"[27] (SF 148) he declares. This ends up with an *antisocial* result, since there is no recognition of the individual people, each giving form in their own way, who constitute a world.

Thus we have two versions of consciousness represented in the two characters, both of whom fail to completely attain either a cognition or an experience of their own selves: both, while demonstrating their conscious activity in their search, fail to attain *self*-consciousness when they do so through their own version of consciousness. Joachim understands consciousness as form-giving activity, yet he cannot capture the dynamics of this activity in its entirety—neither in the social motivations that set it into motion, nor in its effect on the world. Vincent sees the failure of consciousness as that which can give an *experience* of the movement of this form-giving activity in a larger context. While he is then given to experience his continuity with the world and with others, in a "communion of feeling," he is threatened with the danger that he might no longer be able to claim this experience as his own.[28] If we view the isolated consequences of

[27] "*nur im Geformten fühlt man die Metaphysik der Formlosigkeit…*" (dSF 317)

[28] Likewise Lukács had noted of the mystic, whom we have shown he likens to the Romantic, that: "the essence is self-oblivion… in mysticism, it is beyond all explanation how a self can absorb everything into itself, how, in a state of

each character's ideas, the relationship *between* them, in terms of their social situation, could be described as a vacuum, an unbridgeable distance. At some point in the conversation, Joachim accuses Vincent of merely reading into Sterne whatever he pleases – of imposing "rhythm" where there is none. Likewise, Vincent accuses Joachim of taking his words and forming them into something else. Here we have a Shandy-esque moment, where the two men produce an abyss between themselves, taking on "empty" words as forms and then imposing their own meanings upon them, such that real communication is impossible. From their own individual points of view, both characters, like Don Quixote, seem to be "intelligible selves" only: they do not receive *actual* feedback from the world, or from each other. This is the reading of the text if we apply Joachim's version of consciousness as our standard of judgment: these characters end up like the novelistic characters they describe because they seek to impose their ideas in the world, but they are condemned to their own isolation. Notably then, the conversation given in this dialogue itself reproduces what has been read as novelistic space in its *own* social world: that which exists between people cannot be bridged through form, as characters ultimately end up isolated from one another.

However, if we apply *Vincent*'s version of authorial self-consciousness to this dialogue, and consider these separate characters as if they were attributable to the movements of one, authorial consciousness—such as Lukács' own—we can begin to consider the *overall* process of self-consciousness in terms of its completion for the author. The early Lukács is understood after all, as a neo-Kantian Romantic, such that both Vincent and Joachim can be read as offering Lukács' own ideas in his desire to express himself through literary criticism. As Rachel Schmidt has

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melting flux, it can destroy everything distinctive about itself and the whole world and yet retain a self to experience this cancellation of the self." (SF 160)

noted, given Lukács' known intellectual interests during this phase of his life, we can find evidence that the "neo-Kantian naysayer" Joachim and the "young Romantic" Vincent represent facets of Lukács' own thought.[29] Each version of self-consciousness, as it becomes a process of seeking and insofar as it is viewed within the social situation, provides the other with what it is missing. Vincent and his relationship with the girl remind Joachim of the social element that he cannot account for, even as he is primarily motivated by it in his intellectual assertions. Meanwhile, Vincent cannot be said to attain a real experience of failure, such as Romantic self-consciousness would seek, unless he has imposed a form which he can take responsibility for: he is indebted though to Joachim's intelligible self and the terms introduced by Joachim, and appeals to these terms to maintain the formal rigor that would allow him to feel a "metaphysic of formlessness" as one produced by a movement of his own mind. Here then I read intersubjectivity as making coherent the dynamics of the relationship between the characters in this dialogue even as we identify these characters as absorbed in their own processes of self-consciousness (their own desire to see their intelligible self *as* a social self). Joachim, in order to obtain a "full" self-consciousness, would have to recognize his desire to experience his own ideas as if they existed *among others*, which he, according to his own understanding of his formal consciousness, identifies as impossible. Vincent has been projected as "failing" in his assertion of ideas only if he could properly have an experience of the failure of his own forms from *within* Joachim's ideas, as if Joachim's thoughts were his own. If either is to attain self-consciousness, they can only do so if they could have a dualistic recognition of themselves simultaneously through their own, creative perspective and through another's perspective which is opposed to their own. The practice of intersubjectivity is the projection of one's own self into

[29] *Forms of Modernity: Don Quixote and Modern Theories of the Novel,* 320.

another person, as if a subject could properly *have* another person's experience and think from within their consciousness, seeing from within this other person's perspective. In this dialogue, it is not performed by any singular character, but it can instead be read as the very movement of the search for self-consciousness that we attribute to the *author's* endeavor to express his form-giving self. After all, the author has been projected as attempting to construct his relation to himself through characters (particularly in the parenthetical commentary included in the dialogue), as if he could really think from within each of his characters, as if they themselves were versions of himself, as if he could experience the novelistic space he created through the interaction of characters. In lieu then of the characters of this dialogue committing an intersubjective mistake, it is the *author* Lukács who takes on intersubjectivity as a figuration of the motivating activity of his consciousness – the intersubjectivity of characters allows the author to express *his* relation as a self to his own ideas, now released into the world of his created fiction and figured as the social space created between characters. The novel then becomes a mechanism for the author to express his search for his own self-consciousness as that which exists as the social space between versions of himself in the act of literary criticism – and these versions of himself, in character, represent his various ideas, his attempts to give form to the world.

The space then which we have read as the "novelistic space" of a vacuum between men here, which can also be understood as the social situation created by this fictional dialogue *as* an event of literature, then is turned into the space of the consciousness of the author of this "essay" – the distances *within himself,* which he creates in his ironic distribution of his ideas into the formal confines of various characters who try to assert their difference from one another. Consciousness *in* the novel can be understood then as the individual representations of characters who are

unable to share meanings, as each seeks a self-consciousness which he or she will never completely attain. Its representation of social relations and space then, here, appears negative, constituted of differences between these people. The consciousness *of* and *from* the novel though, can be understood as the ironic, authorial view which takes responsibility for these individual failures as figures of its own journey towards self-consciousness – the intersubjective possibility that exists between characters becomes a movement of the authorial mind in its *own* movement towards self-consciousness and self-expression in the aesthetic work.

However, this process of conversion of the social space of the novel (as it is brought out into the relationship between Joachim and Vincent) into the ironic consciousness of this dialogue's author is not immune to Lukács' criticisms of Romantic self-consciousness. If we see the author as seeking self-consciousness through his characters, who are just projections of his own ideas into the world, then the self which he ultimately "experiences" is not really his own social self as it exists in the world and in continuity with others, but it is rather a self that mistakes the fictional world it has generated out of itself as the world in which it lives. Such a self would fall prey to what Lukács criticized as a Romantic mistake, insofar as it can be said to have "identified the cosmos they [it] had created in their [its] dreams with the real world."[30] (SF 50) It would fall victim to the problem which Vincent has, insofar as that which it constitutes as its own "self" ends up "dissolving into thin air," since in fact, everything which it has constituted as "experience" has been developed from the interplay of its own ideas, rather than in actual interaction with the world outside of an interior consciousness. The author then *cannot* actually obtain the experience of his own consciousness as something that is continuous with the All, as

[30] "… *den erträumten und selbsterschaffenen Kosmos der wirklichen Welt gleichsetzten*…" (*dSF* 110)

the Romantic would so desire, since he has no guarantee that he has not merely made this all up for himself. The author's search for his own self-consciousness in its social existence, by way of his created "art" of the essay, would be unsuccessful. Further, novelistic space as the "void" between people would here seem to rule any interpretative maneuvers which we, as readers, might make in trying to comprehend this author, since the author cannot guarantee that his forms have actually been communicated. Novelistic consciousness here then, which we now see within the author of the essay in his generation of characters in this fictional dialogue, isolates itself and seems not to be communicable – Joachim's conclusion about consciousness is most applicable here. So Lukács emphasized one of the main problems of the "essays" included in *Die Seele und die Formen* was that: "the essayist's possibility of existence becomes profoundly problematic… who gives him the right to judge? … the criteria of the essayist's judgment are indeed created within him."[31] (SF 16) He seems here to be posing the question: who will give the essayist (Lukács himself, author of this dialogue) a social world in which he can attain his self-consciousness? So the essayist awaits "the one who is always about to arrive"[32] (16). It is this problem which the text of *TR* tries to take on in practice as the projection of the Novel itself as a living consciousness.

II. The Author's Form-Giving Act of Composition in Die Theorie des Romans

In a way similar to *Die Seele und die Formen, Die Theorie des Romans* views the author as employing an intersubjective practice as an expression of his own self – as his own "ethic" as the

[31] "*Jedoch hier wird die Existenzmöglichkeit des Essayisten erst recht bis in die tiefsten Wurzeln hinein problematisch… wer gibt ihm aber dieses Recht zum Gericht? Es wäre beinahe richtig zu sagen: er nimmt es sich; aus sich heraus erschafft er seine richtenden Werte.*" (*d*SF 35*)*

[32] "*der immer Kommende, der noch nie Angelangte, der einzig zum Richten Berufene…" (dSF* 34)

text calls it (72). However, unlike *SF*, which indicates that the author might lose sight of his social motivations and aims as he takes responsibility for his characters' intersubjective practices (seeing their continuity generated by the movement of his own mind), *TR* presents an ironic recognition—which will come to be developed as the viewpoint of the Novel itself—which navigates this "danger" of the "fragility of the world" (72) created by the author in his quest for self-consciousness.

First then we will address how the author composes his novel through his imposition of self-consciousness onto the character, as it is described in *TR,* extracted from the complicating factor of the Novel's ironic reading of this compositional practice. In describing the novel, Lukács says, "the given structure of the object [*Die gegebene Struktur des Gegenstandes*] (i.e. the search [of the character]…) supplies an indication of the form-giving intention [*die Gesinnung zur Gestaltung*]." (60) [50] As I read this, authorial "form-giving intention" can be seen within the "object" of character because the author provides his own created forms to view and develop the character's consciousness. The author constructs the consciousness of the character through imposing on this character a version of his *own* form-giving intention*:* he intersubjectively provides the character with a quest for self-consciousness. We can view this as an intersubjective interaction rather than just an *ex nihilo* compositional act of form-giving because the novel character for Lukács always maintains a referential status: so he emphasizes that character is to be understood as an "empirical" self, in contrast to the drama's "intelligible self." (47) (But, as I will demonstrate in the following pages, the "intelligible self" can be seen as an essential element in the development of the "empirical" self in the novel, as Lukács' distinction between the drama and novel will come to make clear.) The text gives an example of the novel of "abstract idealism" in *Don Quixote*, whose main character does not even know he needs to seek himself,

for he assumes his place in the world is transcendentally given. Cervantes provides this search for self-consciousness for him though, as the adventures which the author develops for the character indicate that the meaning Don Quixote expects to find in the world needs to be accounted for in terms of this character's individual self. The terms the author imposes are Kantian rather than native to the character's world view: according to *TR,* the character comes to be conceived in terms of the "intelligible self" as the object of the search for self-consciousness. Here then, what I previously read as illuminating the communicative efforts between two characters from *Tristram Shandy* in the vacuum of novelistic social space, comes to be articulated as the space between an author and his character. The author can thus be said to be *practicing* his sociality vis-à-vis his character along the same terms as characters were seen as relating to each other, even if the author's doing so means employing his own ideas as his only resource for such sociality. His originality paradoxically emulates the practice of characterological intersubjectivity that was read as existing between the Shandy brothers. In imposing his own ideas on his character, he employs his situatedness in novelistic social space, the milieu of "life," insofar as he interprets according to his own form-giving creativity, contributing to the endless possibilities that constitute this space.

Because the "intelligible self" that the author seeks in his character is understood in terms of its *individuality*, its unique "essence," the author opposes the character to an environment which demonstrates how at "cross-purposes" (100) [*Vorbeihandeln*] this character's ideas are with that which the character's world is capable of receiving as meaningful within its own social structures. The contrast between the world in which these ideas are exercised and the character's intentions serves to show the character's *creative* formal activity. So, for example, in *Don Quixote*, Don Quixote acts according to a chivalric code, even though this code does not actually

reflect the values of the social world in which he seeks to exercise them. In his act of composition then, the author develops the essence of the character through terms similar to what Lukács says of the drama in *TR*: the drama tries to portray a character's "destiny" [*Schicksal*] as that which was always to have been the case, so that a character's essence can retrospectively be seen as given from the start. The character of the drama is the "intelligible self" for Lukács because this genre seeks a character's essence as pure form, such that the content through which this self manifests—the accidental content of "life" (the contingencies, interpretative instabilities, and accidents of history)—is shown to be insignificant to the self's essence, a mere occasion for the expression and realization of this self. That the novel character is originally conceived in such terms is articulated in the following way: "Their relationship to one another [the subject's actions and its oppositional 'arena' for realization in the world] is … only of a grotesque failure to meet… [which] accentuate[s] and confirm[s] the grotesque contradictions between the imagined and the real."[33] (99) The soul, characterized by its capacity to "imagine," [*vorstellen*] has an "unquestioning, concentrated interiority" that has no equivalent in the world with which it can express its essence. (99) In both the novel and the drama, composition begins in a character created as an intelligible self who constructs ideas not given within the world; that this is the case comes into evidence once the antagonism of these ideas with "the world" is demonstrated.

The character of the drama would be similar to that of a novel, if it were not for the novelist's *dissatisfaction* with that which it yielded as the resultant "intelligible self" for the character. "The life of a person with such a soul becomes an uninterrupted series of adventures which he

[33] "Ihre Beziehung aufeinander kann … nur ein groteskes Vorbeigehen aneinander… sein … Der Inhalt und die Intensität dieser Handlungsart müssen deshalb … den grotesken Widerspruch zwischen vorgestellter und tatsächlicher Wirklichkeit – die Handlung des Romans – in ihrem grotesken Charakter bestärken und befestigen." (*TR* 97-8)

himself has chosen…"[34] (99) says Lukács of the character of the novel of "abstract idealism." If the author ends here, with such a portrayal of character as independent of a world at cross-purposes with the character's "interiority," Lukács warns that he will not have written a novel. The novelist seeks to portray the intelligible self as a dynamic activity, whereas the drama ends up portraying it in terms of a final formal product, a symbol[35] of that which will attain meaning only in the eyes of a transcendental authority, in a realm located beyond this life. J.M. Bernstein has analyzed Lukács' interpretation of the Kantian search for self-consciousness in terms of such dissatisfaction. As he explains it, if the self seeks itself in terms of its form-giving activity, it would look to all form-giving acts preceding this search for self-consciousness as that which it could claim as its own. However, in creating the abstraction about the self which would account for all such activity in the quest for self-consciousness, the self is engaged in yet another activity of form-giving which it would need to also account for, to be fully comprehensive of that which it can claim as its own self. [36] So Lukács mourns, "our thinking follows the endless path of an approximation that is never fully accomplished…" (34) Every further effort to know the self

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[34] "Das Leben eines solchen Menschen muß also zu einer ununterbrochenen Reihe selbstgewählter Abenteuer werden." (*TR* 99)

[35] The term comes from Hegel. Hegel understood the symbol as the mediation between the Absolute and its sensuous manifestation in matter through art—the symbol is a form that unifies (and it is equated with beauty for Hegel), and it can be distinguished from what he called "the sign" [*Zeichen*] because the latter is characterized by an arbitrary assignment of matter to meaning. But, that there is art at all indicates the initial separation of consciousness from the transcendental unity. Further, that the symbol is distinguished from the sign means that there must be some postulate of a transcendental order or authority from which the symbol could ground its unity. So for Lukács, a symbol can be said to maintain a distinction between the essence of the thing represented and the sensuousness of its manifestation. While a symbol allows for the meaningful essence of a thing to manifest within a concretely sensuous instance, the ultimate meaning is expressible *not* because of some meaning immanent to the concrete world of "life," but rather because underlying both this "life" and the essential, there is conceived to be a transcendental authority. The meaning of essence in the symbol maintains its distance from the contingent circumstances of its manifestation by pointing to a possible redemption of essence on a higher, unknowable plane of mystical meaning; life was only an inconsequential medium for expression, and essence is independent from it. So, for example, the play of Oedipus can serve as an example: Oedipus has an ultimate destiny spelled out by the gods from the very beginning—the events of the drama give the accidental way that such a fate, determined by the gods, comes to be realized. In other words, the practice of the search for self-consciousness as it is composed in the drama indicates that the drama assumes a transcendental authority that has already pre-determined meanings.

[36] *Philosophy of the Novel* 188.

creates more formalizing activity to be known as the self, so that the practice of self-consciousness is endless.

According to *TR,* the modern drama, unlike the novel, does not seem to recognize that the essence it constitutes in the end through its character is incomplete. It tries to put a "polemical emphasis on heroism" [*polemische Akzent des Heldentums*, 28] – it tries to yield the independence of an essential destiny of a character – but Lukács claims that this instead leads to "an excess of purely lyrical lyricism" [*eine Überwucherung von rein lyrischer Lyrik*, 28]. That is, in its attempt to discover the essence of the intelligible self through a character, the drama ends up actually producing *something to be experienced* that can be seen as a product of the activity of the intelligible self, but which the drama is unable to formally grasp from within its own terms. The hero, who has tried to assert himself through "winning a hierarchical contest with life," [*hierarchischem Wettkampf mit dem Leben*, 29] ends up producing his own "loneliness" [*Einsamkeit*] but he does not know that he himself is responsible for such an experience.[37] Such an experience could provide yet another occasion for form-giving activity that seeks to discover the self, but it does not seem to do so for the drama.

The "form-giving intention" (the author) of the novel, in contrast to the "finished form" of the drama, actually comes to recognize that the "lived experience" of the character demonstrates

[37] We have here a parallel to the experience of Joachim, who, in seeking to put into practice his search for his own intelligible self, ended up in a lonely condition in which he felt he could not communicate with his interlocutors. Likewise, the hero constituted by the drama, constructed through the terms of the intelligible self, speaks the language of the "absolutely lonely man" and is "monological." (44) The text then goes on to emphasize, much like my reading of Joachim, that this produced experience is ultimately an indication of the social motivations of the search for self-consciousness: "Such loneliness is not simply the intoxication of a soul gripped by destiny and so made song: it is also the torment of a creature condemned to solitude and devoured by a longing for community." (45) Furthermore, in what I also read to be the parallel to Joachim's reading of the social space of the novel, the produced experience is an indication of that which an intelligible self makes *as* its world, even if it admits the defeat of not being to experience or live within such a world: "it must believe that the milling crowd of humanity which surrounds it is only a carnival prank and that, at the first word from the essence, the masks will fall and brothers who have hitherto been strangers to one another will fall into each other's arms. It knows this, it searches for it, and it finds itself only alone, in the midst of destiny." (46)

the dynamic activity of this character's intelligible self and must also be incorporated into any consciousness he could have of (or for) this characterological self. This means the author first points out the limitations of the character's self-recognition, insofar as the character cannot account for that which he himself produces as his own experience of his form-giving activity in the world.[38] The character's own point of view, in other words, is similar to that of the genre of the drama. This character is unable to "experience distances as realities" [*Abstände als Wirklichkeiten zu erleben*][39] – I read this to mean that the character is unable to perceive the novelistic social space in which he exists, constituted of others who have creative conceptions of that which "should be." The character cannot perceive this social space because he believes that his meaning in the world is "secure" and already pre-determined as his fate, so he does not look for evidence to the contrary. He does not believe he needs to invent new forms to capture the experience of the unexpected (the experience of his own social existence in modernity, given to the interpretations of others).

The author sees these limits of the character's perception because he projects that which exists beyond the frontier of the character's consciousness, and which the character's "essence" is to be differentiated from—a particular social situation which the character does not grasp, a world of other creative form-giving entities, whose interpretations are different from those of the main character. In providing a social setting for the main character's actions, he turns the

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[38] So in the novel of abstract idealism, the character exercises his "ideas" as actions in the world, because he assumes that he has a place in the transcendental order: he assumes that his actions can be read as meaningful within the context of the social world in which he lives, since they are the common, unquestionable values of others in within that world. Don Quixote, for example, believes others ascribe to the same chivalric values as he does, so he acts accordingly. He cannot recognize that "the essence existing within the same shell of life in another person need not be the same as his own" (45) (as Lukács describes the intelligible self of the drama), and he therefore assumes he already knows the meaning of his actions prior to carrying them out. This means that he is "incapable of experiencing anything" (99) in his "inner certitude" that he already knows the meaning of his actions, and instead he "throws himself into life because life means nothing more to him than the successful passing of tests" (99).

[39] (So the German word *Abstand* emphasizes the distance *between* entities, their relationship, as opposed to the general *Entfernung* used in *SF* to express this space.)

character's "secure existence" [*gesicherte Sein*] into a "subjectively clear, fanatically maintained existence, lacking any objective relationship"[40] (103). Such a subjectivity of the character, while missing an "objective relationship" to the realm in which it exists, is nevertheless seen in terms of its multiple relations to others by the author. For example, in *TR's* mention of Balzac's *The Human Comedy*, the author is read as providing the character with a social context consisting of other people "with similar mental structures, although with completely different orientations and contents," making one subjectivity (in the form of character) merely one amongst the "strange, boundless, and immeasurable mass of interweaving destinies and lonely souls."[41] (108) As pointed out in the previous section, when everyone is an intelligible self, there exists an "abyss" that can only be bridged by interpretative activity. This allows for the "distance" [*Abstand*] which the character misses, and which the author is then allowed to see as that which *would* be the character's experience of his own created social condition. The novelist thus has a view of that which the character is missing in his comprehension of himself—a larger context of others, who also creatively give form to life. The character though, fails to recognize that his essence is not already pre-determined in social life, and therefore he does not even know that he needs to seek self-consciousness to understand what sort of meaning he makes for himself in this world of others.

In providing this social context of novelistic space for the character, the author is actually constructing the character's *continuity* with the world in which the character lives, which in turn

[40] "… das subjektiv nicht erfaßbare, objektiv gesicherte Sein der Idee hat sich in ein subjektiv klares und fanatisch festgehaltenes, aber die objektive Beziehung entbehrendes Sein verwandelt." (*TR* 103)
[41] "… die Außenwelt ist eine rein menschliche und ist im wesentlichen von Menschen, die eine ähnliche Geistesstruktur, wenn auch mit ganz anderen Richtungen und Inhalten aufweisen, bevölkert. Dadurch wird diese dämonische Inadäquatheit, diese endlose Reihe von schicksalschweren Vorbeihandeln der Seelen aneinander, zum Wesen der Wirklichkeit; es entsteht jenes merkwürdige, unendliche und unübersichtliche Gewühl von Verflochtenheit der Schicksale und der einsamen Seelen, das das Einzigartige dieser Romane ausmacht." (*TR* 111)

gives the author an occasion to help complete the character's self-consciousness. As Lukács puts it, "creative subjectivity glimpses a unified world in the mutual relativity of elements [subject and object] essentially alien to one another, and gives form to this world."[42] (75) Even while developing the character polemically, in terms of its creative originality contrasted to the mentalities of others, the author comprehends this character's interpretations as *contributing* to the space in which he perceives him as existing. So he sees the "mutual relativity" of "alien" elements. That is, the author understands the character as a homogeneous part of a heterogeneous social world, insofar as this character is one of the intelligible selves who *creates* the abyssal nature of novelistic space through his own creative interpretations. By providing the character with a social context consisting of other characters "fatally at cross-purposes with one another"[43] (108), the author demonstrates that this distance between people is also *generated* by the very interpretations which seek to bridge it.[44] The hero creates novelistic social space through his thinking activity because his form-giving activity is original, and such forms do not exist in the world when he seeks to exercise them within it. When the author yields the character's "lived experience" [*Erlebnis*] of the world's *rejection* of the character's ideas, he turns this negativity into something that is positive: the character's activity creates something else in the world that is to be experienced as his own social condition within novelistic space, even if this something is conceptually labeled as "distance" [*Abstand*]. The character is thus understood as a participant of the world, even as the character is developed out of a differentiation from this world.

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[42] "in eine Subjektivität, die die Abstraktheit und mithin die Beschränktheit der einander fremden Subjekts- und Objektswelten durchschaut, diese in ihren, als Notwendigkeiten und Bedingungen ihrer Existenz begriffenen, Grenzen versteht und durch dieses Durchschauen die Zweiheit der Welt zwar bestehen läßt, aber zugleich in der wechselseitigen Bedingtheit der einander wesensfremden Elemente eine einheitliche Welt erblickt und gestaltet." (*TR* 68-9)
[43] "…diese endlose Reihe von schicksalschweren Vorbeihandeln der Seelen aneinander…" (*TR* 112)
[44] As Lukács had earlier pointed out, "Form, then, is like a bridge that separates; a bridge upon which we come and go, only to arrive at ourselves, without ever really meeting anyone else… human contact is confined, at best, to psychological sign-interpretation." (*LR* 44)

As I interpret it, the author performs a round of "abstraction"[45] on the character's lived experience, once he can envision the character's continuity with the heterogeneous nature of the world: consciousness can bestow form upon an experience of the world only when it is assumed that the self is continuous with the world, that it has some sort of immediate connection that gives it an *occasion* for form-giving activity outside of its own inventiveness. An abstraction is understood to conglomerate heterogeneous experience into a concept of the same, so for such form-giving activity of abstraction to be justified, there must be a basis for the belief in unity. The author commits to the practice of creating this unity for the character by projecting the character's continuity within a social context—he both *assumes* and *envisions* a world that can subsume the character's originality within itself. Through his generalizing abstraction, he creates novelistic social space as that which can contain within itself the essence of his character as a differentiable individual but also as a participant. Furthermore, it is notable that, if we continue to read the author as emulating a Shandy brother in his intersubjective assumptions, the author can also be read as having already put into practice the possibility that he himself is continuous with this context – the author is like another character, part of the social space which provides more and more interpretations to a character's form-giving acts. In his intersubjective projection, he acts on the basis that his forms are applicable to another, that they are somehow justified, insofar as he is part of the same social world. His own activity of composition then can be read as practiced on his assumption of this unity of the social, as his own ethic.

Abstraction though is not just generalizing, but it is also generative: the author first of all *creates* this world *for* the character, and then he goes on to make certain theoretical conclusions

[45] As Lukács says, "The relationships which create cohesion between the abstract components [of the novel] are abstractly pure and formal…" (84) ["Die zusammenhaltenden Beziehungen der abstrakten Bestandteile sind in abstrakter Reinheit formell..." (*TR* 79)]

(on the basis of his experience of this continuity) about self-consciousness for his character. The derived "theory" (his produced abstraction about the character's social existence, contained in the "biographical form" of the novel as his "idea") is understood to retain the contradictions apparent in the process of the character's form-giving, even as authorial activity emulates characterological practice in its assumption of unity. *TR* describes the author's "creation of forms"—his produced novel—as "the most profound confirmation of the existence of a dissonance," rather than a "finished form."[46] (72) That is, his abstraction does something beyond just reading what the character's consciousness in the social realm *is*; it is itself an act of creative form-giving *by the author,* which the author performs from within his intersubjective projection into the character. "The relationships which create cohesion between the abstract components are abstractly pure and formal, and the ultimate unifying principle therefore has to be the ethic of the creative subjectivity,"[47] (84) Lukács concludes. By viewing this character through the search for self-consciousness that is endless, the author sees that the character's previous acts of form-giving, turned now into sensuous events and the character's experiences in his social world, need another round of abstraction to incorporate all such acts into a consciousness of the character's self. More specifically, the author tries to account for that which the character produces in this character's own social situation (through his "lived experience"). That which the character experiences as his own "loneliness" needs to be accounted for as part of his participation in the social—and hence, as something that also needs to be given form in the process of seeking the character's self-consciousness, as part of that self.

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[46] "… das Formschaffen ist die tiefste Bestätigung des Daseins der Dissonanz, die zu denken ist… So erscheint der Roman im Gegensatz zu dem in der fertigen Form ruhenden Sein anderer Gattungen als etwas Werdendes, als ein Prozeß." (*TR* 64)

[47] "Die zusammenhaltenden Beziehungen der abstrakten Bestandteile sind in abstrakter Reinheit formell: darum muß das letzte vereinigende Prinzip die inhaltlich deutlich gewordene Ethik der schöpferischen Subjektivität sein."(*TR* 79)

So the "idea" derived from that which is glimpsed in the character's lived experience is actually evidence of the author's "ethic": *his* form-giving activity that he performs *for* a conception of the consciousness of the character's self. For example, the character Don Quixote, as *TR* reads it, did not know he had to create new forms to capture unexpected experience; his author, instead, does this *for* him. Cervantes does so by turning the "sensuous… lived experience of the novel's characters" into an "instrument of composition"[48] (71) – into the form of the novel. Thus, even as *TR* allows Cervantes to "meet the deepest essence" [*hat gestaltend das tiefste Wesen … getroffen*] (of "heroism" in his time, in the character of Don Quixote), Cervantes' recognition does not exactly *uncover* (as the less accurate English translation "expose" would suggest) the essence of this heroism so much as it *creates* it. So the following is Cervantes' *own* form-giving idea that is evinced in his novel: "the ways leading to the transcendental home have become impassable; reality does not have correspond to subjective evidence, however genuine and heroic."[49] (104) The character's social continuity is given as that of his own loneliness—the emotional experience [das *Gefühl*] of distance from others—which this character cannot recognize as that which he himself is responsible for producing. It occasions yet another round of form-giving on the part of the author, who gives form to the character's social existence by providing a "homogeneity" within novelistic social space that gives enough of a unity of experience to point out a theoretical conclusion about the "transcendental homelessness" of the self. In this way, what Bernstein identified as the form-giving activity of *one* intelligible self in its endless, on-going quest for self-consciousness comes

[48] "… abstrakt ist die gestaltende Gesinnung, die den Abstand zwischen den beiden abstrakten Gruppen der Gestaltungselemente unaufgehoben bestehen läßt, ihn als Erlebnis des Romanmenschen unüberwunden versinnlicht, zur Verbindung der beiden Gruppen verwendet und so zum Vehikel der Komposition macht." (*TR* 62)
[49] "… daß das reinste Heldentum zur Groteske, der festeste Glauben zum Wahnsinn werden muß, wenn die Wege zu seiner transzendentalen Heimat ungangbar geworden sind; daß der echtesten und heldenhaftesten, subjektiven Evidenz keine Wirklichkeit entsprechen muß." (*TR* 105)

to be distributed across both the lived experiences of the character and the form-giving recognitions of the author.

But it is not in the author's conclusion about the character's social self where the intersubjective practice of self-consciousness ends. As I read it, the author also takes up that which he encounters in the character's situation and employs it in his own quest for self-consciousness, as a measure for understanding his own intelligible self. So the novelist institutes himself in terms of an "interior diversion" [*innere Spaltung*]. He is both:

> … a subjectivity as interiority, which opposes power complexes that are alien to it and which strives to imprint the content of its longing upon the alien world, and a subjectivity which sees through the abstract and, therefore, limited nature of the mutually alien worlds of subject and object, understands these worlds by seeing their limitations as necessary conditions of their existence and by, thus seeing through them, allows the duality of the world to subsist.[50] (75)

As a "subjectivity as interiority," the author is identifying with the character, practicing his own implicatedness in this novelistic social space, in his assumption that he can intersubjectively experience the character's process of self-consciousness, and even complete it for him. He practices his sociality with his character like a Shandy brother. Yet, the author can be distinguished from character because he also takes an ironic perspective on the process of self-consciousness, in his further acts of form-giving, his theoretical conclusions. In practicing his own form-giving activity on the "lived experience" of the character, which he makes into an "instrument of composition," the author makes himself into an intelligible self that must be distinguished from that of the character, since he creatively invents that which is not already in

[50] "Sie bedeutet, als formelles Konstituens der Romanform, eine innere Spaltung des normativ dichterischen Subjekts in eine Subjektivität als Innerlichkeit, die fremden Machtkomplexen gegenübersteht und der fremden Welt die Inhalte ihrer Sehnsucht aufzuprägen bestrebt ist, und in eine Subjektivität, die die Abstraktheit und mithin die Beschränktheit der einander fremden Subjekts- und Objektswelten durchschaut, diese in ihren, als Notwendigkeiten und Bedingungen ihrer Existenz begriffenen, Grenzen versteht und durch dieses Durchschauen die Zweiheit der Welt zwar bestehen läßt, aber zugleich in der wechselseitigen Bedingtheit der einander wesensfremden Elemente eine einheitliche Welt erblickt und gestaltet." (*TR* 68-9)

existence in the mentalities of the character's milieu, or in the character's own mentality. The author dynamically creates his own existence as an independent intelligible self by inventing a new form—the novel itself, his abstraction about the character in his world—that "sees through the abstract and, therefore, limited nature of the mutually alien worlds of subject and object [as the dissonance of existence]." (75) As I read this, the author's *divestment from the character,* constituted within his own original act of form-giving, is, paradoxically, evidence of his attempt to continue the practice of self-consciousness as he had initiated it *intersubjectively* for his character. His own development of his intelligible self in his form-giving activity can be understood as an implementation of *the social self-consciousness of character as a motivating principle of his own self.* This is how I read the assertion that the author allows "the duality of the world to subsist": he takes on that which he has glimpsed in a character's social self – the "mutually alien worlds of subject and object" and the fundamental dissonance of existence – and uses it as the pathway which he must take to both create and discover his *own* self-consciousness. He makes that which he has glimpsed within another necessary to himself; he makes it his own "guilt" as Lukács had put it in an essay from *Die Seele und die Formen.*[51]

[51] "… by feeling that everything that had to happen to him is of his own making, he draws firm contours round everything inside himself which accidentally happens to enter the flowing circumference of his accidental life-complex. He makes a necessity of it; he creates frontiers round himself; he creates himself…. Through guilt, a man says 'yes' to everything that has happened to him; by feeling it to be his own action and his own guilt, he conquers it and forms his life, setting his tragedy—which has sprung from his guilt—as the frontier between his life and the All… the *guilt of another* [my emphasis] is always only fate." (*SF* 165-6) While this quotation pertains to the dramas of Paul Ernst, I read it as also applicable to that which can be said about the novelist. In the way that the author recognizes the otherness of this character in seeing this experience which "happens to enter the flowing circumference of his accidental life-complex" as that which he must claim as his own, he implements the "guilt of another" as his own guilt. In claiming "transcendental homelessness" as his *own* guilt, insofar as it is imposed by his *own* abstraction about his own social world onto the character, he could implicate himself as existing in a novelistic social space; he references the "frontiers" beyond which he himself cannot see, in his efforts to continue the process of self-consciousness within himself. In turn, the character comes to be seen in its otherness (as an empirical object to which the author could not guarantee access), while the author "creates himself" out of a "necessity" to this otherness. Thus, as *TN* claims, the "object [the character] remains isolated as indeed it should," while "the lived experience [of this object by the author] that absorbs the event and radiates it out also carries within it the ultimate meaning of life, the artist's sense-giving, life-conquering power." (52)

However, in trying to learn a lesson from that which he experiences through the character, the author threatens the entirety of his novelistic construction: if the author's fundamental social condition is like that which he creates in his abstraction about the character's social self, and is characterized by his own inability to get outside of his own form-giving intention, then he must critically recognize that the original projection into the character's experience might only have come from the dynamic of his own mind, rather than a justified, common basis for inner identification between his own self (or the character's) and another self. His identification with his character then—what he learns from this experience, how he gives it form, and how he comes to practice this form of self-consciousness on himself—actually paradoxically motivates the critical concept that notes the lack of justification for his original intersubjective projection. Thus, the author must criticize his application of his own forms to another person. In his own process of self-consciousness, he is left with a failure to attain experience that can be assured to have a realm of exercise outside of his own form-giving activity, outside of the movement within his own mind.

Nevertheless, I am here insisting that such self-criticism can be paradoxically read as an *application* of what is learned from the character because the author is seen to *transform and delimit* himself *on the basis* of that which he recognizes in the intersubjective self-consciousness which he has seen for the character: "In the novel the subject, as observer and creator, is *compelled* by irony *to apply its recognition of the world to itself* [my emphasis] and to treat itself, like its own creatures, as a free object of free irony: it must transform itself into a purely receptive subject…"[52] (75) In applying that which is glimpsed in the character's social self to his

[52] "… es zwingt das schauende und schaffende Subjekt, seine Welterkenntnis auf sich selbst anzuwenden, sich selbst, geradeso wie seine Geschöpfe, als freies Objekt der freien Ironie zu nehmen; kurz gefaßt: sich in ein rein aufnehmendes, in das für die große Epik normativ vorgeschriebene Subjekt zu verwandeln." (*TR* 68)

own process of self-consciousness, the author comes to see the character as existing in the "empirical" (75) realm to which the author does not have access. He indicates his own distance from the interpretations of others. As the author comes to see his own limitations, this character can begin to be conceived of as another entity to which the author cannot constitute his own "objective" relationship—as part of that social world which the author is denied access to. He emphasizes then his own implication in novelistic social space through his critical concepts, the social distance between himself and others, when these critical concepts are viewed as *practices* of his self-consciousness, rather than as just theoretical illuminations.

The formal note that the author can be said to end on is "resignation," as the text calls it. For, if the author invents new form (the novel itself) to account for the self-consciousness of the character, this latter activity of form-giving must also be accounted for as part of the authorial intelligible self, once the author is read as inscribing himself in novelistic social space—if the author is to achieve "empirical" status like his characters, his form-giving activity needs to be seen as something that can be *experienced,* an occasion for yet another activity of abstraction. But if the author were to make an abstraction about himself from his own perspective and make some conclusion on that basis, he would only be re-generating the same problem, rather than achieving a view of himself—there would be yet another activity of form-giving that needed to be accounted for as part of himself. "[The author's] ethic … cannot, when all is said and done, completely penetrate the objects of form-giving, and therefore cannot completely rid itself of its subjectivity and so appear as the immanent meaning of the objective world."[53] (84) The author's conclusions about his character's selfhood, his abstractions about it, are themselves subjective

[53] "… und weil sie die Objekte ihrer Gestaltung doch nie ganz zu durchdringen und deshalb nie ihre Subjektivität gänzlich abzulegen und als immanenter Sinn der Objektswelt zu erscheinen vermag, bedarf sie selbst einer neuerlichen, wieder inhaltlich bestimmten, ethischen Selbstkorrektur, um den Gleichgewicht schaffenden Takt zu erreichen." (*TR* 79)

impositions that need to be accounted for as attributable to an intelligible self. The perspective of the text notes that the author's ethic then needs "a new ethical self-correction": his "reflexion… becomes an object for reflexion… the need for reflexion is the deepest melancholy of every great and genuine novel."[54] (85) In other words, the author needs an intersubjective perspective that can help him complete his social self-consciousness *for* him, as he gives form to the character's life. In his incompleteness and indication of his "resignation," he leaves himself open as a "purely receptive subject" (75). He thus invites another round of "reflexion." The *author's* experience, his "melancholy" as the text calls it, then becomes the experience which needs to be accounted for as a moment of form-giving of the authorial intelligible self. The process of self-consciousness continues through the author in its dissatisfaction: there is always more form-giving activity that needs to be accounted for as part of the intelligible self, in its ongoing creativity. And, as I demonstrate in the next section, the challenge of this reflexion is taken up by the perspective of the Novel itself in *Die Theorie des Romans.*

III. The Novel's Quest

The philosophical voice that Lukács uses in *TR* goes on to apply an "objective" (71) perspective to the author's receptive stance (which is evinced in his subjective "resignation" in his realization that he might have merely imagined all those experiences which generated his form-giving activity, his quest for self-consciousness; he cannot continue the practice of his own self-consciousness on his own). This is where the voice of the Novel comes into play: the endless practice of self-consciousness, which I read as distributed across the character and the author, now also comes to be performed within *TR* as the form-giving activity (the

[54] "… Diese Reflexion wird aber nochmals zum Gegenstand des Nachdenkens… Dieses Reflektieren müssen ist die tiefste Melancholie jedes echten und großen Romans." (*TR* 80)

consciousness) of the Novel itself. Once the text points out that all the elements of the author's novel are "abstract" (and hence: attributable to an abstracting consciousness, the author's own isolated imagination), it nevertheless projects more world in which this form-giving entity exists. I argue that this as the activity of the Novel, coming into existence in its own right as a search for self-consciousness in an emulation of the authorial practice of composition.

The point of view that the voice of the text brings to its reading of the author of the novel is already informed by some preconceptions about what constitutes a self and what its own "lived experience" has been of its social world. I have already mentioned that my reading of the authorial act of composition excluded some of the more difficult elements of presentation in *TR*; this allowed me to introduce, in the last section of this chapter, a less complicated description of the author's practice. Likewise, I will initially read the presentation of the consciousness within *TR* as a process distinct from that of the author. But it will be read in such a light that it can be seen to pre-figure that which the speaking voice of the text imposes as its own original interpretation on its reading of the author's "ethic." The similarity between the journey that the consciousness of *TR* undergoes and the author's practice of composition then is not accidental. However, the interaction between these two processes will be better explained if we first distinguish them.

TR opens with its own version of what I have called an intersubjective glimpse: some subjective perspective is imagining itself into another's experience and thoughts. "Happy are those ages when the starry sky is the map of all possible paths—ages whose paths are illuminated by the light of the stars."[55] (29) The imagery of this depicted experience leads us to believe that

[55] "Selig sind die Zeiten, für die der Sternenhimmel die Landkarte der gangbaren und zu gehenden Wege ist und deren Wege das Licht der Sterne erhellt. Alles ist neu für sie und dennoch vertraut, abenteuerlich und dennoch Besitz." (*TR* 9)

the subject who speaks here has some kind of immediate access to this other world—as if it could really live from within the lives of the ancient Greeks that it references here. The situation into which the voice of the text casts itself, by way of its conception of the interrelation between "life" and "essence" in the Greek epic, is described as one in which the self is discoverable in its completeness, because this self exists as a homogeneous, constituent part of a larger whole—the larger whole here is understood as the "totality" of a world, the social forms of which are constituted of fulfilling "paths" for the realization of human destiny.[56] This glimpse into the epic then occasions the idea—the persistent thought and the ethic that allows us to read the speaking subject of the text as presenting the singularity of a subjective point of view throughout *TR*—that the connection between self and world can be *positive,* and that these two "sharply distinct" entities can in-form one another. The self can create that which exists in the world in its participation, and because this world is so created out of the self's expressive activity, its totality corresponds to the "possible paths" that a self could take to fully realize its inner "essence."

Yet, the glimpse of meaning that is had from within this intersubjective projection of the speaking subject into the epic ends up almost immediately *excluding* the intersubjectively imagining subject from its plenitude: once the voice of the text describes how each "action of the soul becomes meaningful and rounded..." it sees such meaningful action as "draw[ing] a closed circumference around itself." (29) This closure does not only signify the epic self's self-

[56] "The world is wide and yet it is like a home," says this philosophical voice in its depiction of epic life, "for the fire that burns in the soul is of the same essential nature as the stars." (29) ["Die Welt ist weit und doch wie das eigene Haus, denn das Feuer, das in der Seele brennt, ist von derselben Wesensart wie die Sterne." (*TR* 9)] This "soul" in the epic world exercises itself through its activity, the meaning of which, as it is constellated within a social totality, "draws a closed circumference around itself," and therefore seems to be complete, to fulfill a destiny. "… each action of the soul becomes meaningful and rounded in this duality: complete in meaning—in *sense*—and complete for the senses…." (29) ["So wird alles Tun der Seele sinnvoll und rund in dieser Zweiheit: vollendet in dem Sinn und vollendet für die Sinne… rund, weil ihre Tat sich von ihr ablöst und selbstgeworden einen eigenen Mittelpunkt findet und einen geschlossenen Umkreis um sich zieht." (*TR* 9)] as the text describes it. Each action of the soul is both an event of lived experience and of self-realization, and can be considered one of the "homogeneous" parts constituting the "totality" of social life.

sustained completeness, but also its exclusion of that which exists outside of its world—and hence, its exclusion of the possibility of the intersubjectivity which has been our means of accessing this experience. The voice of the text then immediately switches from an identification with the joyful, soulful social self of the epic to a self-critical articulation of how it has discovered only its own "homesickness" in its failed intersubjective projection, which now appears to have been unjustified. Its forms have been inadequate for truly experiencing this totality, it admits; instead, its experience of this other is that of its irreconcilable distance from it. The only thing which this subjectivity can seem to "know" is that which it creates for itself through its own impositions. "We have invented the productivity of spirit… [and] the creation of forms… and that is why everything that falls from our weary and despairing hands must always be incomplete,"[57] (34) it mourns the incompleteness of its knowledge. The recognition of its own form-giving activity then allows it to declare the intersubjective projection which seemingly occasioned such activity as having been invented from within itself. So it sees that the "forms" of "art" "have to produce out of themselves all that was once simply accepted as given…. they must create by their own power alone the pre-conditions for [their] effectiveness—an object and its environment."[58] (38) It identifies its own activity as that of a translation of an imagined experience into the terms of aesthetics – particularly, it declares that the "resurrection of the Greek world" (which it has engaged in) is a "hypostasy of aesthetics into metaphysics." (38)

Thus this voice of aesthetics, at the close of the opening section of *TR*, creates a self-critical "theory" which undermines the possibility of its social origins and aims, as well as the

[57] "Wir haben das Gestalten erfunden: darum fehlt allem, was unsere Hände müde und verzweifelt fahren lassen, immer die letzte Vollendung." (*TR* 16)
[58] "… sie müssen alles selbst hervorbringen, was sonst einfach hingenommene Gegebenheit war; sie müssen also, bevor ihre eigentliche, apriorische Wirksamkeit beginnen könnte, deren Bedingungen, den Gegenstand und seine Umwelt, aus eigener Kraft herbeischaffen." (*TR* 22)

social experience it has had from within the epic. It recognizes that it has invented the environment and the objects which it claimed its formal expressions described. The situation is analogous to the one in which we left the author, as we can attribute to *his* intelligible self the entire process of abstraction and composition in his ironic point of view on his novel, as he comes to recognize his lack of access to the "empirical" world of his characters. Further, the way this opening voice is depicted in the text also parallels my reading of the other element of the author's *innere Spaltung*. For, just as the author was seen as identifying with the "subjectivity as interiority" of character intersubjectively, this speaking voice appeals *again and again* to its sensuous perception of epic life, as if it too had lived in this time. This compulsion, insofar as it is constantly undermined by a self-critical theory, constitutes one of the enduring puzzles of the text. In my reading of the author, he paradoxically instituted as a principle of his own self that which was "glimpsed" in the character: as such, he was left with a self-critical perspective that demonstrated his own limitations, his own inability to know his own self-consciousness from within himself. Likewise, it is the depiction of this experience from within the epic that time and again prefaces—and may even *occasion*—many of *TR*'s self-critical theoretical considerations of an aesthetics that recognizes its own limitations.[59]

[59] The text is replete with this move, but here is an example of a typical rhetorical maneuver performed in the text, the juxtaposion of an abstract description of elements in a modern genre with a sensuous depiction of epic experience: "Virgil's heroes lead a cool and measured shadow-existence, nourished by the blood of a splendid ardour that has sacrificed itself in order to conjure up what has vanished forever; while Zolaesque monumentality amounts only to monotonous emotion in face of the multiple yet simplified complexity of a sociological system of categories that claims to cover the whole of contemporary life." (49) There is an indication that the position of Virgil's heroes has been *experienced from within* by the fact that the depiction of their lives is given in sensuous terms. This experience not only provides an illuminative contrast to the abstract mediation of a "system" in Zola, but it also seems to set up a mode of interpretation: a "monotonous emotion" would seem to refer to nothing whatsoever (for what is a monotonous emotion but *not* an emotion at all?), but here, against the pathos of Virgil's heroes, it seems to describe something—an experience of lack—because it is viewed from within the standards of the sensuous plenitude that precedes it.

The text identifies this tendency to think in terms of that which was intersubjectively glimpsed in the epic—in terms of a positive "bond" between self and "reality as it is," in terms of "extensive totality"—as the way the genre of the *novel* "thinks": "The novel is the epic of an age in which the extensive totality of life is no longer directly given, in which the immanence of meaning has become a problem, yet which still thinks in terms of totality."[60] (56) The novel retains a desire for that which has been seen in the epic in the dynamic of its thought, at the same time it is situated in a position (modernity, its own social context) that makes its own development into a true "epic" impossible. This characterization of the novel likewise describes the way that the speaking voice of *TR* "thinks." The voice of the text might be identified as that of a philosophy of aesthetics when it notes the moments in which it must claim responsibility for its imposed forms—its self-critical moments which seem to preclude the possibility of intersubjectivity. But the voice of aesthetics becomes the voice of the Novel when the dynamic of epic intention is enacted and brought into view: when, even in spite of its self-critical conclusions, the perspective of the text *continues* to demand that its view of its objects corresponds to what it seeks as the "extensive totality" of the epic. Through its insistent appeal to an intersubjective experience discovered in the epic, various "thoughts" and abstractions about the speaking voice's own social situation of modernity are depicted as a contrast to epic totality, and in turn they become occasions for more "thinking" activity. The Novel "thinks in terms of totality" because it has glimpsed something in epic life which it endeavors, through the activity of its consciousness, to discover or impose as its own self. That which it glimpses in another, it itself aspires to be; within its own consciousness, it comes to have an *applied commitment* to the

[60] "Der Roman ist die Epopöe eines Zeitalters, für das die extensive Totalität des Lebens nicht mehr sinnfällig gegeben ist, für das die Lebensimmanenz des Sinnes zum Problem geworden ist, und das dennoch die Gesinnung zur Totalität hat. Es wäre oberflächlich und nur artistisch, in Vers und Prosa die einzigen und entscheidenden gattungsbestimmenden Kennzeichen zu suchen." (*TR* 44)

idea it generates from this practice, even if its abstractions about this practice tend to preclude its possibility. This commitment comes to be its resource for its "thinking" activity, as it again and again appeals to the epic in order to have a better view of its ideas.

However, these thoughts, as the "created totalities" (37) of aesthetics and the imposed form of the Novel's own version of self upon its view of others, actually generate an experience of the *lack* of the existence of extensive totality and the impermanence of its created forms. The Novel may seek itself in terms of the positive "extensive totality" that it glimpses in the epic experience, but it never discovers itself as such. Instead, this experience of lack has only occasioned more moments of abstraction which are unable to account for their generative and produced circumstances. The history of these created abstractions—all the previous form-giving activity of aesthetics—is depicted as the "sum total" of "artistic genres" which "cut across one another" "with a complexity that cannot be disentangled."[61] (41) Every art form, with the exception of the novel, is seen as a "resolution of the fundamental dissonance of existence," an attempt to give form to this experience of lack. (62) However, the experience that occasioned this resolution then comes to be revised, its reference to a social reality lost: the "historico-philosophical meaning of periodicity is never again concentrated in the forms themselves."[62] (41) That is, each art form establishes the terms of its own meaning immanently, excluding the "dissonance" outside it, but such form does not mean much beyond the confines of the work. They do not seem to reference the social context in which they were created, nor the experience which occasioned them – their "historico-philosophical" situation. Other genres here take on a

[61] "In einer unentwirrbaren Verschlungenheit kreuzen sich hier die Gattungen als Zeichen des echten und des unechten Suchens nach dem nicht mehr klar und eindeutig gegebenen Ziele; ihre Summe ergibt bloß eine geschichtliche Totalität der Empirie…" (*TR* 24)

[62] "… der geschichtsphilosophische Sinn der Periodizität sich niemals mehr auf die symbolisch gewordenen Gattungen konzentriert…" (*TR* 24)

position that bears a resemblance to the formlessness of a world in which every subjectivity creates its own interpretation as read in *Die Seele und die Formen*; the situation of modernity, reproduced in this constellation of entangled literary genres, is one in which no meaningful links between created forms (and form-givers) can be constituted, because meaning is only individually constituted within autonomous interiorities. Seen as repetitious projects that create only distances between form-givers, aesthetic genres all together help form the "transcendental homelessness" of modernity.

This is where the Novel engages with the *author* in what I have called an intersubjective projection—I see it as taking its "applied commitment" to the epic and reading it into another round of intersubjective projection. This second round of intersubjective practice allows the commitment to undergo a change. Rather than being implemented as a merely repetitive insistence (as it seems to be in the beginning of the text), the subjectivity of the Novel devoted to the epic comes to express something of its own self-consciousness only once it applies "extensive totality" in another round of a social practice.[63] The Novel's version of self-consciousness cannot allow its final moment to be constituted as a "finished form" of its own self. Other genres present such attempts at "finished form," whereas "the novel… appears as something in the process of becoming." (72-73) The Novel's version of self-consciousness, in contrast to that of other genres, can only be expressed when it is engaged in a social practice (and, as will be further argued, when it *engages others* in a social practice): in *TR*, the Novel's

[63] This practice can be read as a contrast to the "thinking" activity that takes place in Section I and (most of) II of Part I of *TN*: in these two sections, there does not yet seem to be the coherence of the voice of the Novel—there is only a search for the self in terms of that which is glimpsed in the epic, and the resultant failure to discover such a self, a failure that yields the terms of aesthetics. These two irreconcilable tendencies have been labelled a "methodological parallelism" concealing a "deeper ideological dilemma" "which Lukács never managed to solve in his early period." Markús, 99. Other critics have tended to attribute this symptomatic stylistic duality to the entirety of *TN*. I am proposing that the dynamic activity of the consciousness of the Novel however will provide a glimpse of unity for these opposing tendencies, as it can be understood as developed in an intersubjective practice.

social self-consciousness is performed in its second intersubjective projection (of that which was intersubjectively glimpsed in the epic) into the author. However, the possibility of intersubjectivity manifesting in this practice can only be retained if the Novel, in its application of its thought of "extensive totality" as it reads the author's journey, yields something to be glimpsed anew, something that can be differentiated from that which the Novel had already seen when it employed such a search for self-consciousness in its reflection on aesthetics. That is, the only way we can read the Novel's relation to author as an *intersubjective* imposition rather than as an unjustified imposition is if the Novel experiences something in the author that is differentiable from the "epic intention" that it imputes to him. (If, in contrast, the author's compositional act had to be read as entirely created by whatever the subjectivity of the text imposed upon it, and never actually experienced from within another, then there would no longer be an intersubjective possibility. The speaking voice could instead be seen as having "identified the cosmos [it] had created in [its] dreams as the real world," as Lukács put it in *Die Seele und die Formen*. (50)

Whereas the speaking voice's comprehension of itself through the philosophy of aesthetics seems to be left with a self-critical idea of its own "transcendental homelessness," at odds with its longing for the epic (in Sections I and II of *TR*'s Part I), its recognition of the author to whom it can impute epic intention at the end of Section II indicates a way to "transcend" the limitations of this idea:

> Only when the idyll transcends its form and becomes epic, as in Goethe's and Hebbel's 'great idylls,' where the whole of life and all its dangers… enters into the events depicted, must the author's own voice be heard and his hand must create the salutary distances, to ensure that the hard-won happiness of his heroes is not reduced to the

> unworthy complacency of those who cravenly turn their backs on an all-too-present wretchedness they have not overcome but only escaped…[64] (52)

The idyll here is depicted in terms pre-figuring those of the novel. (However, it is only the *treatment* of this genre by the subjectivity of the text that can be understood as novelistic.) The idyll communicates some kind of meaning ("transcends its form") once an epic intention can be attributed to the creativity of its author. That is, that which has been glimpsed in the epic is here applied in an intersubjective imposition; whatever the Novel seeks to discover as its own self will be used to read that which the author expresses and has sought as *his* own self. The examples of Goethe and Hebbel here assert their "own voice[s]," but only insofar as they have engaged in positing an extensive totality—"the whole of life"—*for* their characters (here: their "heroes"). The author furnishes a context for the character's actions to be expressed through their participation and contribution to a larger reality, such that the author's form-giving (and hence the activity of his intelligible self) is the equivalent of a projection of extensive totality. This epic activity on the part of the author is further being read by the speaking voice in another round of imposition, insofar as the speaking voice imposes *its* version of extensive totality—uses *its* epic intention—to contextualize the *author's* act. This is how I read the lines: "What is given form here is not the totality of life but the artist's relationship with that totality."[65] That is, the voice of the text takes the author's epic intentions *for* his character and views this as an expression of the self of the author within its *own* version of totality. Against this background,

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[64] Nur wo die Idylle zur Epopöe transzendiert, wie in Goethes und Hebbels "großen Idyllen," wo das Ganze des Lebens mit allen seinen Gefahren… in die Geschehnisse selbst hineinspielt, muß die Stimme des Dichters selbst ertönen, muß seine Hand die heilsamen Distanzen schaffen: damit weder das siegende Glück seiner Helden zur unwürdigen Genügsamkeit derer werde, die vor einer allzu gegenwärtigen Nähe des nicht überwundenen, sondern bloß für sie beseitigten Elends feig abrücken, noch die Gefahren und das Erbeben der Lebenstotalität, das diese verursacht, zu blassen Schemen werden, den Jubel der Rettung zur nichtigen Farce erniedrigend…" (*TR* 39)

[65] "… es ist nicht die Totalität des Lebens, die gestaltet wird, sondern die Beziehung, die wertende oder verwerfende Stellung des Dichters, der als empirisches Subjekt in seiner ganzen Größe, aber auch in seiner ganzen kreatürlichen Begrenztheit die Bühne der Gestaltung betritt, zu dieser Totalität des Lebens." (*TR* 40)

authorial intention is being read as a social act between character and author—the Novel's thinking in terms of extensive totality furnishes the context for this social relationality. This allows authorial "subjectivity" to "transform itself into a purely receptive organ of the world" (53)—that is, reading the author as engaged in an act of self-expression *through* his social relation to his characters enables the author's act to be seen as *open* and *receptive* rather than as an act that determines an immanent meaning only within the confines of an aesthetic form.

But, the character of the idyll "remains isolated," an "object" rather than a subject. (52) As I read this, the author of the idyll has not really *had* an intersubjective experience, and is instead read as entirely imposing form on an "object," rather than trying to have seen within another "empirical subject" (53). "… a totality of life which is by definition extensive cannot be achieved by the object's being annihilated—by the subject's making itself the sole ruler of existence," the text emphasizes, pointing to the imposed nature of that which was understood as the character's inner world. The same criticism could be applied to the subjectivity of the text in this instance: it has only doubled the practice of imposition, but not in such a way that it has retained the possibility of an intersubjective *experience*. It cannot claim to have experienced that which the author has experienced, for that which it glimpses here does not look much different from that which it had already understood of its own situation, its "transcendental homelessness." That there is something missing from this doubled intersubjective practice upon the genre of the idyll will allow us to compare it to that which is gained in employing such a practice on novels.

In Section III of *TR,* "The Epic and the Novel," the Novel again attributes an epic intention to that which the author (this time of the novel rather than the author) ostensibly "seeks" in his composition of a character. "The epic gives form to a totality of life that is

rounded from within; the novel seeks, by giving form, to uncover and construct the concealed totality of life."[66] (56) While the author is not explicitly mentioned here by name, the lower-case "novel," in my view, figures the point of the Novel's intersubjective identification with the novelist. There is still an imposition, this tendency to preface that which the novel "seeks" with that which has been glimpsed in the epic; it "constructs" the "form-giving intention" that it finds in the process of composition. But then there is a claim that the voice of the text *uncovers*—so the Novel assumes that there is a perspective that it can project itself into; there is a subjective perspective that can be seen as separable from its imposition. From this view, the Novel-as-author considers the nature of the novel's heroes and how they are composed, and it speaks from the vantage point of the author—that is, without any mediating perspective (in contrast to its treatment of the idyll's characters).[67] The subjectivity of the text comprehends the experience of the hero as "finding out through experience that a mere glimpse of meaning is the highest that life has to offer, and that this glimpse is the only thing worth the commitment of an entire life."[68] (80) Yet it also identifies with the moment of authorial irony as an *interior diversion* [innere Spaltung]: the Novel experiences the author's abstraction about this experience as the author experiences this problem from within the character, and identifies with the moment at which this author "applies" this "recognition of the world to itself" (75). This brings us to the point in my argument from Section II of this dissertation chapter, where I left the author performing a social gesture that ultimately appeared asocial, insofar as the attempt to implement that which was

[66] "Die Epopöe gestaltet eine von sich aus geschlossene Lebenstotalität, der Roman sucht gestaltend die verborgene Totalität des Lebens aufzudecken und aufzubauen." (*TR* 49-50)
[67] This indicates that it is considering the composition of the novel from *within* the point of view of the author, even as it speaks for the author through the generalizing perspective that names the author's intention as that of some vague "subject."
[68] "Die Totalität des Romans ließe sich nur abstrakt systematisieren." (*TR* 70)

glimpsed in the life of the character came to question the possibility of its occasioning social experience.

It is from this point of view that all the elements of the novel might appear to merely be various unfounded abstractions of the author's intelligible self, and the possibility of any intersubjective experience becomes questionable. "In a novel, totality can be systematized only in abstract terms,"[69] the Novel comes to recognize (70). It goes on to employ what I see as a second round of intersubjective projection on the product of this first intersubjective projection, the author in his *innere Spaltung*. The second round of intersubjective projection demonstrates that the Novel though, unlike in its imposition of epic intention on the idyll, has *learned* from the first round. The first round yields not only the final form of the author's "idea" of transcendental homelessness, but it also yields the author's *lived experience* of the development of his own self-consciousness. (If the first round yields only the *idea* of "transcendental homelessness," we will not have arrived at any abstractions that can be differentiated from that which the subjectivity of the text articulates from the very beginning pages of *TR*—and that which is glimpsed in the author will seem to have only have been an imposition. Unlike the speaking voice's experience of "lack" though, here this experience will be understood in positive terms.) It is this lived experience which provides an *occasion* for the Novel to exercise its own compositional act—this time, rather than an intersubjective projection repetitiously employing the terms of that which has been glimpsed in the epic, it seeks to retain that which can be glimpsed in the author's experience *as* a product of this author's relation to his character. And in doing so, it is notably *emulating* the way the author constitutes his sociality, as if it had *learned* from the author's relation to his character.

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[69] "…So sind die Elemente des Romans, im Hegelschen Sinn, durchwegs abstrakt." (*TR* 62)

Just as the author had projected himself into the character, the Novel continues to project itself into the author: from such a point of view, the author's self-consciousness can be completed as an act of fully taking responsibility for the abstractions in the novel. Taking on the point of view of the author entails resigning oneself to the unjustifiability of intersubjectivity, even as I am also claiming the Novel is meanwhile practicing its own round of intersubjectivity. That which is critiqued in theory is maintained in practice. "The ultimate unifying principle therefore has to be the ethic of creative subjectivity," declares the Novel (84) as it indicates the author's responsibility. The entire process by which the author composed a novel can be attributed to his intelligible self, as the Novel fully carries through the author's social gesture—fully applying the idea of self glimpsed in the character to a reading of solely the author's self. "The voyage is complete: the way begins," The Novel says of the "being" of the novel. I read this, on one level, as applying to the character's voyage – while *his* voyage is at an end, having been turned into the form of the novel, the *author's* practice of self-consciousness is allowed to begin. So it is that the author's act comes to be read *as* an activity that yields a vision of his social reality: "… the abstract basis of the novel assumes form as a result of the abstraction seeing through itself; the immanence of meaning required by the form is attained precisely when the author goes all the way, ruthlessly, towards exposing its absence."[70] (72) Yet the author's point of view is that of "resignation" – from the singularity of one subjectivity, this process can only ever appear to be a "circle," pointing to the author's limitations within which he is enclosed, rather than his own social context. He only experiences the lack of meaning in his own world.

[70] "In beiden Fällen aber bleibt das Gebilde abstrakt: das Formwerden der abstrakten Grundlage des Romans ist die Folge des Selbstdurchschauens der Abstraktion; die formgeforderte Immanenz des Sinnes entsteht gerade aus dem rücksichtslosen Zu-Ende-Gehen im Aufdecken ihrer Abwesenheit." (*TR* 64)

Nevertheless this view provides us with the means to re-read the process we saw the author as performing for his character, and consider how it is attributable to the author's consciousness. The Novel reads the author's "abstraction seeing through itself" as his "ethic" that has been rendered "visible in the creation of every detail… an effective structural element of the work itself." (72) So the entire process by which the author composed a character can now be read as indicating something of the author's "journey," his own search for himself. In order to articulate the "essence" of a self in an abstraction, as addressed in the previous section, one must extract out all that one considers the insignificant material of its realization, the contingencies of life, so that the resultant concept can stand alone as an idea. This is what an author tries to do for the character, as he creates oppositions in the character's environment for him, demonstrating how they do not belong to the character's form-giving activity. But such an abstraction about the character takes place on the basis of an extraction about what "life" is insignificant—which can be revealed as the author's abstraction about what the nature of his own social world is.[71] In

[71] This is how *TN* reads the concept of "second nature," which is what it sees as Kantian philosophy's conception of that which exists as reality: such philosophy sets out on a search for the self in terms of a cognitive activity of form-giving, but in order to create its "intelligible self," it uses a preconception of how the rest of the world consists of "senseless necessities… unknowable in its real substance." (63) The world is seen as an empirical realm of phenomena, without any inherent meaning in itself. The quest for self-consciousness then abstracts out what it conceives to be merely "second nature" from its heterogeneous life experience, such that it can see the "pure" form-giving activity of the intelligible self that ought to figure its own essence. It then comes to see this intelligible self in terms of a "first nature." However, "first nature," is developed into a concept of self only on the basis of how "second nature" had been conceived. As *TN* states of the intelligible self in the modern drama, "the banishment [of life] implies a recognition, not only of the existence of what is being banished, but also of its power; it is there in all the nervous words, all the gestures outbidding one another in the endeavor to keep life at bay, to remain untainted by it; invisibly and ironically, life nevertheless rules the bare, calculated severity of the structure based *a priori* on abstraction, making it narrow or confused, over-explicit or abstruse." (43) So "first nature," the newly created abstraction, in turn comes to be understood as "a set of laws for pure cognition." Much as "second nature" was conceived of as being constituted of "senseless necessities," so too "first nature" is conceived as being an "exalting logic, a necessity that is eternal, immutable and beyond the reach of man." (65) [*wie die erste nur als der Inbegriff von erkannten, sinnesfremden Notwendigkeiten bestimmbar und deshalb in ihrer wirklichen Substanz unerfaßbar und unerkennbar 53*] "First nature" then, rather than being held up as an ultimate version of the self in the purity of its formal activity, is understood to be as distanced from the essential self that is sought by the novel as is the empirical realm of "second nature." The process of abstraction then must be repeated in the quest for self-consciousness, since "first nature" is not a comprehensive representation of the intelligible self in its dynamic activity of abstraction.

other words, in seeing the author as living within a social context that he cannot fully perceive (as provided by the subjectivity of *TR*), as he performs this act of "abstraction seeing through itself," we can come to see that the author already has an abstraction about what reality ultimately is as he begins to compose the novel, and he creates this as the world in which the character lives. The character is developed as a formal concept out of this prior abstraction, particularly insofar as he comes to be developed in terms of his creative differentiation from this world. Thus, even as this entire process of composition loses its reference to the reality of the character in the author's social gesture, it re-gains its reference to the reality of the author's "historico-philosophical moment" – *his* preconception of his own social world and experience has been a foundational experience for the composition of his novel. "All the fissures and rents which are inherent in the historical situation must be drawn into the form-giving process,"[72] declares the Novel in its reading of the author. The author is seen as having an experience of his social reality, and as having incorporated it into the process of his own development.

The Novel, in returning the author's act of composition to this setting of sociality, sees the "transcendental homelessness" of the character as only a unifying abstraction that puts the differences between two of the author's ideas (his perception of *his* reality, and his idea of an opposition to this reality in character) into a continuity. However, if the original abstraction about a social world is considered evidence of the author's own form-giving activity (and at this point we do not know what its relation to the author's reality is) rather than as the immediate presentation of the social world of the character, then the author's "instrument of composition" by which he conceives of the difference between a character and his environment can actually be

[72] "Alle Risse und Abgründe, die die geschichtliche Situation in sich trägt, müssen in die Gestaltung einbezogen und können und sollen nicht mit Mitteln der Komposition verdeckt werden." (*TR* 60)

shown to be the difference he has created between two of his abstractions – the dynamic of his own thinking activity in its capacity to conceive of another version of that which exists, opposed to a former version. He conceives of something other than his prior conception of otherness to create his character, of that which exists outside his own interiority. The character is only developed as yet another idea differentiated from this prior abstraction which is not yet recognized as such. Here then we attain a glimpse of the author in the process of "becoming," as we see the dynamic of his mind in its self-difference.

The Novel assists in this process along the same terms for the author as the author did for character: it provides *its* own abstraction as the social context in which the author exists. So, it comes to posit "the fragile and incomplete nature of the world as ultimate reality: by recognizing, consciously and consistently, everything that points outside and beyond the confines of the world."[73] (71) In employing this in a second round of intersubjectivity, it *emulates* the authorial gesture towards his character, just as the author was understood to emulate his character's vis-à-vis one another. That is, the Novel, in its *practice*, is assuming that its own forms can provide the terms to complete the author, acting as if it too exists in the same social world that the author has acted within vis-à-vis character. Yet if this is an emulation of the author's intersubjective imposition, then it must also assert its *own* creativity in form-giving.

What sort of abstraction does the Novel provide to the author, such that we could see his form-giving activity taking place against a setting of sociality? Just as the author had to divest himself of his experience within a character, so too does the Novel divest itself of its view from within the author. It must create its *own* abstraction about the author's situation, one that can

[73] "Und bekämpft kann sie nur werden, indem das Unabgeschlossene, Brüchige und Übersichhinausweisende der Welt bewußt und konsequent als letzte Wirklichkeit gesetzt wird." (*TR* 63)

provide the continuity between the author and its provided world of various genres. So, just as the novelist invented new form to account for the character's "lived experience" (which the character could not see for himself), the Novel invents new form to account for the author's "lived experience" of "melancholy." In order to be *new,* it must differentiate itself from that which is the *author's* idea, the idea which it has already seen the creation of, in the author's composition of character. The author's idea is assumed to be an idea that comes to *exist* once the author has posited it—the Novel's abstraction provides the *continuity* in which the author's activity can be read as *participating within*. The Novel, in its intersubjective projection, has seen that the author has created the form of his novel through a process of abstractions: first the author creates the essence of character (as an "intelligible self"), created out of a difference from a previous abstraction about his own social world (so, Cervantes sees the time in which he lived as "demonic"). It further sees that this created difference has in turn become an occasion for *another* abstraction, yet more form-giving activity – the author derives an idea about the fundamental "dissonance of existence." The voice of the Novel *continues* this practice of differentiating one abstraction from another by employing its *own* abstraction about *its* social world as the background against which it reads the author's dynamic intelligible self. So, even while the novelist must delimit himself and self-critically recognize that he may have overstepped himself in his intersubjective practices, the Novel, in *its* intersubjective practice, can see *for* the novelist that an experience of his form-giving activity (now demonstrated in his self-criticism) is that which has to be accounted for as part of the novelist's social self-consciousness. By providing a context of others in which the author's composition can be read in terms of its continuity, it can see *for* the novelist that his delimitation of his own selfhood is actually a social act. Historical time is the best way to describe this new formal abstraction provided by the

Novel: it is the milieu within which Cervantes can be properly understood as the "intuitive visionary of the unique historico-philosophical moment" in which he existed. (130) It is the milieu within which all the particular authors mentioned in *Die Theorie des Romans* come to be envisioned as contributors. Against such a background, authorial selfhood can be understood in terms of its creative (and created) difference from its context, while the author's ethic can also be read in terms of its continuity and participation within history.

Historical time is conceived in terms of seemingly homogeneous constituent parts – and thus the novelist's new "idea" comes to constitute just one moment of "duration." "The greatest discrepancy between idea and reality is time: the process of time as duration," (120) declares the Novel. Here we can see that the author's "idea" (the "dissonance of existence" or the gap between a subjective form and the world – as it is *experienced within a world that it cannot grasp for itself*) is assumed to *exist,* to have contributed to this conception of a temporally created history, as one of its constituent parts. The author's conception is further put into a continuity with the journey which the author has experienced through his character: "time is the resistance of the organic… to present meaning… the entire inner action of the novel is nothing but a struggle against the power of time."[74] (122) The character has tried to impose his own ideas onto the reality of the world, but he fails; the author's conception of this failure, his idea of the fundamental dissonance of existence, is drawn into a continuity with this struggle through a homogenizing conception of time, that allows them both to be moments of "duration." If he learns from the former, then, we have something contributing to the continuity of historical time—a result from a prior moment in time adds to the meaning of the next moment. Time as an

[74] "die Zeit ist das Sichsträuben der bloß lebenhaften Organik wider den gegenwärtigen Sinn… die ganze innere Handlung des Romans ist nichts als ein Kampf gegen die Macht der Zeit." (*TR* 129)

abstraction that the Novel provides in its reading of the author allows us to maintain the difference and differentiation between these two interiorities as well, since their journeys do not take place within the *same* duration. So the "appearance of a character" emerges from an "existent, experienced continuity" that is nevertheless constituted of a "unique and unrepeatable stream of life." (125) Further, insofar as each moment of "duration" comes to question that which it has developed, the abstraction the novel makes about temporality also encompasses an *experience* of how this idea comes to affect its subject as it is dynamically exercised: "time… gradually robs subjectivity of all its possessions and imperceptibly forces alien contents into it." (121) Each moment of self-criticism can be seen to rob subjectivity of its possessions—its thoughts of otherness, as it creates such difference within characters—and turns it into a moment of the "impotence of subjectivity." (120-1) Thus the concept of time can be said to account for the asocial self-critical moment by which the links between particular "durations" seem to be absent.

In Part II, the text then goes on to accumulate how the "ethic" of authors can be said to be experienced from the particularity of several author's novels (*Don Quixote, Hans im Glück, Wilhelm Meister, Sentimental Education,* Tolstoy's novels, and so on). If we see the Novel as *intersubjectively projecting itself* still into these authorial experiences, the abstraction which it generates in order to understand its intersubjective experience of the author's ethic (as it is dynamically coming into being within particular novels) is that the author's social self can be given form once it is conceived of as his contribution to historical time—the difference he makes within history and the experience he has *of* his historical reception. His form-giving activity is interpreted as producing an experience of temporal change—of modern historical time. We read then the Novel as glimpsing the author's social participation as his contribution to a world which

then must be conceived of as different from its prior conditions because of his form-giving act. This standard seen here then is one in which the self is sought as a historical agent of change.

If the Novel had stopped at its first round of intersubjective projection, and conceived of this abstraction only against the "idea" of "transcendental homelessness," it would likewise come to the conclusion of the author—taking responsibility for that which it has invented from within the dynamic of its own mind. If it were to apply that which it glimpses in the author to its own self, thereby fully completing its emulation of the authorial act, it would be confronted with a view of its *own* process of abstraction that takes place through its self-difference. There are certainly indicators in the text which invite such a reading. For example, if we were to return to the beginning sections of the text, we would discover that the Novel already seemed to have a pre-conception of its own social situation, consisting of "artistic genres, now cutting across one another, with a complexity that cannot be disentangled." (41) It comes to employ this version of that which "exists" in the outside world in its reading of that which the author experiences as "historical time." How the Novel reads the author is informed by what it considers to be *its* others—as if its own "social" world, consisting of "beings with similar mental structures, although with completely different orientations and contents" (108) could be used to read the "moment" in which an author existed. So it is that the Novel sees Cervantes' intentions in continuity with the intentions of *other artistic genres* similarly grappling with the dissonance of existence. The "historico-philosophical moment" comes curiously to be described in the limited terms of the "chivalric novel" and its depiction of a "fairy-tale reality." Cervantes' "creative criticism," his act of writing *Don Quixote*, is understood against such a background as pointing to "the historico-philosophical sources of this genre." (103) The social gesture of novel writing thus seemingly participates only within the world that aesthetics has invented, through the

Novel's generalizing abstraction that incorporates authorial intention into its own version of "totality."

However, something is glimpsed here anew: the temporal self that participates in historical development. I read the end of the text, in which the subjectivity of the Novel seems to posit the future of genre and the return of the epic in Dostoevsky, as indicating the Novel institutes the temporal self as that to which it has an *applied* and now *changed* commitment to. In its application of hope to the future, it institutes another moment of "duration," having learned from the previous ones. Its version of self is still in-formed by that which it has glimpsed in the epic, but it has now learned to seek its temporal existence. But, as evinced by the fact that this ending has only puzzled critics, this moment of self is just as much in "danger" of losing its intersubjective past and possibility as was the author. If we, as readers, emulate the approach of the Novel to the author in how we approach this text of *Die Theorie des Romans*, we can conceive its limited conception of historical time through aesthetic genre as merely pointing us to *its* incompleteness—if we are willing to exercise the social practice of *our* intersubjective self-consciousness on the Novel, the ending of *TR* can be read as an invitation.

The author now can be read as contributing to his own world in his original development of the negativity of criticism because the Novel provides him with a movement of *its own mind* to complete the author's social self-consciousness. If we apply that which was glimpsed of the author's practice of abstraction *to* the Novel, which has adapted this practice, then we can begin to read all the activity in *Die Theorie des Romans* as attributable to the "ethic" of this latter self-consciousness. The subjectivity of the Novel leaves this opportunity open to us, because of its failure to fully differentiate its reading of the character-author relation from that which it would impose through its own search for itself. This is what the text means when it declares, in the

context of the author's limited reflection (self-criticism), that it will continue, in its emulation of such a reflection, "recognizing, consciously and consistently, everything that points outside and beyond the confines of the world [as it is created within the author through the "abstract elements" of his novel]." (71) It does this by providing its own abstraction as the social background against which to read the author's form-giving activities, but it is one we can claim only indicates the dynamic of the mind of the Novel. But such a claim encourages us, as readers, to continue the social practice of intersubjective self-consciousness *for* the Novel: by leaving its own self-consciousness incomplete, the reader's understanding of his social world can come to provide the terms of completion.

I read the Novel's abstraction about historical time as deriving from the Novel's own imagination, its own constitution of itself as an intelligible self, *out of* a social commitment to that which it has glimpsed intersubjectively in the author. Just as the author had glimpsed the character's "lived experience" in the perception of distance between self and world, and turned it into an "instrument of composition," such that he came to compose his own self out of that which was glimpsed in his projection into character, the Novel perceives the novelist's self-criticism in both its originality and its social participation, and turns it into *its* own "instrument" (83). It comes into being as an intelligible self on the basis of that which it glimpses in the author's self-criticism *as* the sociality which the author cannot see for himself. So, in emulating the author, and then attempting to see his process of self-criticism intersubjectively through the same social practice, the text likewise *creates* its own, independent intelligible self by providing form to the author, exercising its own form-giving activity on that which it glimpses in another. The perspective of the text, which can come to be identified with the invention of the Novel as a thinking entity, must also come to present itself as another consciousness which has

intersubjectively provided the author with the terms that would help him complete his social self-consciousness.

Chapter Two: Experimentation with Forms of Consciousness and *The Golden Bowl*

In the opening preface of *The New York Edition Prefaces*, that to *Roderick Hudson*, Henry James describes a double project. He declares his intention to communicate a "private history" of his "process of production" alongside a seemingly generalizing study of the "art of representation." The author, James himself, will be depicted in terms of the "growth of his whole operative consciousness"—his references to the "record" of his personal past, he declares, will be read as part of the "adventure" of his "whole unfolding." (*AN* 3-4) Consequently, critics have understood the *Prefaces* as an act of narrative self-presentation by James; the edition has been seen as a "monument" of his life's work, in which biographical details help tell the story of his development into a "master" of his craft, one who has the authority to speak generally on the art of fiction.[1] However, it is not clear what he means by "growth"; his opening statement indicates that this self-presentation will detail a "thrilling tale" (*AN* 4) of James's development, as if a coherent story will be told about his progress from the young novelist who wrote *Roderick Hudson* into the author of *The Golden Bowl.* Instead, his autobiographical inclusions tend to be anecdotal and impressionistic;[2] he depicts the circumstances of writing his novels often in terms

[1] Early critics of James, such as Leon Edel, R.P. Blackmur, and Percy Lubbock, have constructed what Ross Posnock has called the "aura of Henry James" in their reading of the *Prefaces.* (See "Breaking the Aura of Henry James," *Henry James's New York Edition: The Construction of Authorship.*) For them, a coherent life narrative is presented alongside arguments about his formal aesthetic. So, for example, in the 1934 Introduction to *The Art of the Novel* (in which the *Prefaces* are collected together as one work, detached from the texts which they precede in *The New York Edition*) R.P. Blackmur reads autobiographical features, often presented by way of anecdote, as part of the "unity of being" of the "principle of his career as an artist" articulated in the collection, while he also maintains that the *Prefaces* are an "exhaustive reference book on the technical aspects of the art of fiction." (vii) However, the more focus is brought to bear on the theoretical elements of the texts—James's presentation of novelistic technique, which has been used to construct a coherent vocabulary about fiction—the more inconsequential the autobiographical anecdotes in the *Prefaces* seem to become, indicating their incompatibility.

[2] David McWhirter, in *Henry James's New York Edition: The Construction of Authorship*, likewise takes note of how the opening gesture of the *Prefaces*, if it is read as announcing *The New York Edition* as a "literary monument,'" "as a unified, authoritative act of self-definition" by way of a "coherent plot," (6) is not borne out by the structure of the work itself.

of his own distracted past consciousness, the elements of which sometimes end up intruding on his novels, exercising undue influence on the novel's "direct" and "sincere" representation of the "germ" of inspiration. (*AN* 45) From one preface to another, there is very little "growth" of authorial consciousness, in the sense of an explicit, progressive development of states of consciousness presented as the "air" of one novel into the "air" of another novel. Instead, what tends to be understood as "growing" are the "germs" themselves, the original subjects he intended to express in particular novels, ideas that had motivated the author to write his novels. Meanwhile, the artist's mind serves as the "soil out of which the subject springs" (*AN* 45)—his imagination gives the conditions or material for "growth" of the value glimpsed in the germ. The germ develops into a novel through its "placement" in the author's mind, envisioned as a crowded "back-shop" containing "precious odds and ends," rather than as something with its own organic life. What then, are we to make of the claim that the "growth" of authorial consciousness is presented, when here it seems that such consciousness is only the garden plot for the "growth" of something else?

The other stated aim of his project is to describe the "art of representation" – this, rather than the personal history of James's development, is what provides the "continuity" of the *Prefaces* as a whole. Many critics have accordingly understood (and used) this work as one of the first influential attempts at generating a vocabulary for speaking about the novel's formal techniques and the novel more generally as an aesthetic form; James stands at the origin of formalistic Anglo-American studies of the novel and narrative fiction.[3] The *Prefaces*, in other

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What I mean to emphasize here is that we need not take this opening assertion as contradicted by the rest of the work if we focus on what is meant by the "growth" of "operative consciousness."

[3] As Dorothy Hale puts it, "The Anglo-American scholarly record is virtually unanimous in crediting James and Lubbock as forefathers of novel theory." *Social Formalism,* 22. This tradition of theory originating with James tends to be understood as the systematic elaboration of novelistic technique, a "scientific" and descriptive approach to novel form. Joseph Warren Beach's *The Method of Henry James* and Percy Lubbock's *The Craft of Fiction* serve as early examples of this

words, have served as a primary touchstone for what might be considered James's "theory" of the novel. However, the theory that may have its origin in readings of James, characterized as it is by the attempt to achieve a methodological vocabulary for describing novels and narrative, should be distinguished from what is actually presented in the *Prefaces*. As Sheila Teahan puts it, "readers expecting to find a 'frank critical talk' or straightforward exposition of individual works are likely to be baffled by the *Prefaces'* figurative density, range of illusion, and complexity of argumentation."[4] Nevertheless, in spite of the fact that such straightforward exposition is lacking throughout the *Prefaces*, James opens with the claim that he confronts his old consciousness, with its "private history," only to discover himself in the presence of "some such recording scroll or engraved commemorative table—from which the 'private' character, moreover, quite insists on dropping out." (*AN* 4) The "notes" he articulates as he re-reads his novels achieve the status of an objective document—James puts us on the path towards seeing his construction of his literary "monuments" (*AN* vii, 52) and his aesthetic achievements as if they can be read by way of the generally applicable terms generated by a "theory." How though do his "terms" provide "continuity" for the presentation of the "growth" of the "whole" of authorial consciousness—how is it that a "private history" comes to achieve its own "completeness" by its immersion in a "rich, aesthetic air"? (*AN* 4) In other words, why is it that authorial consciousness is expressed, in part, by means of novel theory? And, inversely, why is James so insistent on recovering "attendant facts" in his impressionistic depictions of his past consciousness, as if they were demonstrations of the "validity" of the work of art? In what way,

formalistic tradition, which sees the "continuity" given to the *Prefaces* (as it seeks to declare the "terms" of artistic composition) as contributing to a conception of the aesthetic value of novel form. Beach thinks of James as a "craftsman" who was deliberate and artful in his employment of specific techniques. Lubbock sees James's rigorous employment of the "laws" of fiction as evidence of his aesthetic achievements.

[4] "Mastering Critical Theory," *Palgrave Advances in Henry James Studies,* 16.

in other words, might such depictions of consciousness contribute to the achievement of the novel's value?

In his 1884 essay, "The Art of Fiction," James invokes the word "theory" to establish *that* speaking about the novel as a serious art form was desirable. James thought that "raising" an "eloquent voice" (*AF* 7) for prose fiction could help prevent novels from being treated as objects of consumption; he describes reading publics averse to novel "theory" as too complacent with their "good-humored feeling… that a novel is a novel, as a pudding is a pudding" and in their belief that "our only business with it could be to swallow it." (*AF* 3-4) So it is that the "terms" that James develops for questioning "the art of representation" in the *Prefaces* are characterized by their "difficult[y]" (*AN* 3)—he not only elaborates on the challenge of composing when he has a preconceived notion of what his own art should be,[5] but he also generates terms that, if we were ourselves to try to "apply" them in our reading of his works, would tend to defer or complicate the problems posed by the art of representation rather than resolve them.[6] Like his earlier essay, what we might think of as his "theory" of the novel opposes itself to the idea that the novel is a self-explanatory object. Instead of generating clarifying descriptions, James says that he desires to develop an "air" of the novel's having a "theory, a conviction, a consciousness of itself behind it"—that is, rather than articulating anything conclusive about what the novel

[5] His own difficulty in applying a particular conception of what the "form" of his novel should be is discussed, for example, in his preface to *The Awkward Age*. The preconceived form for this novel seems so definite that he can describe it as a geometrical figure ("small rounds disposed at equal distance about a central object"); upon writing, however, he discovers that his subject is "condemned in advance… to overtreatment." (*AN* 110)

[6] So, for example, we might expect a term such as "center of consciousness," so often associated with James, to answer the question of why James chose to focalize through one character rather than another—one might seem to have a finer intelligence than another, and make for a better "reflector" because of certain characteristics of their consciousness. But, the term itself is actually a translation of what he actually says—the "centre of interest" of *Roderick Hudson* is "in Rowland Mallet's consciousness." (*AN* 16) The more commonly used translation of his words elides the difficulty presented in this context, for it is unclear whose interest we are speaking of and in what way that interest can be related to a "centering" effect. It may be that James himself found Mallet the most interesting character (but why?) and decided to focalize narration predominantly through him; or, it may be Mallet's way of being interested in others that allows his consciousness to serve as a centralizing "stage" on which the interactions between these people can best play out.

ultimately *is*, he endeavors to constitute a realm of expression in which varying views about the novel can be drawn into "exchange" and "comparison." (*AF* 4) As I read this, he aims to constitute some of his own social relations out of the kind of "talk" that would take place given the willingness of his peers to think about novel form. In accordance with the performance[7] of this conception of "theory," his 1884 essay justifies its own existence only by virtue of being engaged in a social exchange; it is framed as a response to the public intellectual, Walter Besant, who, in having tried to lay out *a priori* principles that generally describe good novels, gives James a pretext—or rather, a social context—for talking about the novel as a serious art form.[8] Further, the constitution of an "era of discussion" is what maintains the novel *as* an art and it is what sustains the value of the novel for James: "Art lives upon discussion, upon experiment, upon curiosity, upon variety of attempt, upon the exchange of views and the comparison of standpoints," he says (*AF* 4). Rather than establishing a formalistic aesthetic whose value lies in its autonomy and self-sufficiency, what James derives from thinking and talking about the novel is understood in terms of its practical productivity within a context of others, its contribution to the realm of "talk." As I argue over the next two chapters, the "difficulty" of the "terms" of Jamesian novelistic aesthetics is intended to create social possibilities and modes of participation, as the "continuity of an artist's endeavour" (*AN* 4) is worked into the presentation of the "growth of his [the author's] whole operative consciousness." His stated purpose in the

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[7] Performance has become an important concept for comprehending some of the stylistic tendencies of the *Prefaces*, as in Eve Sedgwick's "Queer Performativity: Henry James's *The Art of the Novel*." But my own use of this term is less politically suggestive, insofar as it is not "identity" that is performed (something which gains meaning within a social or political structure) but rather consciousness. Nevertheless my reading of the *Prefaces* resembles Sedgwick's, since the practice of consciousness will also be read as socially constituted, in the sense of a relation*ship* that is invoked.

[8] Mark Spilka has discussed the extent to which Besant's lecture was a "pretext" for James's "The Art of Fiction" to create a circle "of public exchange and private community" (Spilka 106) around a discussion of novel form. He believes that James did not take Besant on because he was a serious intellectual or literary critic, because Besant was actually an "amiable fool." (102) Rather, James wrote his essay as a response because Besant was a public figure and philanthropist who had an already established audience for his words and ideas. "Henry James and Walter Besant: 'The Art of Fiction' Controversy," 101-119.

opening pages of the *Prefaces* accordingly can be understood as announcing his effort to offer and create the social value of consciousness by way of thinking about novel form and producing "terms" that represent this thought.

James does not simply suggest that "theory" *treat* the novel in a certain way—he advocates for the kind of "theory" that he does *because* of the novel's distinctiveness as an object, constituted by what it seeks to represent and the forms it uses for representation. As he says in his essay "The Future of the Novel," the novel assumes the form that it does in part because it takes on the "whole of human consciousness" as its subject. This suggests that novels provide opportunities to consider how consciousness operates. James himself, in the *Prefaces*, sees characterological consciousness as a resource for seeing such operations—Lambert Strether, for example, provides the author with "an opportunity to 'do' a man of imagination," allowing him to "bite into" "thickened motive and accumulated character" (*AN* 310)—particularly insofar as Strether's "state of mind… was literally undergoing, as a result of new and unexpected assaults and infusions, a change almost from hour to hour." (*AN* 314) Phenomenological studies of James have accordingly tended to read specific presentations of experience by way of characters in various novels, considering their engagement with intentional construction,[9] while they see the *Prefaces* more in terms of theoretical articulations *about* this process. In my own

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[9] Sharon Cameron and Paul Armstrong use the Husserlian term "intentionality" to describe how "knowing"—experiencing the world, assigning meaning to it and conceiving of its "reality"—is a process of "doing," rather than passive representation. Both Cameron and Armstrong use the example of the cube to describe intentionality. As Armstrong says:

> For Husserl, consciousness is not a passive receptacle for contents from the outside world but, instead, directs itself actively and even creatively toward its objects to posit, constitute, and give meaning to them. For example, when we are presented with the three sides of what seems like a cube, he argues, we assume the existence of the other three hidden sides as we construct the 'intentional object' which our 'intentional acts' presume to deal with. If we discover later that these sides don't exist, our surprise only shows that we had been intentionally active in assuming them earlier. ("Knowing in James: A Phenomenological View," 6)

As Cameron explains Husserl, the "natural world" is bracketed, so that everything that "exists" is not understood as a "thing in itself" that is out there *to be* perceived, but rather the objective world is seen as a "consequence of our intuitings of it." *Thinking in Henry James*, 22-3.

phenomenological-pragmatic approach, I share the view that a good starting point for consciousness in James can be understood by way of individual characters, insofar as experience and meaning are constituted and communicated through presentations of their thinking activity, as they actively engage in "making" the reality around them. Sharon Cameron has demonstrated that consciousness is much more experimented with—as intersubjective, "between" people, disseminated, versatile in function—than it is consistently conceptualized when we look at particular novels and characters through a phenomenological perspective. But, in contrast to Cameron's work, I argue that consciousness as it is presented in the *Prefaces* bears a resemblance to Maggie Verver's way of thinking as it is expressed and given to be experienced in *The Golden Bowl*—that is, it can be read in a way similar to how we read this particular character. For Cameron, the *Prefaces*, concerned as they are with "systematic coherence"[10] and issues of novel form, serve to re-interpret consciousness given in specific novels, so that characterological consciousness can be read as "centered, subjective, internal, and unitary" and expressible within "representational boundaries," even though this is not what is actually presented in his novels.[11] In contrast, as I read the *Prefaces,* the terms of such theory do not just abstractly explain how consciousness is represented and what it might be, but rather they allow for a presentation of authorial consciousness insofar as it is engaging in, itself constituting its own expressed experience out of, its effort to represent characterological consciousness. What her reading neglects is the dependence of what can be called novel form on the *variability* of consciousness, particularly as it tries to represent the thoughts of others—it is actually quite difficult to say what novel form really "is" for James.[12]

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[10]Cameron, *Thinking in Henry James,* fn17, 185.
[11] Ibid., 77 and 21.
[12] There are though, very explicitly named *instances* of novel form, such as the "*ficelle*" and the use of a "deputy" by way of the narrator—the novel form that eludes us is the more generalizing understanding of novelistic aesthetics contained in

The "high price" of novel form can be read as something James proposes the novel may need to "pay"—that consciousness can be so various, from person to person, means that novel form may simply not be characterizable *as* a form. We might not be able to say what the novel really "is":

> Here we get the high price of the novel as a literary form—its power not only, while preserving that form with closeness, to range through all the differences of the individual relation to its general subject-matter, all the varieties of outlooks on life, of disposition to reflect and project, created by conditions that are never the same from man to man (or, so far as that goes, from man to woman), but positively to appear more true to its character in proportion as it strains, or tends to burst, with a latent extravagance, its mould. (*AN* 46)

James is explicitly referencing authorial consciousness as that which is contained within the "house of fiction," the many possible differences among such consciousnesses making the novel an "extravagant" form, such that the novel is, as he says in another essay, "the most comprehensive and the most elastic" (*FN* 33) of literary forms. But notably, in this preface to *The Portrait of a Lady*, James has just evaluated this consciousness of the author in terms of his capacity to take on and become the means of expression for some "direct impression or perception of life"—here, specifically, "the sense of a single character." (*AN* 44-5) The "high price" of the novel can be understood then as the *value* that authorial consciousness, by way of his use of novel form to represent some other consciousness, might be capable of *expressing* and *producing* for the reader. His consciousness is a "widely and wondrously varying element," (*AN* 45) not only different *from* other authors, but also, like Strether's assaulted state of mind, capable of taking on variation within itself. Here, we can read this variation in terms of the author's

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James's consideration of "the novel as a literary form," not the moments of form understood as "techniques" that sometimes can be written off as only part of the work's "treatment" rather than its achievement. As I will show, however, these designations themselves come to be read as engaged in the labor of representing authorial consciousness. (The distinction that I note here between the technical treatment and the literary achievement, in other words, will ultimately break down, insofar as these named instances of form come to function as representations of another consciousness—in the labor of creating what I read as social value.)

capacity to represent characterological consciousness, as something different from his own impositions upon it, such that the value of authorial consciousness is shown in its own versatility. But the value of characterological consciousness, in turn, tends to be itself produced *for* the author in the *Prefaces* when it serves as a *technique* by which still other consciousnesses are represented—so, for example, Rowland Mallet's consciousness, consisting of the sum of how he "feel[s] certain things happening to others" (or, his representation of other consciousnesses), is significant because it becomes a "set and lighted scene, to hold the play" through which the story becomes "intelligible." (*AN* 6) What had seemed to be the author's expressed value of his own versatile consciousness (made in his ability to *represent* character, which he shows to a reader) coincides with an effect of the value that characterological consciousness has expressed to him in its own versatility (made in *its* ability to represent other characters, which is then made to affect the author). Again, we have the possibility that the "high price" of the novel may have to be "paid" here—the author, in expressing the value of his own consciousness by way of its versatility, might not have any consciousness to call his own, as such versatility might simply be a product of what the character has done for him. As I read it, characterological consciousness is one way that James *tests* different forms *for* consciousness in terms of their social consequences—*as* such characterological consciousness represents others' thoughts to itself, it has experiential consequences for another consciousness, that of the author or other characters, or even the reader. But these consequences can only be social if they are really those of one consciousness upon another—maintaining this social possibility will be read here as the task of novel theory.

In this chapter, I approach James' *The Golden Bowl* as an experimentation with various forms of consciousness; this work is characteristic of his later phase, in which he considers how

different ways of thinking might create social value, in terms of what their practical consequences (understood in a pragmatic-phenomenological sense) might be in the context of other consciousnesses. This novel in particular is relevant to a reading of James's theory of the novel because it is known as the novel in which *aesthetic* form comes to be thematized as a way of thinking.[13] I read James to be investigating consciousness in its representation of other consciousnesses; the forms of consciousness tested here, I argue, are closely associated with the demands made upon novel form by him. For James, the novel is an arena for thinking about what consciousness has been, expanding on what it is, and considering what consequences its chosen forms for thinking has in the context of others. As I detail in the next chapter, I see Book II of *The Golden Bowl*, in its depiction of Maggie Verver's consciousness, as specifically applicable to what James presents of his own, authorial consciousness in the *Prefaces*. In this chapter, I lay out the problems posed for forms of consciousness as characters come to be engaged in the representation of others' thoughts, and I indicate how these problems—which become social problems in the context of the novel—are raised as challenges for novel form in his literary critical essays and the *Prefaces*. In Section II, I show how Adam Verver's consciousness thinks in terms of "representative objects," employing a method that aestheticizes its objects—creates a "richness" of a large quantity of perceptions as the way he can see something *as*—by essentializing according to an "idea." This way of thinking is shown to be

[13] For Martha Nussbaum, for example, Maggie must learn to accept a different aesthetic—one that sees the "flawed and imperfect beauty" of the world, rather than demanding perfection and harmony—in order to recognize the "flawed nature of the consciousness" that produced the original social problem. (*Love's Knowledge*, 142-4) Laurence Holland sees the novel confessing its own aesthetic as an "artifice" in the "feelings of its characters." (*The Expense of Vision*, 335) Leo Bersani's claims can also be read in this vein, even though he says that the aesthetic *enslaves* consciousness (rather than being a form *for* consciousness, he thinks of it as a form that prevents others from engaging their own interpretations). According to Bersani, in his later works, James seeks to discover some reality that would be able to resist the power of consciousness. However, James ends up affirming the power of form over resistant reality—*The Golden Bowl,* in particular, asserts this power by way of form "from the point of view of the artist," insofar as Maggie's manipulations of her family are associated with the designs of fiction for him. ("The Jamesian Lie," 146)

both imperialistic and impotent in the novel. It has a boundless ability to see the fine gradations of possible meanings and views embedded in everything; its rich capaciousness is not just an opportunity for "profit" (of accumulating experience and possibility) in this novel but also a danger (to what will come to be read as the social value that others seek through their understanding of this consciousness). As I argue in Sections II and III of this chapter, the capacity of this form of consciousness to dominate—to take on anything—is, paradoxically, evidence of the insignificance of its existence, its inconsequentiality. *The Golden Bowl* comes to depict this problem as one that comes to matter for other consciousnesses; it becomes a social problem of how one consciousness determines a ground of response for others by mandating how it is to be represented by these others and declaring in advance how these other consciousnesses will be represented by it. I read the other characters in *The Golden Bowl* as attempting to solve the problem presented by Adam Verver's consciousness. In the final section of this chapter, I understand Amerigo as presenting a form of thinking which James sees as having social consequences and possibilities—one which, in its representation of other consciousnesses for itself, at least has the potential to create the value of these others for itself. However, the Prince ultimately fails to establish a form in which consciousness still retains its value as an object worthy of representation, in its interaction with Adam Verver's impositions. This problem, which I read as implying what James saw as the task of novel form, then comes to be taken up by Maggie Verver, whose presentation of consciousness I analyze in the next chapter.

I. Pragmatic Consciousness

Approaching consciousness in James through the lens of philosophical pragmatism (particularly as it can be associated with his brother William) allows us to establish a vocabulary for describing his view of the operations and capacities of consciousness.[14] Pragmatism can be understood as a philosophy that departs from essentialist thinking; essentialist philosophies are concerned with epistemological questions about truth, belief, knowledge, ideas, and language. Essentialist inquiries are often based on the assumption that we can attain the "truth" of a thing and obtain knowledge of it, if our understanding of it as an object in consciousness corresponds to that object's existence in a reality perceived to be external to thought. This external reality is conceived of as having something of its own existence; thought seeks to match what that reality is like in order to know it. There is often an assumption that there is some natural way to divide up reality according to different "essences" which can be matched with abstractions about them. Such essentialisms are frequently based on a metaphor of vision, where "knowing" something entails having an image of an object in the mind, as that which, in filling out the "concept" or "idea" of a thing with details of how it appears, indicates that the object of knowledge has been captured in its "essence" within the mind. Consciousness here would be the realm of representation, a realm discontinuous with the reality that it seeks to know, receiving sensory inputs and ordering them, even though these inputs themselves might only be mental inventions.

[14] I refer to philosophical pragmatism because it provides a helpful vocabulary for comprehending consciousness in James's fiction. While James certainly associated with some of William's pragmatist friends and he would have read some of William's philosophical treatises, I do not mean to argue for a direct relationship of influence. I appeal to the relationship between Henry and William as Richard Hocks does in *Henry James and Pragmatistic Thought*. For Hocks, Henry James dramatizes a mode of thinking that can be illuminated in terms of pragmatism, particularly in his late novels; Henry recognizes this only later in his life, once he has read the entirety of William's *Pragmatism*. As Hocks puts it, "William in his thought effectively 'names' or 'tells' what Henry characteristically portrays or dramatizes." (6) See Ross Posnock's study *The Trial of Curiosity: Henry James, William James, and the Challenge of Modernity* for a detailed look at the relationship between the thought of the two brothers—his study takes into account their mutual influences and cultural/intellectual contexts.

In *The Golden Bowl*, the aesthetic object—the golden bowl that Charlotte and Amerigo encounter during their secret shopping trip—might be taken as initially inviting an essentializing approach, albeit translated into the language of an aesthetics that seeks to know not only the essential "reality" of the thing but also the intrinsic value of it.[15] It announces itself as "important" and "justifie[s] its title by the charm of its shape as well as by the tone of its surface" (*GB* 84) as if its appearance represents both what it really "is" and what it is worth: that it is "gilt" leads to the possibility that it might be "formed of solid gold." Charlotte initially asks, when she sees the bowl: "Gold, really gold?" (*GB* 84), as if the bowl's appearance were an emanation of its proper price (its literal "value," since gold is a kind of currency, which Charlotte knows she cannot afford) and an indication of what can be known about the aesthetic object (insofar as believing it to be made of solid gold implies that she believes the object's gilt surface indicates its constitutive "substance"). Such an essentializing approach also can be understood as implying an interpretive method—one which, if applied to a literary object such as the novel, would tempt us to consider its value and identity by way of something like its title, *The Golden Bowl*. That the object seems to "represent" the entire novel tempts us to think of this work as some "whole" which must be mentally represented in its essence or substance, as part of the process of possessing its intrinsic value. The act of novel reading would then be seen as similar to the act of knowing by way of holistic representation.

In contrast, the pragmatist approaches objects of study for their practical consequences; as Richard Rorty summarizes William James's "anti-essentialism," "there is no use being told

[15] Such an approach would be Kantian, in that a perceptual representation which is disinterested—that is, which represents the "being" of the object somehow—produces an experience of pleasure. That is, we think about the "being" of the aesthetic object as we represent what it looks like, and we attain the "value" by way of our experience of it. Such value though, because generated in a disinterested process, is not merely subjective—it may be had because of some intrinsic property of the object, or because of something objective in our faculty of judgment.

truth is 'correspondence to reality,'" since capturing the essence of a thing in a mental representation does not tell us whether or not we *should* hold a certain view.[16] A proposition, idea, or belief can have value as an object of study in pragmatic philosophy so long as it continues to have some sort of "use"—potential to affect how things operate (whether this refers to the operations of consciousness or to how we use certain objects). Peirce formulates the pragmatic approach in the following way: "Consider what effects that might conceivably have practical bearings we conceive the object of our conception to have: then, our conception of those effects is the whole of our conception of the object."[17] An object of study is here neither located "in" some external reality, nor is it fully describable as an internal conception within consciousness—it is a "process of validation" defined and redefined through an exchange between a belief (or thought) and the experienced context in which the belief, as a kind of proposition or test, can have its truth "happen" to it, as William James puts it.[18] So, rather than conceiving of its objects in terms of how they might be visualized or otherwise essentially symbolized as "known" in the mind, pragmatism defines or evaluates its ideas in terms of what they might *do*. ("Defining" an object might be understood as the idea *as* it is being tested, and "evaluating" in terms of the results of such a test to see whether a definition has been valid in a context, but this evaluation of the definition can only maintain its validity insofar as it is subjected to more testing, to the continued act of "defining" it as such.) From such a perspective, we could instead approach the golden bowl in terms of its function, recalling that bowls are a

[16] Richard Rorty, *Consequences of Pragmatism*, 162.
[17] C.S. Peirce formulates this possibility in the following way: "Consider what effects that might conceivably have practical bearings we conceive the object of our conception to have: then, our conception of those effects is the whole of our conception of the object." *Essential Pierce,* 135.
[18] "The truth of an idea is not a stagnant property inherent in it. Truth *happens* to an idea. It *becomes* true, is *made* true by events. Its verity is in fact an event, a process: the process namely of its verifying itself, its veri-*fication*. Its validity is the process of its valid-*ation*." William James, *Pragmatism*, 97.

kind of tableware—that it could serve such a use is emphasized by descriptions of it as a "drinking vessel" and a "gilt cup." (*GB* 84) Peirce's understanding of the object of study for pragmatism would be interested in an inclusive enumeration of all such possible functions (whether actualized or not) in the "whole of our conception." Such "functions" though need not only be conceived of practical uses in some "external" world. Another such possible use the golden bowl would have is as an object that characters can approach *aesthetically*: for instance, in response to her question about price, the shopkeeper directs Charlotte to evaluate the object on the basis of whether she "likes" it, whether (as I read this question) she gets some sort of pleasure from looking at it. The practical bearings of treating the bowl as an aesthetic object would be its capacity to have an effect within the context of an experiencing and perceiving consciousness—we can look towards the "*human* consequences it engenders in actual life experience" as John Dewey puts it.[19]

Of course, many of the functional uses to which the golden bowl are put could only have been realized in the context provided by the novel. Whereas Peirce's language implies that the "whole" of his "conception" actually *could* enumerate all possible functions without also anticipating all the infinite contexts within which a conception could be made to operate differently, William James (whose pragmatism I mean to relate more closely to his brother's) emphasizes the significance of concrete cases as the context in which the "definition" or "value" of the object develops and can be transformed. The golden bowl can be made to function as a "*ricordo*" (later becoming the means by which Maggie learns of her husband's and her stepmother's illicit intimacy) because of the possibilities its contextual placement makes available: it was present in the room during the couple's excursion, and the shopkeeper who

[19] For John Dewey, "the actual work of art is what the product does with and in experience." *Art as Experience*, 3.

overhears their conversation happens to see a picture of them when he later visits Maggie, after she purchases the bowl. The object of study for the pragmatist is not some physical "thing" that we might more commonly assume has natural boundaries that impose themselves on us; instead it is a process of testing thought and acting through belief so that these thoughts and beliefs can be made and re-made by experience had within *particular* contexts. As William says in one of his lectures on pragmatism:

> What shall we call a *thing* anyhow? It seems quite arbitrary, for we carve out everything, just as we carve out constellations, to suit our human purposes. For me, this whole "audience" is one thing, which grows now restless, now attentive. I have no use at present for its individual units, so I don't consider them. So of an "army," of a "nation." But in your own eyes, ladies and gentlemen, to call you "audience" is an accidental way of taking you. The permanently real things for you are your individual persons…. We break the flux of sensible reality into things, then, at our will. We create the subjects of our true as well as of our false propositions.[20]

The "whole of our conception" only comes to be created through a matter of selection from actually experienced contexts, which differ from person to person—as William puts it, it is a matter of "carving" from the flux of sensation, such that consciousness is engaged in omitting certain irrelevant perceptions and focusing on others, meanwhile putting them into significant relation. The vague cluster of such relations associated over time can solidify into a concept or idea as it comes to be tested in experience—used as if it were a delineable entity, or something treatable as a "whole" under a particular name or word. To use William James's own example from one of his lectures, in order to have originally developed a concept for "winter," we can imagine some primitive fictional person who would have had to have had accumulated sensations of weather being cold over a course of days and allowed these sensations to be put together into significant association, so that he could form an idea that such similar sensations

[20] William James, *Pragmatism,* 122.

over a period of days were often clustered together. Another person who lived in an area where seasons were hardly distinguishable from one another might not have had this same repeated association of experience. Having the idea that winter is a season lasting some 70 days after a certain cycle of a number of other days can be "useful" for "plung[ing] forward with into the stream of our experience. It cuts off certain probabilities and sets up others: you can put away your straw-hats; you can unpack your arctics."[21] That there was such a thing as "winter" would come to assume definition *as* it came to be used as such in the context of this person's life, insofar as "winter" being treated as a time to wear warm clothes continued to generally work within that person's experience. However, if some drastic climate change made this person's geographic location feel season-less, this person might discover what he had previously defined under "winter" was not useful. Also, not every such hypothetical person, even if exposed to such experience, might have come up with such a concept, because consciousness can *choose* which relations it wants to test as functioning together. How one decides what "exists" is a matter of specifying and bringing into more significant relation certain experienced associations, and under this umbrella of hypothetical relations an assumption can come to be acted upon in one's behavior. Or, once this hypothetical person has affirmed (through testing it by way of behavior) the idea that winter is helpful for knowing how to dress, he can also experiment with new possibilities for what his concept of winter "is"—what sensations should be associated under it and how it can be made useful as such a cluster of associations in different contexts. So, for example, an astronomer might find it useful to assume that there is such a thing as winter when he is trying to make sense of the stars in the sky. It might then allow him to make sense of the fact that constellations from the same geographic location are not the same every night, and that

[21] Ibid., 127.

some appear only in winter; it might help him notice some other association in his observations that he had never paid attention to before.

But it is not only our treatment of a concept as a "thing" that comes to inform our experience of it. Our assumptions about what should be arranged under one conception, as something that informs our behavior, can make context operate in a different way, making available new sensations to be thought of as part of the concept. For instance, if there had been no behavior based on a conception of something like "winter," we would never pack away our arctics, or we might never have created such heavy coats in the first place. It is not just that experiences can be noticed (as for the astronomer who observes the distant stars) because we have a certain conception, but because we act on the basis of our beliefs, and our actions have an influence on the arrangement of an environment, we come to be a part of creating what experience might be *like* in "winter." (Likewise, Charlotte and Amerigo assume the shopkeeper does not speak Italian; the way they act on the basis of this idea allows for the creation of a context in which the golden bowl can become a "*ricordo*.") Further, the concept of winter might not retain all associations under which it had previously been useful to understand as part of it. A person might experiment with different definitions of "winter" to see if, say, defining winter in terms of 60 days is more useful than defining it in 70. Consciousness still has the opportunity to select according to its own choices and then it can submit these to testing by acting *as if* something is true in varying contexts.

In sum, for the pragmatist, our specification of a certain idea achieves the "definition" or characteristics that it does because it is drawn from experienced contexts; but that idea, made to "operate" in certain contexts by way of our behavior, can also change these contexts, making different associations available for consciousness. Consciousness and the reality in which it

participates are then seen as *continuous* with one another, insofar as they become reciprocally influential. A view of this continuity is reflected in Henry James's understanding of "relations" as the "whole matter" which is to be confronted and captured by the novelist—a passage which is at least implicitly linked to the problem of consciousness, as Sharon Cameron has argued:[22] "Really, universally, relations stop nowhere… this continuity is never, by the space of an instant or an inch, broken, and … to do anything at all, he [the artist] has at once intensely to consult and intensely to ignore it." (*AN* 5) As I read this, both consciousness and the reality with which it is engaged are constituted of "relations"; furthermore, consciousness itself is "related" to reality in this engagement. The relation defines the connection or relevance *between* things rather than seeing things as having their own essential, delineable identity, so what we can "carve out" from experience to associate under the conception of "things" as they are related to one another is left open and flexible. The fact that we might have a warm hat and a coat easily available by the front door is a "relation"; we might think of this as a spatial distance given in the "truth" of an "external reality," but that they are seen as separable objects differentiated as separate parts of a "relation" is only significant if they are acted upon and thought of as such—say, if it is cold enough to wear a coat but not so cold that one needs to wear a hat. What is given to be experienced comes to us in terms of an infinite continuity of possible ways of dividing, selecting, and associating the flux of sensation to be had. How such experience is being determined as relevant—however what is "out there" is understood as "in relation" to other parts—is an effect

[22] Sharon Cameron understands this passage in terms of the definition or the delimitation of consciousness, which cannot be had: in *Roderick Hudson* in particular, she thinks that the "thematic of continuousness (taken up by the embroidery passage)" in the *Prefaces* is related to the "thematic of a single consciousness," by way of characters whose consciousnesses inadequately differentiate themselves from one another. There is no saying where one character's consciousness begins, and another's ends, in other words. While she sees this passage as "enact[ing] the relational confusion being described," she opposes such confusion to the "unconflicted terms" of the rest of the preface. *Thinking in Henry James*, 48-50.

of how it is being *related* to. For example, a novice sketch artist wanting to depict this same scene might need to forget that there are things such as hats and coats as he tries to draw his experience in terms of lines, colors, and shades. But how this scene is being related to *by* consciousness is also a matter of what "relations" are being used as significant *within* consciousness, which also presents an infinite continuity of possible ways of dividing, selecting and associating past experiences. "Winter" might be thought of in terms of sartorial habits such that hats and coats become relevant as objects in the picture; or, it might be associated with feelings of gloom and isolation, which might result in darker lines and less contrast for this artist. (Or, he might not be thinking of the scene as "about" winter at all, but only as a matter of lines to be drawn.)

In defining everything in terms of "relations," Henry James is not only making a point about the continuous nature of an experiencing consciousness and a reality available to be perceived, but he is also referencing the indefinite nature of what counts *as* a part of consciousness. For the essentialist, consciousness is understood as consisting of perceptual experience and some formal activity (whether representative or creative). For James, experience cannot be strictly delineated as something that is "in" consciousness; it cannot be considered to be already arranged as "units" of consciousness. There is no saying where experience begins and something that is *not* experience begins, as he puts it in "The Art of Fiction."

> It is equally excellent and inconclusive to say that one must write from experience… what kind of experience is intended, and where does it begin and end? Experience is never limited, and it is never complete; it is an immense sensibility, a kind of huge spider-web of the finest silken threads suspended in the chamber of consciousness, and catching every air-borne particle in its tissue. It is the very atmosphere of the mind… (*AN* 11)

"Experience" is the "atmosphere" of the mind, even though not all of the "air-borne" particles of it are caught by the silken threads. As I read this, consciousness is always implicated within and

attached (or "related") to an environment from which it may actually be indistinguishable—the chamber might "have" an air, but the windows of consciousness are open; a person's surroundings provide an infinite number and constant stream of elements *to be* perceived, associative relations to be selected as the focus of attention. In the *Prefaces*, James often references such an attached consciousness as a specific kind of moment of his past consciousness, a moment which serves both as the challenge that writing needs to overcome, and the precondition for its possibility. In such moments, he portrays his distracted mind flooded with sensory perceptions from the "current of life," at times coming in through the windows of his writing room. His reminiscences blur the line between what is "in" consciousness and what can be qualified as its environment; consciousness instead *is* constituted insofar as it is invaded by its surroundings. In order to write novels, he must choose to focus on only singular elements (his "germs") of his perceptions. For instance, in writing *The Spoils of Poynton*, he discovers a "mere floating particle" within "the stream of talk" at a dinner party; turning this mere particle into the subject of the novel depends on his capacity to divorce it from this context of "inclusion and confusion" in which he finds it, to single it out as a "nugget" of value. In other words, he comes to pay particular attention to a minute element retrieved from and specified as having some characteristic of its own within the indiscriminate flow of experience. (*AN* 119) However, the very fact that he returns to these moments in the *Prefaces* records the fact that the *whole* of his consciousness as he composed his novels must also include those perceptions within the stream which he tried to shut out. So he comes to recognize that these elements of his past awareness come to "lurk between the lines" (*AN* 125) of his novels. What counts as experience that is proper to consciousness then is more defined in terms of the gradations of emphasis given to chosen perceptions or thoughts—there is no distinct end, no clear beginning to what can be

qualified as part of experience. Instead, what counts as experience seems more to shade off into that which is not significant for consciousness; while focused on one thing, one is still dimly aware of other elements of experience.

Further, what can come to be seen as a significant experience—as what ought to be included in a description of what was part of one's past consciousness—also depends on the context in which one recounts a past consciousness. For example, a man who becomes bald might come to think of his past perception in terms of a state of awareness of having hair, even though this was not really registered *as* perception in his previous state of mind. It is only in the context of his feeling what it is like to be a bald man that his having had hair seems to make a difference. Likewise, Henry James, with his consciousness as revisionist, returns to his novels and re-appropriates the incidents of their growth as part of his old consciousness, even as he speculates that certain of these elements were what he had to *ignore* in order to write his novels. In reviewing the novels, though, he notices these elements reappearing, exerting what must have been their influence; they make a difference particularly because they invigorate his current consciousness, making him *more* interested in what is contained in his novel. In William James's terms, there must be a "cash-value" for an idea or belief to be "true": they must have some sort of practical consequence to be valid. "'Grant an idea or belief to be true,' it [pragmatism] says, 'what concrete difference will its being true make in anyone's actual life? How will the truth be realized? What experiences will be different from those which would obtain if the belief were false? What, in short, is the truth's cash-value in experiential terms?'"[23] Here, I am applying William's expectation of an experiential "cash-value" to the idea that a certain perception (such as having hair) was a part of what can be called consciousness: it must make a difference within

[23] *Pragmatism*, 97.

another context (that of one's consciousness of being bald) that attention was at least somewhat aware of a particular perception (having hair) in the past for us to think it was "true." Consciousness might retrospectively claim certain elements of its surroundings as having been part of it, particularly when it has come into a different state of being itself.

Notably, it is difficult to consider the pragmatist's approach to consciousness as treating it as something that has form (a view which is likewise reflected in Cameron's phenomenological reading of consciousness), or as something whose identity could be represented by or contained within a form. It has no units that we can break it up into—no natural or self-explanatory divisions, since "relations" as a term implies that there are infinite possibilities for different ways of dividing experience. Consciousness itself cannot be separated from the atmosphere that it is realized in and that impinges upon it; the "whole matter" consists of "relations" because consciousness only comes to invoke certain ideas and experiences as what it will use in a context, see within it, on the basis of what is there to be experienced, what perceptions and sensations are constituting it. Part of the flexibility of the pragmatist approach lies in the fact that it selects *from* a continuity of possible relations what constitutes the "object" of study. Because the possible contexts in which I can define a thing are innumerable, the ways of defining a thing *as* an object are also indeterminate. Why then, would we select "consciousness" from this continuity as an object of study? Why is it that James converges on consciousness as *the* subject of the novel in his 1899 essay "The Future of the Novel," as opposed to his more vague assertion that the novel must "attempt to represent life" in his earlier 1884 "The Art of Fiction"? What does it even mean to "represent" consciousness for a pragmatist? Why should we select it as something with its own value from the continuity of relations, as James does when he writes *The Portrait of a Lady* from his impression of a "sense

of a single character"? The pragmatist would likely respond that the object of study then must be said to have an experiential "cash-value": what difference does it make that we can demarcate and select something called consciousness from within the flux of experience? To answer the question, the pragmatist would bring a concrete case to bear on it—he would consider the practical consequence within a particular context; the "truth" of an idea can only be made and re-made through experience, conceived of as an "experimental loop of perception, action, consequences, further perception of consequences, further action, further consequences and so forth."[24] For Henry James, the belief that the representation of consciousness has value is put to the test in the *Prefaces*, in terms of the difference it makes for authorial consciousness. But it is a belief that has already been exercised in a specific context and made to yield practical consequences in his novels. In the world of characterological consciousnesses, we are given the concrete context in which the representability of consciousness makes a difference through James's experimentation with it.

II. A Strange Workshop of Fortune

The Golden Bowl opens with a character who has come to feel a difference in his own life and in his own consciousness on the eve of his wedding; this difference has been made because of his representation of the consciousness of others to himself (in terms though, of how he believes *they* represent him). The Italian prince Amerigo, whose unhappy pecuniary situation will finally be relieved through his marriage to Maggie Verver, is wandering the London streets, with the sense that something is wrong with him. His anxiety is reflected in the way he is able to notice the objects around him: usually, we are told, he would be seeing how London reminds him

[24] Grimstad, Paul. *Experience and Experimental Writing – Literary Pragmatism from Emerson to the Jameses.* 1.

of an image of an *Imperium,* but, in the moment we encounter him, his imagination works "at comparatively short range," his "attention" lacks "consistency," and his thought is "undirected." (*GB* 3) His fiancée is the daughter of Adam Verver, a wealthy American on whose generosity Amerigo will come to live. This material wealth creates a problem of "reciprocity" (*GB* 4) for the eventual son-in-law. In this initial depiction of Amerigo's thoughts, we learn that Amerigo conceives of himself as a kind of purchased "possession," to whom an "essential quality and value" (*GB* 18) have been attributed, but he can only conceive of his personal value to the Ververs as something that can be yielded from his behavior—as demonstrable in practice, in what he does, rather than in what he "is." He thinks of his debt as a problem of how one consciousness can attribute value to another: he believes he must first know how the Ververs *think*, achieve a representation of their operational consciousnesses, in order to act accordingly. In other words, his own "value" must be conceived of from within his representation of their consciousnesses—his representation of himself as seen within their minds. As I read this, he is looking for his social value, conceived of as a product of other consciousnesses, which in turn can help guide his behavior as to what he can do *for* these others, to live up to their conception of him. He figures his access to their thoughts through "a thickness of white air that was like a dazzling curtain of light, concealing as darkness conceals, yet of the colour of milk or snow," and he recognizes himself as a "shrouded object" within this fog, as if he is trying to conceive of himself within his representation of their minds. "Who but a billionaire could say what was fair exchange for a billion?" is the question motivating his crisis. (*GB* 18-9) That their consciousnesses are so concealed from him demonstrates that Amerigo fails to represent these other consciousnesses (as they are engaged in representing him) to himself on terms he is

familiar with; he is unable to determine how their minds assign *value*, and he is therefore uncertain about what he should "do" for the Ververs because of this failure.

In our introduction to Adam Verver, the narrator gives us a sense that his consciousness, as it usually operates, is one that ultimately *cannot* be represented. The narrator describes this quality of impenetrability attributed to Adam by Amerigo as a common problem for other people in Adam's social life. Adam Verver's mind is portrayed as a "chamber," an "establishment, mysterious and almost anonymous, the windows of which… never seemed, for starers and wonderers, perceptibly to glow." (*GB* 92) The "windows" of his mind are not illuminated; others cannot see how the "spark of fire" within him creates the values of his "workshop of fortune." These "starers and wonderers" cannot capture the way his brilliant mind works; they could not produce a "receipt" (as the narrator calls it) which would describe a principle for how he assigns meaning or significance to certain objects or to people. The narrator himself must negotiate this problem as he seeks to represent Adam's consciousness, insofar as he must consider the "miraculous white-heat" contained within this "chamber" in terms of a scene of what it "must have been." That both the narrator and other characters cannot see into the windows implies that the problem lies not in the characters who are incapable of representing Adam's mind to themselves, but in the way Adam thinks of his surrounding environment, as if something about this mode of thinking made consciousness inherently unrepresentable for others. So, Amerigo's vision of the white curtain of air given earlier in the novel is turned into an effect emanating from Adam's consciousness in these later pages. Specifically, the way that Adam thinks of others who surround him—how he figures others as a "numerous array" surrounding him in terms of "gradations of tint"—allows his thought to "fade into … blessed

impersonal whiteness," such that he presents himself as "inscrutably monotonous behind an iridescent cloud." (*GB* 94)

How then, exactly, *does* Adam think, and in what way is a consciousness so in-formed incapable of being represented? While his thought is described in ways that mirror some of the problems that a pragmatic conception of consciousness would produce for representation, it also assumes some distinctive characteristics that can be read as specific to his mode of thinking. Before I address the more distinctive form that his consciousness takes, I will illuminate the problems *for* form that pragmatic consciousness in general presents. In a way that parallels how all the characters live off of his *financial* generosity, I read the sheer capacities depicted in his consciousness as giving us a general view of what each character has *available* to them, what their own consciousnesses could be, what resources are largely available to the operations of consciousness (conceived of through pragmatism). Adam Verver, in other words, is the benefactor of consciousness in the novel; he gives the rest of the characters' consciousness material to work with. So it is that the narrator tells us that Charlotte can present herself as a "*consciousness* [my emphasis] materially, with a confidence quite splendidly, enriched" (*GB* 179) once she has married Mr. Verver.

First, the illustration of his mind reflects the pragmatic conception of consciousness insofar as it seems to consist of that which it is invaded by; consciousness becomes a mere consequence of the impingement of an environment upon it. We meet Adam initially in a moment of escape, as he seeks to attain some privacy while his house guests and his daughter are at church. However, we are then told that the predominant characteristic of his consciousness is that he feels other people are always making demands upon him:

> It may be mentioned also that he always figured other persons—such was the law of his nature—as a numerous array, and that, though conscious of but a single near tie, one

> affection, one duty deepest-rooted in his life, it had never, for many minutes together, been his portion not to feel himself surrounded and committed, never quite been his refreshment to make out where the many-coloured human appeal, represented by gradations of tint, diminishing concentric zones of intensity, of importunity, really faded to the blessed impersonal whiteness for which his vision sometimes ached. It shaded off, the appeal—he would have admitted that; but he had as yet noted no point at which it positively stopped. (*GB* 92)

Just as James' consciousness in the *Prefaces* came to be seen as constantly attached and surrounded by the appeal of "life" outside of it, so too does Adam feel his environment (here, depicted as social, consisting of others) surrounds him, makes him "committed." That Adam's consciousness can only be represented through its invasion comes to be mirrored by the narrator's effort at representation. After claiming that Adam has created a sense of "having the world to one's self," the narrator undermines the statement by saying: "We share this world… with Mr. Verver; the very fact of his striking… for solitude… investing him with an interest that makes our attention qualify his achieved isolation." (*GB* 92) Later in the novel, Adam Verver's connectedness to the continuity of life around him comes to be treated as a kind of omniscient perceptual attunement for his daughter—one which becomes the predominant danger when Maggie must hide her knowledge of his wife's and her husband's adulterous affair from him. If a single sign of her sense of betrayal is given out, she believes there is a strong likelihood that he will notice it. His consciousness is thus portrayed as essentially open to all the possible perceptions that encompass it; even if Maggie is the "single near tie," his most intense area of focus, there is still a sense that he is capable of discerning everything he is exposed to *eventually*.

Adam is associated not only with an attached consciousness, but also with a "variety of imagination." (*GB* 94) In the aforementioned description, he is portrayed as thinking in terms of "gradations of tint." Within this image, variations among others and their requests of him can be seen as fading into one another in his mind—while there is a sense that there are different kinds

of people, different kinds of appeals, how he chooses to select anything as his focus can be freely defined; he seems equally able to make the most minute distinctions as he can make grand, encompassing ones, since there are no given boundaries that dictate how he is to divide things. This would mean that he is doubly capable of accumulating a quantity of perceptions—taking in not only the weight of all the environment that surrounds him, but of accumulating things to be seen in this environment, because his consciousness can select from an infinite number of possibilities its focus of attention, created through the fine or gross distinctions he chooses to make. Likewise, I previously read pragmatic consciousness to be made of ethereal "air" and infinitely divisible "relations," rather than being constituted of already ordered and distinct essences. Finally, a third trait of his consciousness is the fact that the "appeal" of the "concentric zones" *fades* into impersonal "whiteness" as that which surrounds him—the "iridescent cloud" does not have definite edges. This signifies that, like the pragmatic consciousness whose "contained" experience only shades off into non-experience, he cannot draw any permanently valid boundary between that which constitutes his own consciousness and some sort of "external" world.

Pragmatic consciousness, the observation of which is qualified by the narrator who subordinates his description to the hypothetical ("had there been a spectator in the field"), provides a view of everything of which Adam is capable, the "law" of his nature, as opposed to its concrete and particular realization in the context of other characters in the novel. There is also though something distinguishable as his *own* way of thinking specified by the narrator; there is a suggestion that he has a centered locus within his consciousness, insofar as a description of "concentric zones of intensity" implies that there is something of Adam Verver's own that can be so encircled. There is a "point of light" that sits "somewhere in his inward vagueness," an

"essential pulse of the flame." (*GB* 94) By looking at his specific way of thinking in terms of some of its similarities to James's depiction of his own literary "benefactor," (*AF* 25) Balzac, we can read Adam's consciousness as having a certain method behind it. Balzac is portrayed as having an incredibly competent and richly perceptive consciousness, with "genius," even as he "assails us, sometimes almost to suffocation, under the general rubric of *things*." James thought that, for Balzac, there was a "whole" of France with "definite edges and corners" (*AF* 26) that was the "thing to be done," a picture that he "proposes to copy" "from side to side, from top to bottom" in his novels. Within the complexity of social life in France, Balzac sees an "arrangeable" order: [25] France is approached as having a "great enclosed and exhibited quality," with "neatness and sharpness of arrangement… categories, subdivisions, juxtapositions." (*AF* 27) His grand project involved reporting on "multitudinous facts of the scene about him," which could be so arranged to "swarm… at their best to perfection" and which "somehow involved a preliminary, a pre-experiential inspiration, a straightness of intuition."[26] Balzac understands France as a whole social reality for which there could be some order that would maximize the expression of identities within and functioning as part of it; there is also the assumption that there is some fundamental essence to this order, some pre-experiential reality of that which simply exists. Further, how this "essence" is divided and arranged also seems to be assumed. James remarks that facts, as notated by Balzac, allow for the translation of "things" into indicators of pecuniary social situations, as the larger system into which people are made to fit and which provides them with possibilities. The "state… of their pockets" [of Balzac's characters] is represented, as is their "outermost shell" (their place of habitation, with all its "furniture and

[25] Ibid., 146.
[26] Ibid., 146.

fittings") and "the most personal shell of all, the significant dress of the individual." But the significance of this description by way of surface appearance is *not* that people are able to be reduced to their market value; stories may be about the money-drama, but James implies that the use of money tells us something about "pre-experiential" assumptions about what is being depicted, as separable items that have the same ontological status as "things for things." By way of the "evocation of the shell and its lining," Balzac allows for the "vividest exhibition of the habited and figured, the representatively stamped and countenanced, buttoned and buckled state of the persons moving through [the epic tale about money]."[27] It is the ability to exhibit this sense of identity, to allow his mind to become a "hardening medium" such that creatures and objects in the novel attain the "hardness and permanence," (*AF* 27) that demonstrates Balzac's "genius for an infatuated grasp of the environment."[28] In other words, Balzac "possesses" the "things" (and creatures) depicted in that they are portrayed as having some identic essence of their own, even as they are evoked and exhibited often by way of their "shell," their surface appearance.

Interpreted through a pragmatic conception of consciousness, that the world is so seen can be understood as a method of selecting and defining "things" within the continuity of experience: here we have a formalized mode of the way consciousness *decides* to work, brought forward against the background of all that it is capable of. Adam is a collector known for his "genius" of taste, who, during the novel, is in the process of accumulating objects to be displayed in his museum in American City—a habit which is likened to "piling up his arms." His project is aimed at the "whole" of art and "civilization" (rather than the conception of the whole of a

[27] Ibid., 154-5.
[28] Ibid., 155.

country, although the museum's fictional location implies something American in its general character). It is to be the "museum of museums" and he thinks it will be not only inclusive of "all the sanctions of civilization," but he also thinks that it can contain the conception of civilization, "civilization condensed, concrete, consummate." (*GB* 106-7) In a way that resembles the "definite edges and corners" of France, this museum is brought to his mind with "the structure of the shell all determined," (*GB* 106-7) as if his own task will consist of merely filling it, placing objects within it for display. Rather than being ordered into something like the system of Balzac's social world, the items he puts into the museum are to be understood as "representative objects," as each presenting the appearance of an identic essence, the "master" to whom they can be attributed. It is in this way that they have the same ontological status, in that they are understood to represent the same *kind* of thing.

The descriptions of Balzac and Adam Verver do not completely correspond, but nevertheless some of their similarities can give us a view of one kind of essentialist thinking that is a chosen form for consciousness *within* the horizon of pragmatic consciousness—in terms of what thinking can be made to do given how it operates, what it might think of as a produced value. With his assumption of a reality constituted of essences arranged within a larger order, "Balzac's plan was simply to do everything that could be done," (*AF* 26) a quest for comprehensiveness that recalls Adam's desire to contain the "all" of civilization and art. According to James, Balzac tries to gather all the facts that can be had from observation of such an assumed arrangement, so that his descriptions tend to make his prose feel "close-packed, pressed-down" and in "want of elbow-room." But the very crowdedness of the description—and the fact that he tends to proliferate even the objects that are there to be described—helps indicate that there was no end to such description. That Balzac expresses so much to be seen *within* this

order demonstrates the richness of his particular mind; James appreciates him for the fact that, even while he sometimes presents his descriptions as "reporting" on an objective reality, he ends up being an "originator," communicating as he does the "contagion of the author's overflowing sensibility." (*AF* 35) The "objects" attain actuality (acquire "hardness and permanence")—images come to seem real—by being exposed to the "air of his mind." (*AF* 29) That is, rather than a depiction of reality that reflects reality as it is, we become convinced of the "reality" of that which is in his fiction because it appears to *have been seen* by him *by way of an idea*. As he depicts the "things" as "natural objects" in his novels, he portrays "bristling surface[s]," "rough with richness." (*AF* 27) He demonstrates an "energy of perception and description which so multiplies them ['natural objects' described in his stories] for beauty's sake and for love of their beauty." (*AF* 31) Rather than representing what might be understood as an objective social reality or empirical perceptual reality, what he ends up representing is "his revelation of a lingering earlier world," his *sense* and conception of a patriarchal France as his idea; further, the arrangement of this world is described by way of his tendency to "infinitely divide" and "subdivide," to "alter" and "multiply" the "heads and categories." (*AF* 38)

Adam, with his capacity to see in terms of "gradations of tint," is likewise understood as "rich" in his perceptual acuity, and his consciousness works in quest of subordinating that which is to be put into his museum to his "supreme idea." The way he treats people, as representative aesthetic objects, can be likened to the way Balzac allows the "surfaces" of his "natural objects" to "bristle."[29] His representation of Amerigo allows us insight into what his essentializing

[29] He has a "pleased view" of Amerigo as a "representative precious object" and he also associates his wife, his "human acquisition," Charlotte with a set of oriental tiles that he purchases for his museum. So we are told: "Representative precious objects, great ancient pictures and other works of art, fine eminent 'pieces'… had for a number of years so multiplied themselves round him and, as a general challenge to acquisition and appreciation, so engaged all the faculties of his mind, that the instinct, the particular sharpened appetite of the collector, had fairly served as a basis for his

assumptions are, and how they work within his consciousness to create his overflowing sensibility. He conceives of Amerigo first as a "Palladian church" who has arrived in his and Maggie's lives, as if a church had one day appeared in the middle of a public square. He likes the church (and Amerigo) because it, while still appearing as do "all proper great churches," illuminates how the "piazza takes care of itself" – that is, both images retain the identity of that which they represent in his mind, even as they are being interposed upon one another in his imagination to illuminate certain elements of them. In other words, his thinking is metaphorical,[30] in that the identity of objects assumed to be distinct, each consisting of their own essence and having certain associations within a larger system, is what is employed in the comparison. As the traits given in the conception of one object are brought to bear on the other by way of the metaphor, specific characteristics that do not coincide with one another can simply be ignored. My understanding of metaphor here is restricted to metaphors between static entities (which could be named by nouns) conceived of as similar in their ontological status.[31] In his

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acceptance of the Prince's suit." (*GB* 103) He likes Amerigo so much because he fits in well with Adam's system of thinking.

[30] Using metaphor to describe a phenomenological engagement given the assumptions of correspondence theory, which posits "knowing" as a matter of accurate representation of a "true" reality, has its roots in Nietzsche. His discussion of metaphor is generally a critique of the unjustified assumptions of correspondence theory; the phenomenological process comes into view once we can question the assumptions of such a theory. For a description of Nietzsche's musings on metaphor, see Lawrence Hinman, "Nietzsche, Metaphor, and Truth." Derrida is known for his more sustained description of the use of metaphor under metaphysical assumptions about *ousia* (essence), or the self-identical substance of being. See Derrida, "White Mythology, Metaphor in the Text of Philosophy," *Margins of Philosophy*. Derrida's reading looks to the history of philosophy, whereas I am here engaging with how such thought comes to operate within the particular context that the novel provides—the social world here is being conceived of as constituted in part out of this consciousness that thinks in this way.

[31] Donald Davidson's conception of metaphor is helpful for describing what I consider metaphorical about this way of thinking, in so far as I look to the *effects* of it for a consciousness that *uses* it. On the one hand, Davidson thinks of metaphor as a method of making us notice certain similiarites between two objects: it makes us "attend to some likeness" between our conception of one of those objects and the other, with the understanding that such objects are essentially different (with their own identities). The metaphor allows for the extension of how we think about the tenor of the metaphor, as we might notice some surprising similarity between tenor and vehicle. Paraphrasing what we are made to notice by way of the new light that the vehicle sheds upon the primary subject though will never achieve the same *effect* as the metaphor. For him, what makes for a metaphor then cannot be described in terms of some content that a speaker intends to communicate to an addressee. Instead, as I read him, metaphor is a mechanism for invoking the indefinite nature of experience such that it can come into play within a comparison of assumed identities, allowing for no limit to what one can be made to notice by way of this comparison. As he says, "How many facts or propositions

considering Amerigo as a Palladian church, what is illuminated for him is the similarity between Amerigo as a person and the church: he is "all round," made of "practically yielding lines and curved surfaces." (*GB* 101) Even as each term in the comparison retains its identic character, the associations of the church are transferred to the conception of his person, allowing him to appear by way of a different and novel aspect. Meanwhile, the passage implies that whatever perceptions Mr. Verver has of Amerigo by way of such comparison fit into the picture he has already arranged for it; that he later recalls how he had first "satisfied" himself about Amerigo on the same terms that he had acquired a Bernadino Luini painting shows how he thinks of him as if he were an item to be put into his museum, as if Amerigo could fit neatly into his larger idea. Meanwhile, he dismisses the fact that these kinds of churches also consist of pointy and sharp elements.

Now, to pose the earlier question, from the pragmatist's perspective of this essentializing way of thinking—what difference does Adam Verver's representation of Amerigo make for him? His reason for this representation of another person as an object metaphorically comparable to another "item," lies in his accumulation of perceptions, or rather the *ways* he can see something *as*. This way of representing and comparing allows for the "growth" of his consciousness: "his freedom to see—of which the comparisons were part—what could it do but steadily grow and grow?" (*GB* 111) Just as his metaphorical thought of Amerigo as a "pure and perfect crystal" allows Adam to give an "account of his surface" so that "golden drops evenly flowed over it," each item of vision for Adam has its own "surface" that he comes to fill out with his perception. (*GB* 102) Before turning to the method by which perception can be seen as filling the surface,

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are conveyed by a photograph? None, an infinity, or one great unstatable fact? Bad question. A picture is not worth a thousand words, or any other number. Words are the wrong currency for exchange for a picture." See Davidson, "What Metaphors Mean."

"gilding" it (as Adam's thought of Amerigo seems to do), as it were, it is worth highlighting the assumptions that work as the background against which such "value" is constituted. The fullest description and perception of the "surface" of an object can be used to *possess* or *grasp* that object as a whole—allowing Adam's consciousness to "contain" it and arrange it in the interior of the museum of his mind. So we are told that he thinks of Charlotte and Amerigo as "human acquisitions," using as he does the same "measure of value" as he would for "old Persian carpets." (*GB* 145) A museum is a place in which the exhibitional quality of a work of art, even while each might be "stamped" with its own "essence," is put into focus. A thing that is "fixed" (as Charlotte and Amerigo conceive of Adam's way of thinking) or arranged in a museum is assumed to retain its aesthetic value according to a logic similar to all the other items on display, as something to be seen, no matter where it is placed—we can say that the maximization of visual facts *to* be seen would be an ideal way for the museum to be arranged. Adam's consciousness can be figured, and "located" as central and determinative, as if it were such a museum, gathering such objects for their exhibitional value, so as to get as many visual facts as possible about an item.

I previously emphasized that Adam thinks in terms of "gradations of tint"—in terms of fine distinctions. Again, gradations are suggestive of the seemingly arbitrary way that a pragmatist selects, from the continuity of "all experience" and "all life," a particular object about which he seeks to discover the practical consequences. However, according to my reading of Adam, he already has assumed that each object has an essential quality; he has chosen a way of "selecting" from the continuity of experience. Yet he can still be read as employing these fine gradations in service of this larger system; it becomes a way of multiplying the *number* of perceptions. Insofar as he acquires more and more objects (initially vulgar ones, before he

begins to develop a more refined taste), Adam thinks he is adding to the "soil" of his mind, by "polishing and piling up his arms." (*GB* 106) Each unique work of art or precious person to him, treated as having its own essence to be captured in a visual metaphor, can be read as adding "more" perceptions to the collection since each would include some perceptual details that were different from those given by other objects.[32] Further, that he has so many items (both in his mind, as things experienced, and in his possession) allows him to compare them with one another, allowing him to see *more* of each, even as they each retain their own essence. That which has already been experienced as belonging to his conception of, for example, his son-in-law can be seen under a new light by way of a comparison to some other object, such as the Palladian church. On the one hand, this extended view of the Prince is additive, in that it can be considered another, new perceptual experience of the prime object—had within consciousness by way of metaphor, *how* he can see Amerigo comes to attain a new possibility. He now sees Amerigo with a roundness like that of a Palladian church. The novelty of this perception allows for the "value" of the represented Amerigo to be yielded for the collector—an addition to what one has *seen* something *as,* to use Wittgenstein's term,[33] can be understood as the "profit" of consciousness. This "aesthetic principle" (*GB* 146) that he uses delights in producing as many aspects as possible of a particular thing, permeating an account of its "surface." That Adam can imagine Amerigo as a "pure and perfect crystal," for example, allows his image of the whole to

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[32] So, for example, he comes to be interested in Charlotte, the woman Maggie has proposed that he marry, because of the seeming opportunity she provides for adding to the quantity of his perceptions. He thus develops "an odd little taste, as he would have described it, for hearing things said about this young woman, hearing, so to speak, what *could* be said about her: almost as it her portrait, by some eminent hand, were going on, so that he watched it grow under the multiplication of touches." This value though is seen as additional—his interest in her is based on his assumption of her essential quality of being a "thing classed and stamped as 'real.'"

[33] As he explains "seeing as" or aspectual seeing: "I contemplate a face, and then suddenly notice its likeness to another. I *see* that it has not changed; and yet I see it differently. I call this experience 'noticing an aspect.'" Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, 212. Wittgenstein critiques theories of perception that consider the sensory data of an experience as separable from the interpretation of that data. The association with which one sees something is part of being able to take it in at all. "All seeing is seeing as," he says.

take on a "richer tone"—this implies that, now as an object within Adam's mind, Amerigo can be illuminated in a different way, a way that brings out more of what is there to be seen of him—even as we can begin to recognize that there would be an infinite number of aspects by which a thing could be seen *as*. The only standard that these visions need to uphold is their contribution to the "perfection" of the whole—Adam can submerge the things around him in the richness of his consciousness so long as no perceptions are given out that cannot be made to fit each valuable whole, each thing supposed to have its own "essence." From within this system, he can maximize the quantity of aspects that can be had from collecting a large number of objects and the infinite number of ways these objects can be seen.

The fact that Adam Verver is a billionaire at least helps imply, in a rather literal way, how he accumulates "value" for his possession. He enjoys his aesthetic objects because of all the perceptions and experiences they can continue to give out even once he has "purchased" them, or grasped the "essence" of their being. Adam in this way comes to be associated with making such fine observations of his objects and their qualities that he is "rich" in the mere *quantity* of perception he has from objects; for him, his consciousness can "grow and grow" as more of these liminal perceptions can be claimed as part of consciousness. One might say that once some territory has been claimed, the boundary phenomenon of consciousness shifts further from the center, as consciousness can come to recognize more and more experience as part of itself. Consciousness, in this way, is envisioned as imperialistic, seeking to dominate other possessed things and people by subordinating their meaning to its larger system, arranging these others in its "picture." Yet, it is also homogenizing in regards to other consciousnesses, thinking as it does in terms of "representative objects." Just as Balzac's "things" ultimately come to be turned into the exchangeable units of "francs and centimes," so too does Adam's consciousness

expand by converting everything into objects with similar functions within his assumed system; his "variety of imagination" becomes "monotonous." On the one hand, the "possessed" items of the mind need to be different from one another; Adam's collection consists of acquisitions that are original, because each such item needs to be something that can add to the values of consciousness by bringing at least a few new perceptions with it. On the other hand, Adam sees them as each functioning within the larger system of his "supreme idea" in similar ways—it ultimately does not matter to him that such "objects" might have consciousnesses of their own, in the way he treats Amerigo and Charlotte. Adam's consciousness here does not typically socially interact with people as if they had a consciousness or thoughts of their own; he instead approaches them as "surfaces."

Yet, Adam does conceive of his daughter Maggie as having a consciousness, even as the others are relegated to only being "valuable" to him as objects to be seen and captured. To know another's mind for Verver would mean simply to share certain visions—to have been exposed to the same objects, to have taken these objects in from the same perspectives, to have made the same comparisons so as to highlight certain aspects of that vision. So it is that prior to the problem that sets into motion his marriage to Charlotte, he thinks of himself as in relation to Maggie as "deep in her heart and in her life; too deep down, as it were, to be disengaged, contrasted or opposed, in short objectively presented." (*GB* 114) It is as if he expects that he shares with his daughter the values generated within his consciousness, of quantities of perceptions. Sharing visions, in other words, would be his ideal of the sociality of consciousness. For him then, there is a *social* problem when he recognizes that Maggie has seen him as a "distinct thing," when she has a fear for his "individual life," as if their perspectives diverged, as if they could no longer take in the same visions, because certain objects in their

perception have been arranged differently. That they cannot occupy the exact same "spatial" position by which they can take in the observation of objects is then made manifest. Amerigo is conceived of as *closer* to Maggie, as her husband, while their marriage "had made vacant… his [Adam's] immediate foreground, his personal precinct… made room in it for others." (*GB* 114) (And, Maggie would have had intimate experiences with him that the father in law would not be having.) Charlotte can then be read as allowed to enter into the arrangement so that Adam's situation can at least be made symmetrical to Maggie's; even if Charlotte and Amerigo are both seen as each having their own value, giving out slightly different perceptions, that they can be positioned in similar ways for each of the two observers then allows at least the substitute in each picture to contribute to the illusion of a shared vision. Adam seeks to put Maggie at ease "by a marriage as good, speaking proportionately, as hers had been." (*GB* 154) Notably, that this is the function of Charlotte allows Adam to ignore the fact that she and Amerigo act in remarkably similar ways; he even imagines Amerigo might have "coached" her to behave as well as she does. (*GB* 152) That is, they give out some of the same qualities to be seen, even though the valued object for Adam is supposed to be individual in its "essence." But because of the function Charlotte is supposed to serve, of making it appear to Maggie that father and daughter can still share a vision, this only happens to *help* Adam's decision to marry Charlotte. The more interchangeable Charlotte and Amerigo are, the more they can help accomplish his goal of sharing a vision with Maggie.

Adam's own consciousness, however, does not perceive itself to be threatened; it is only that he is afraid Maggie no longer believes that they can still share a vision. If one assumes that there is a determined order behind such visions, thinking about what other consciousnesses see and feel can only help *add* experience, rather than help one arrange one's consciousness anew. It

matters little if reality is seen as constituted of one single ideal consciousness or many different people's consciousnesses, since these would in the end both add up to the same totalizing universal vision. So it is that Adam establishes his own perspective as one that hovers above, as if transcendental, from the "peak in Darien," with his "apprehensive passion" that conceives there to be a "world … left him to conquer." (*GB* 104) However, from the *pragmatic* point of view there is a lot more ontological uncertainty for a consciousness that forms itself in this way. This is because it really *makes no difference* for Adam if there is such a thing as consciousness, because everyone can be understood as simply seeing what there is to be seen; to imagine oneself in another person's mind is really the same as being exposed to all the same environments, and to compare the same objects to one another. Hence, his daughter's consciousness is originally depicted as indistinct from his own; she is treated as a subsection of Adam's consciousness, since she would have occupied the same spaces and situations generally speaking in her less extensive experience. While consciousness in this model acts imperialistically, it is also able to paradoxically be envisioned as incredibly impotent from the pragmatist's point of view. It does not seem to make a difference for experience if there is such a thing as one's own consciousness, since, even if one has a "genius" that others do not have, such genius is subordinated to the idea that the difference between consciousnesses is really only passively quantitative, seeing what there is *to* be seen. Further, that consciousness is made into an accumulation of that which is there to be seen makes Adam's own consciousness into a mere effect (even if quantitatively capable of seeing "more") of the environments that have impinged upon it. The essentializing consciousness, from this pragmatic perspective, cannot answer for itself whether it is a merely passive effect of a "given" reality upon it, or whether it is practically omnipotent in its inventions, even generating that which is supposed to be merely "given" in perception.

In sum, to take on other minds for Adam only means that consciousness can be made to cover new territory, as if it had been exposed to different elements through exploration. This understanding of Adam recalls what James says of the person who does not need to read novels:

> He [the person who needs a representation of consciousness in the novel] likes to live the life of others, yet is well aware of the points at which it may too intolerantly resemble his own. The vivid fable, more than anything else, gives him his satisfaction on easy terms; gives him knowledge abundant, yet vicarious. It allows him to select, to take, and to leave; so to feel he can afford to neglect it he must have a rare faculty of great opportunities for the extension of experience by thought, by emotion, by energy—at first hand. (*FN* 33)

The person who does not need to read the novel (who can "afford to neglect it") can simply grow his or her own consciousness by means of "extension," taking on the experience of others and experience in general without interest in the fact that such experience has been taken on by a consciousness that might be different from one's own. Hearing about someone's experience of a thing is the same thing as adding to one's own experiences; they are all subordinated to the same formal functional operations of consciousness, as it tries to essentially reflect that which it assumes systematically exists. The person who reads the novel, in contrast, likes to take such experience as "cheaply as he can," obtaining *vicarious* experience—that is, he is interested in it also because such experience is that of *others*, and when it is too much like his own, he loses interest because it does not *do* something for his consciousness. He might, for example, recognize that such experience is simply covering territory that his consciousness has already taken in—the points at which experience "too intolerantly resemble[s] his own"; if this is the case, James implies that he would lose interest in the novel, and simply put it down. Unlike Adam, that he selects the object of "consciousness" as something formally representable makes a *difference* for his experience. He who reads novels wants to expand his experience by taking on the experience of others as not only new territory but as something formed in a way different

from his own; he seeks to make a difference in his own consciousness by allowing it to conceive of an environment as constituted of other people's consciousnesses. On the one hand, this novel reader wants such experience on "easy terms" as something which his consciousness can easily absorb, take on as its "object"—in other words, the reader wants to be able to produce a representation of another's consciousness for himself. On the other hand, in order for this experience to allow for extension and growth, it must be vicarious and different enough from his own that he can count it as truly new, as that of another consciousness. Here, the difference that the novel's representation of consciousness makes is its capacity to make a formal difference for consciousness, providing it with new ways of thinking to be distinguished from the consciousness that reads it.

Yet, even after reading a novel by being interested in another consciousness *as* another consciousness, a person, part of the "abysmally absorbent" public for James here, might come to "steal" such experiences, as part of his or her own consciousness. "Vicarious" experience can come to be treated as if it were one's own. This is what happens to James when he reads Balzac; he recognizes that Balzac's way of thinking has been so influential for him he does not even notice that it is Balzac's approach that he emulates; he has turned the experiences obtained in Balzac into part of his habit. So he has been "living on our benefactor," having "intellectually so swallowed" Balzac and other such authors, "digested and assimilated their general use and suggestion…" that he has "cease[d] to be aware of them because they have passed out of sight… by having passed into our lives." (*AF* 24) This is also what happens to those who have no "theory" of the novel—those who do not discuss the novel's form think that their only business is to "swallow it." (*AF* 4) That is, those who do not think about the novel's form come to think about the novel as just providing *more* experience easily assimilable into the expansion of one's

own consciousness. Those who *do* think about novel form recognize the provisions that the novel makes for representing other consciousnesses, consciousness which can give form to experience in a way that is distinguishable from the essentializing approach of Adam Verver and Balzac. Emphasizing that thinking of other people as having consciousnesses might continue to *do* something for our own consciousness—make a difference for *how* we think—this is what James's "theory" of the novel seeks to keep available in the realm of social discourse.

III. Analogical Thinking and Social Value

Amerigo has already been read as seeking to represent the Ververs' consciousness to himself in terms of the formal operations by which they assign value; but his approach to their consciousness is itself distinguishable in *its* formal operations. Again, I read *The Golden Bowl* as experimenting with practical consequences in the world of characters for what value a representation of consciousness can have—the context in which this comes to be inscribed in Amerigo's case is the difference made *for* his own consciousness that another person *thinks* in a particular way, that there is such a thing as other consciousnesses. While Amerigo's way of thinking will be shown to be capable of producing the social value of others *for* his own consciousness, it comes up short as Amerigo seeks to establish his own social value for these others. Adam's way of thinking, in contrast, conceived of sharing views, or allowing one consciousness to become indistinct from another one, as social; meanwhile, consciousness could delight in its own "richness" and capaciousness, as values are obtained from life by means of its encroachment and expansion. (Such value, however, is not created through social exchange, but can only be "shared" as something already possible.) Amerigo's thinking must take on formal operations distinguishable from those of others, in order for him to in turn represent their

consciousnesses as significantly able to make a difference in his own consciousness. As I read it, the predominant form by which Amerigo's consciousness is presented is through the analogy. Metaphorical comparison (seen in Adam Verver) focuses on the identity of a thing and makes active specific qualities within this larger constellation, whereas the analogy does not make the same sort of possessive claims about capturing the core of an object; it instead highlights some aspect of similarity that is relationally illuminated, while the terms being compared in the analogy can still resist being definitively determined.

In "The Art of Fiction," James makes an "analogy between the art of the painter and the art of the novelist." We might take this merely to refer to the product of each of these artists – the painting is similar to the novel, both "arts of" their respective creator. The analogy between two objects highlights some feature or characteristic they may have in common, but *which* is kept vague; we may mean to say something inconsequential such as: a painting is similar to a novel because they are both contained—the painting in a frame, the novel between a front and a back cover. Or, the analogy might be understood as comparing the relation of two objects to the relation of two other objects. For example, James can be read as highlighting the fact that both the painter and the novelist similarly relate to the things they produce; painters and novelists can still be thought of as fundamentally different from one another in identity, as can the pictures and novels they produce, as the analogy merely emphasizes the similarity of *relation* between painter to picture and novelist to novel. The relational blank (here, designed with the word "to") can nevertheless be flexible, because the objects being compared are not necessarily being compared in terms of the whole of their identity, but rather in how they relate to some other object. We might, for example, say that the painter seeks to express himself in his picture, as the novelist seeks to express himself in his novel. Or, we might say that the painter seeks to represent reality

in a picture, as the novelist seeks to represent reality in a novel. Or we might mean to say they both tend to work alone when they produce their works. We could continue to fill in this blank in various ways. Metaphor might technically be considered a type of analogy, but for my current purposes I am distinguishing the comparison between identities (the metaphor) and the analogy between indefinite entities and their relations to some object that keeps some possible aspects in play for what we mean to specify. Notably, our specification of different relations can change how we conceive of the objects we are comparing, since each such object is not set with the stamp of identity. Finally, another important element of the analogy for my reading of James is its capacity to build, change, and further specify by an addition of terms. By way of such addition, one can further indicate which possible relations one means to highlight. So, for example, we might add another term to our painter is to picture as novelist is to novel comparison, by considering the same sort of vague relation to exist between a historian and his final product. Now we would need to find the relation that is common to all three. While this does not precisely specify what we see in the relational blank, it does seem to narrow the possibilities—we might no longer conceive of the relation as aesthetic, for example. We could continue to add other relations to this double analogy—so, for example, we can add the philosopher's relation to his philosophy to be compared to all these other relations, in which case we can start to build our analogy and better specify the relation we mean. We could say now that all four of these relations include the attempt to portray the truth of reality.

The "relation" in James is purposefully ambiguous: in my reading of pragmatism, it came to signify three different levels: that which is "between" things in "reality" (as something exterior to consciousness), the connection of consciousness to its environment (specifiable as perception, but also able to be vaguely understood as mere proximity of a thing to

consciousness), and the associations made within thought and its experiences. The analogy as an operation of consciousness can be understood as working across all three of these levels. By way of example, we can turn to the opening passage of *The Golden Bowl,* which demonstrates how Amerigo's consciousness usually operates:

> The Prince had always liked his London, when it had come to him; he was one of the modern Romans who find by the Thames a more convincing image of the truth of the ancient state than any they have left by the Tiber. Brought up on the legend of the City to which the world paid tribute, he recognised in the present London much more than in contemporary Rome the real dimensions of such a case. If it was a question of an Imperium, he said to himself, and if one wished, as a Roman, to recover a little the sense of that, the place to do so was on London Bridge, or even, on a fine afternoon in May, at Hyde Park Corner. It was not indeed to either of those places that these grounds of his predilection, after all sufficiently vague, had, at the moment we are concerned with him, guided his steps… (*GB* 3)

Notably, we would not be able to reconstruct Amerigo's "image of the truth of the ancient state," as if it had a self-explanatory frame and essential core; it is vague as a representation particularly insofar as it seems to refer to a city, a state, a government, and an empire at the same time. Obviously, the image of the ancient state cannot be visualized, point for point, as corresponding to the Prince's perceptual "pictures" of London at these various locations; the claim is not that ancient Rome and his contemporary London look exactly alike. Instead, the image of the *Imperium* is thought in terms of "dimensions," as if the space *between* selected points in the mental image allowed for its relevance. In other words, the "truth" of the image is approached as consisting of relations. This relational mental image comes to be invoked insofar as Amerigo attains certain "senses" from the city, as he situates himself at particular points within it—*on* London Bridge, *at* Hyde Park Corner, *by* the Thames. It is as if putting himself into more specific external relations within the city of London itself he is illuminating the relational elements in the image of the mind. Or we can see the relation as existing between consciousness and reality, as he puts his consciousness into perceptional relation to something seen here; the

"sense" invoked in such perceptional relations can be made to fit with the dimensions of the image. The perceptional relation is *analogized* to the "dimensions" of the *Imperium*; the two sets of points that produce the relation are not the same, but the relation itself is similar. That he can so match London, relationally conceived, to other relations in his mind is connected to the fact that he "likes" London – this vague word, as I read it in the context of James's work, often designates simply seeing oneself in intimate relation to some entity which helps one associate other relations with the intimate one. Sometimes, the relation brought into association with the intimate relation is mental, other times, it is one that we can think of as "real" or at least outside of consciousness. For example, Fanny brings Maggie and Amerigo into relation by getting them to marry one another because she "likes" Maggie. (*GB* 22) Maggie tells Adam that she "likes" Charlotte because Charlotte "likes" Adam. (*GB* 140) That Amerigo "likes" London helps him match up his sense for the city at certain points within it with some relational image in his mind. This first relation becomes a building block for further associations; it, with the addition of terms to as part of an analogy, can be therefore seen as helping to specify or illuminate other relations in the mind in certain terms.

Further, there is the implication that Amerigo's working through such a process of matching relations gives him direction in life, as his "predilection" would usually guide him through the streets. His typical state of awareness, steered by the relation he constructs between himself and London (he "likes it"), is contrasted to his current lack of attention:

> … he had strayed, simply enough, into Bond Street, where his imagination, working at comparatively short range, caused him now and then to stop before a window in which objects massive and lumpish, in silver and gold, in the forms to which precious stones contribute, or in leather, steel, brass, applied to a hundred uses and abuses, were as tumbled together as if, in the insolence of the Empire, they had been the loot of far-off victories. The young man's movements, however, betrayed no consistency of attention—not even, for that matter, when one of his arrests had proceeded from possibilities in faces shaded, as they passed him on the pavement, by huge beribboned hats, or more delicately

> tinted still under the tense silk of parasols held at perverse angles in waiting victorias. And the Prince's undirected thought was not a little symptomatic, since, though the turn of the season had come and the flush of the streets begun to fade, the possibilities of faces, on the August afternoon, were still one of the notes of the scene. He was too restless—that was the fact—for any concentration, and the last idea that would just now have occurred to him in any connection was the idea of pursuit. (*GB* 3-4)

Notably the "objects" are indiscriminate from one another; he only sees various associations he might attach to (massive, lumpish, gold, silver) them, but he cannot bring these associations into significant relation with one another. He seems to be trying to apply his usual image of "Empire," but this is no longer produced with clarity—consisting instead of the "loot of far-off victories." It is not only that he lacks lucidity here, but also he misses the "faces" that are one of the "notes" of the scene—he notices *less* of what is to be seen. We then learn that it is the introduction of a new relation in his life, his marriage to Maggie, which has unsettled him. As I read it, his consciousness typically uses some of his intimate relations as building blocks *in order to better see* other things (whether mental images or external objects) as they are in turn conceived of as existing in relation; but his new relation to the Ververs frustrates this possibility because they cannot be seen as analogical thinkers. The Ververs, in other words, ought to take the place of "London" in his mind; he "likes" London because he can use this relation to conjure up his own mental associations and his perceptional relations to the city. Although he is technically in relation to the Ververs by virtue of his marriage, it seems that he demands another level of relationality from them, one that would be additional to the kind of relation that his association with London provides, so that he can treat them as *consciousnesses* rather than as just *things*. He wants to see their consciousnesses as also constituted of relations; their thoughts could become building blocks for his own analogical relations if that were the case.

In its ideal operation, Amerigo's relational thinking would construct the value of others' consciousness for his own. He built on his association of simply "liking" London, coming to

prioritize this particular relation over others; this allowed him to perceptionally rearrange his consciousness in service of this preference. In order to put his mind at ease, he goes to Fanny Assingham in order to solve his crisis, as if seeing by way of *her* relation to the Ververs will help him understand them better. He tells her he needs her in order to see, to understand the Ververs: "I can do pretty well anything I *see*…. Therefore it is that I want, that I shall always want, your eyes. Through *them* I wish to look—even at any risk of their showing me what I mayn't like." (*GB* 23) However, Fanny refuses to serve him in this capacity, and it instead Charlotte's arrival that temporarily solves the crisis of consciousness that he experiences in the opening of the novel—she functionally comes to stand in for something that he would want to intimately associate with in the Ververs' minds but which he cannot. Charlotte steps into the picture and provides him a "light" because she provides herself as being able to be seen *in* relation. That he can break her down into her "dimensions" and features associating with one another in the vagueness of the whole is what allows for clarity of vision:

> That immediate, exclusive address to their friend was like a lamp she was holding aloft for his benefit and for his pleasure. It showed him everything—above all her presence in the world, so closely, so irretrievably contemporaneous with his own: a sharp, sharp fact, sharper during these instants than any other at all, even than that of his marriage, but accompanied, in a subordinate and controlled way, with those others, facial physiognomic, that Mrs. Assingham had been speaking of as subject to appreciation. So they were, these others, as he met them again, and that was the connection they instantly established with him. If they had to be interpreted, this made at least for intimacy. (*GB* 35)

Charlotte presents herself in relation to another—she is here presenting herself in an address to Fanny Assingham. That she presents herself in relation allows him the clarity he was missing in his walk just before this particular visit. Previously, he barely made out the faces on the streets, whereas here, he sees Charlotte's presence as a "sharp fact," with some particular attention to her facial features. But, like the image of *Imperium*, this sharpness of the whole cannot be likened to

a picture whose elements correspond to the reality of what Charlotte looks like, as if we could establish several facts about her appearance. Instead, its clarity is created by an accumulation of relations that analogical thinking activates. Just as the image of London came to be associated with through its "dimensions," her face first comes to be seen as "too narrow and too long," and her eyes are "not large," and her mouth "by no means small"—that is, in some relation of proportion. (It is not clear though if it is being measured against some ideal, or if he sees that the eyes are not large in relation to the whole face, the mouth not small in relation to the eyes, and so on.) Amerigo's vision of each of her features in this scene in turn comes to be analogized to some other object, conceived of as itself relational, in Amerigo's mind; that his perception of each of these features can so elucidate other relations in the mind seems to be the value that Charlotte has for him. When he sees her brown hair, for example, he compares it to the "sylvan head of a huntress." The comparison helps highlight a certain feature, illuminating the "tawny autumn leaf" in the color of her hair, but it does not metaphorically account for the whole. (Notably the aspect illuminated here, the color of autumn leaves, is just as likely to be found in the environment around the huntress, as it is to be the color of the imagined huntress's head, making it more analogical than metaphorical.) Her waist is compared to a "long, loose silk purse, well filled with gold pieces," a purse which has "been passed, empty, through a finger-ring that held it together." (*GB* 36) The fact that the purse is both empty and full does not seem to matter; the analogy is made in order to just note *some* similarities between her waist and the empty purse, and her waist and the full purse. The analogy of the full purse to her waist also allows him to bring the purse into analogy with his relation to her, as if he were employing a double analogy to clarify his relation to her: "It was as if, before she turned to him, he had weighed the whole thing in his open palm and even heard a little the chink of metal." That these

features have been so productive for the relations he can provide to them makes it appear that he has "profited" in his experience of her, as James the prefacer might put it. However, it is notable that he is still not encountering his ideal of representing Charlotte's *consciousness* as itself relational; it is instead that she offers herself in relation to another person that allows him to see her in this way. (Meanwhile, Maggie presents her father to Amerigo as having a "romantic" relation to things, which, as we learn in James's preface to *The American*, is akin to a balloon that cuts its cord from its tether to reality—which I here read to mean other relations.) In other words, he does not learn a new and different form *for* consciousness, as he is still thinking according to the same methods that he was previously. In trying to understand how the Ververs think, in contrast, he appears to desire to re-determine how he forms these relations according to a different method.

The social value of the Ververs' consciousness for Amerigo could be constituted if he could represent their consciousnesses to himself, as differently formed than his own—as a representation that could in turn make a difference, have a cash-value for his own consciousness. Analogical thinking does in fact seem to have the capacity to take on such a form different from its own, because Amerigo does seek to discover the relations *within* the Verver's minds. The analogical ideal that creates the value of another consciousness for one's own consciousness would seek to build from another's mind, so that this other consciousness would have value for it: if Amerigo, putting himself into intimate relation with the Ververs, can see *as* they see—that is, see their minds as relational, but also somehow formed differently than his own—then he can in turn apply their way of thinking to his own consciousness, and his own further relational thinking would be socialized through its interaction with another consciousness. So it is that Amerigo is interested in representing the thick, white air that he sees as their minds at least in

relation to *something*—such as in relation to how they think of him, as he envisions himself as the "shrouded object" in the fog. Again, metaphorical thinking can be conceived of as a specific type of analogy because it does establish a relation between two objects, only the relationship between the two objects is specified as one of similarity in identity. To see *through* his relation to them means to see *as* they see him, as if this could be a building block for re-thinking his own experiences in terms of essences.

Before turning to how Amerigo's adoption of metaphorical thinking creates the social problem of the novel, we can turn to the *Prefaces* for a glimpse at how the *ideal* functioning of analogical thinking seeks to establish the value of another consciousness. Within the pragmatic conception of consciousness, "liking" can be associated with the choice by which the mind selects from the continuity of relations something that is of "interest" to it. Such a choice allows one to put further relations into the service of this focus of attention. This form of thinking is employed in the *Prefaces* through James's treatment of his "germ." As I have already mentioned, James, in his focus on the "impression" made upon the writer (the impression which in turn becomes the subject of a novel) demonstrates that the process of composition begins with an "interest" in some element lodged in consciousness, encountered within the flux of experience. In order to write the novel, in other words, James puts himself into intimate *relation* with the germ, similar to how Amerigo "likes his London." We can conceive of this selection of a germinal impression as functioning like one of William James's "ideas" or "beliefs." The writer picks one experience from the continuity, one that he believes has some sort of significant value as its own entity, one that can be described as a discrete "impression," "directly" had from life, and puts himself into relation to it. In his preface to *The Portrait of a Lady,* James conceives of this impression as indicating his "sense of a single character," and the act of composing the

novel consists in acting on the belief that this "germ," treated in terms of some idea or belief of the individuality of Isabel Archer's "own consciousness" (*AN* 51), has its own "value." In William's terms, the belief in the germ's value would be the belief to be tested in experience for whether or not it *makes a difference* to treat it as valuable; there must be a practical consequence.

For Henry James, proving the value of Isabel Archer is therefore not a matter of going back into a history of where he picked up this "germ" and putting it back into those contextualizing relations, but rather that Isabel Archer is seen as an "individual character" with her own value must have some sort of practical consequences; it must make a difference in the context in which the germ is tested and treated as a "subject." This preface suggests that the relevant context is that of the authorial consciousness which has "invested" its interest in Isabel: her value comes to be tested insofar as the author's experiences can provide the "right relations," acting as it does as the "imagination that detains it [Isabel Archer as a figure], preserves, protects, enjoys it, conscious of its presence in the dusky, crowded, heterogeneous back-shop of the mind…" (*AN* 47) That she has appeared so vivid in the original impression can now be corroborated as part of her value by the way she makes the objects of the author's own mind appear in new terms. That is, the germ makes a practical difference in the contextualizing consciousness of the author, once he has put himself into intimate relation with this germ; its "cash-value" lies in the new experience the author can have of his own consciousness, how he can re-arrange all the relations within it in service of the germ. James recounts how he awoke one day with other characters in his mind, who would in turn help provide the "right relations" to help bring out the character of Isabel. In other words, the "crowded, heterogeneous back-shop of the mind" is no longer "dusky," but rather, acting on the belief in Isabel Archer's value, certain elements within consciousness, as "rockets" and "candles" employed in a 'pyrotechnic display,'"

(*AN* 53) come to be highlighted. The "cash-value" of Isabel Archer's consciousness in experiential terms lies in its capacity to illuminate authorial consciousness anew, on the basis of the tested belief that a consciousness that is not one's own can have a value.

Amerigo's approach to the Ververs likewise searches for such value amidst the Ververs' consciousness; his opening scene demonstrates that he has begun to feel the difference made by the Ververs to himself. In a way then, he has already constituted the Ververs' (particularly: their consciousness's) social value for himself—even if it makes all of his perception less lucid, it has made a difference for him. So he envisions himself as "floating" in their "bath" of benevolence and generosity, into which Maggie pours "exquisite colouring drops"—drops which are the "colour of her innocence, with which their relation, his and these people's, was all suffused." (*GB* 8) While he seems in some way to have succeeded in allowing his own consciousness to be socialized and re-formed by way of treating other consciousnesses as capable of unique approaches, he is not sure what sort of difference *has* been made and what he ought to in turn do to keep up to the standard of this difference. He seeks guidance as to how he is to pay them back, make himself valuable *to* them. This is because his own version of social value (one which can be compared to the germ's value in the *Prefaces*) is not the same as theirs. He therefore wants to understand their consciousnesses in terms of how they assign value. As the novel progresses, he comes to accede to their vision of his "essential quality"; he accepts *how* they think of him and what they ascribe to him as his value. He eventually takes "refuge" in his vision of Adam as consisting almost entirely of "quantity" (as he sees Adam amidst his "resources, possessions, facilities and amiabilities," in a way that resonates with my reading of Adam's metaphorical thinking), a vision which, for Amerigo, offers itself as a "substitute for communities, from man to man." (*GB* 238) That is, he allows how Adam thinks of him to

substitute for how he would think others constitute his social value (as if they too thought analogically). At an Easter dinner sometime after Charlotte and Amerigo have shared their first illicit kiss, Amerigo finally accepts the Ververs' mode of "apprehension in which the terms and conditions were finally fixed and absolute." The same vision from the time of his "over-anxious initiation" (as the opening scene is referred to here) allows him to now more calmly see himself "reposed in the bank as a value, but subject… to infinite endorsement… [even though] the 'figure' [of his value] was a conception all of Mr. Verver's own." (*GB* 238)

So, in a way, Amerigo takes on and accepts the Ververs' metaphorical thinking, as if allowing it to re-arrange his consciousness of his situation. He consents to his placement as an object; he assents to what they think about him, where they have arranged him in their system. That is, he finally accepts that the Ververs see value in what he *is* rather than what he does, even though their essentializing view does not contribute to his prior version of what social value would look like (his own version being obtained through analogical thinking). When he considers himself to be in the same "boat" as Charlotte, acknowledging their "benefactor in common" (*GB* 196), he reflects a version of his situation that Charlotte also comes to see as her own position: she is "fixed as fast as a pin stuck, up to its head, in a cushion…" (*GB* 187) They have been situated for a particular, common function in the lives of the Ververs. Amerigo comes to see Adam Verver as "*her* [Charlotte's] father-in-law" too. That their positions are mere effects of the Ververs' ideas comes to be one of their justifications for their affair. They may as well be together because they have been "placed" together; they cannot be responsible for anything they have done since they are only passively reacting to expectation. As previously explained, the Ververs' metaphorical thinking actually homogenizes the functions that each "representative object" is made to perform in the museum of consciousness—variety becomes

"monotonous," "things" become "francs and centimes." In particular, Adam marries Charlotte *for* her interchangeability with Amerigo (even while his collector's sensibility wants her to have her own value)—that she can act *like* Amerigo, create the same impressions, allows Adam to produce the illusion of sharing a "picture" with Maggie. As objects in this picture, Charlotte and Amerigo can best serve their function by becoming *inseparable*: the more they can be perceived as having the same essence, giving out the same perceptions, and having the same experiences which they communicate to their spouses, the more they are acting in their proper fixed places. In simply accepting how the Ververs see *them*, their obligations to the Ververs are transformed, as it were, into mere effects of the Ververs' consciousnesses—they are subordinated to how the Ververs seek to use them. They serve their "social" value (as it is defined by Adam Verver – as aesthetic objects) best when they passively permit the Ververs to make what they will of them: "The only thing is that I have to act as it [the situation the Ververs tend to put Amerigo and Charlotte in] demands of me," Charlotte tells Fanny. (191)

Yet, Amerigo also takes on the Ververs' vision of their situation from *within* his own analogical thinking. He looks at the less accessible "conception" that Mr. Verver has *as it relates* to himself. He in fact begins his affair with Charlotte on the premise of finally accepting the Ververs' attitude towards him, and the Ververs' attitude towards Charlotte, as the *relations* through which he will see. Right before their first illicit kiss, Amerigo and Charlotte both discuss the Ververs' attitude towards their spouses, recognizing together that the Ververs think in terms of "quantity": "'Oh, they've a great deal of idea,' said the Prince [to Charlotte]. And nothing was easier than to mention the quantity. 'They think so much of us.'" (*GB* 224) Amerigo's undertaking this in turn, as the way he will come to see *by way of their relation to him*, contributes to the social problem of the novel, even though it also matches the ideal way

Amerigo can be seen as creating the social value of them for himself (in a way similar to how initially conceives of Charlotte through analogical thinking). This way of seeing applies to both Amerigo and Charlotte. They come to share an analogy about the Ververs insofar as they approach the Ververs' thinking as if it were relational—because metaphor can be considered a *kind* of analogy, they can come to specify how the Ververs see generally through the Ververs' relation to them. Charlotte and Amerigo together describe the father-daughter pair's "confidence" towards them, as if they can retain their essences no matter what they do; they acknowledge that the Ververs feel secure that Charlotte and Amerigo will stay placed in the right arrangement, as objects with identic essences. As Charlotte and Amerigo's initiate their affair, they come to *build* on this relational vision, as if trying to see through this relation in order to see how they should relate to the Ververs. Upon the Ververs' confidence in them they build their *own* analogical relation to the Ververs. "We must act in concert. Heaven knows," Charlotte tells Amerigo, "*they* do!" (*GB* 226) This reversal of the Ververs' vision back upon the father-daughter pair allows Amerigo and Charlotte to constitute their own relation to the Ververs in a way similar to how the Ververs relate to them; they let the father-daughter pair retain their "identities of character" (*GB* 214) and let them stay "as they are." (*GB* 224) Charlotte and Amerigo specify this as their duty to "care" for them, and they coordinate their relational views of the situation, both seeing through the "privilege, the duty, the opportunity" as the "substance" of their visions. In turn, they use this vision of "care" as a way of referring to their own "luminous idea" of how they should act towards the Ververs. (*GB* 227) This vision, constituted through metaphorical thinking as it comes to be realized through added terms to an analogy (Amerigo and Charlotte relate to the Ververs, as the Ververs relate to them), allows them to approach the Ververs as if they sought to keep the Ververs steadfast before their arranged

pictures of their whole situation, "fixing" the Ververs before their shared picture in which Amerigo and Charlotte are supposedly "fixed."

What difference do the Ververs' metaphorical consciousnesses really make for Amerigo's analogical thinking now, though, if he is still engaged in this analogical form of thinking which is only specified as metaphorical? As addressed earlier, the Verver way of seeing implied that one could be social by *sharing* certain visions. The essentializing approach produces a situation in which it does not matter if there is such a thing as one consciousness different from another, since the value to be had by consciousness is that of quantitative accumulation of all perceptions to be had—the achievement of a universal view. That Amerigo can share *his* consciousness and feel the *lack* of difference made between consciousnesses (as Maggie and Adam had felt) then would allow him to feel for himself how the Ververs constitute social value. In other words, Amerigo's version of social value—of thinking through another's relational consciousness, building on their analogies—comes to be converted, through the analogical thinking that tries to see *through* the Ververs' vision of him, into an imitation of the Ververs' way of acting out social values, insofar as he comes to constitute his own lack of distinction from Charlotte. Amerigo and Charlotte, by way of thinking *like* the Ververs, come to *share a picture*, much as the Ververs share a vision with each other. They thereby act out the Ververs' version of the social for themselves; they achieve the "intensity" of "accord" in their "impressions" of their situation (*GB* 238). Amerigo is allowed to partake in this feeling, this difference made to his own consciousness, in the "mystic golden bridge" (*GB* 238) he constitutes

with Charlotte. In other words, the shared analogy as a bond for the pair is made so *by way* of metaphorical thinking employed *within* an analogy.[34]

The social consequence of metaphorical thinking is made to appear strange because the difference made for Amerigo's consciousness in his attempt to live up to Ververs' ideal is actualized as the loss of significant difference between consciousnesses. Both from a point of view of their being the objects of the Ververs' vision and from their positions as subjects who take on others' consciousnesses, Charlotte and Amerigo are led to a situation in which their disintegration into one another is seen as what ought to be a social value. So it is that they first agree on how they must act ethically towards the Ververs, through "care" of them, at the same time they become intimate with one another:

> Then of a sudden, through this tightened circle, as at the issue of a narrow strait into the sea beyond, everything broke up, broke down, gave way, melted and mingled. Their lips sought their lips, their pressure their response and their response their pressure; with a violence that had sighed itself the next moment to the longest and deepest of stillnesses they passionately sealed their pledge. (*GB* 229)

That this sexual act appears strangely amoebic in this passage demonstrates the results of metaphorical thinking when it is drawn into a social exchange between consciousnesses—what I call its ontological reversibility. Here the narrator, by subjecting Amerigo and Charlotte to the same grammatical functions (naming them only through the plural third person), turns them into

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[34] As William Flesch has indicated, Jamesian characters often tend to bond through the way they can "share" an analogy. His definition of analogy is different from my own, but it has some similarities. The intimacy created through analogy typically has two different moments as Flesch explains it: first, the characters both can see something that is quite difficult to make out (they share the act of reference to that object, even if this object is a referent that "resists embodiment" as Flesch puts it), and second, the fact that they can both see this object comes to demonstrate their shared sensibility, while the significance of the referent is superseded. Two characters can share a *relation* to an object, as if coordinating their consciousnesses, while the object itself becomes unimportant. Flesch reads Amerigo and Maggie as establishing their intimacy through their act of reference to Charlotte, who ends up being minimized in importance at the end of the novel. However, his conception of the shared analogy could also be applied to Charlotte and Amerigo's decision to see the Ververs through their "duty" (227) to them. Further, their shared referent (the Ververs) is already conceived of as something relational – they see how the Ververs see *them*, as the Ververs' "difference" from them. See his article, "Analogy and the Inscrutability of Reference."

indistinct functional operations. The tightening of the circle makes it appear that they are somehow *contained* and imprisoned within their functions, as if they were still in the museum of Adam's imperializing mind, merely objects treasured for the perceptional quantities had from their "known character" (*GB* 224). At the same time that they are serving their "value" for the Ververs, they can absolve themselves of responsibility, because they are so "fixed" by the power of Adam's determinations. From this view, the billionaire's consciousness appears to be able to take control of others, to subordinate these others to itself. However, in also taking on the Ververs' view *within* their own, as part of their shared analogical thinking, Amerigo and Charlotte can try to make the Ververs' consciousnesses socially valuable to them, according to Amerigo's own definition. Yet, in allowing the Ververs' way of thinking to make a difference to their views, they ultimately help generate social territory in which it does not matter that there is something called consciousness—so, the fact that they are grammatically subordinate in this passage as objects also coincides with the dissolution of their separate identities into the impersonal third person subject. To be "social" instead means sharing intimacy of visions, as Adam and Maggie seek to do. Thus Amerigo and Charlotte, taking on metaphorical thinking from within their analogies, commit to both Amerigo's way of constituting social value and the Ververs' by collapsing into one another, becoming indistinct.

However, because they are assuming Adam's way of thinking within their own, they can also be seen as the people who are creating the circle—their consciousnesses now take on the qualities of being imperializing, determining the meanings to which the Ververs are actually subordinate, as if they are fixing the Ververs before the picture in which the Ververs believe they fix Charlotte and Amerigo. As I emphasized previously, the consciousness that seeks to conquer as much of reality as if in an outwardly expansive manner, acquiring visions it conceives of as

copies of some existing order, reduces its own significance as a *consciousness* distinct not only from other consciousnesses, but also from its environment. As an accumulation of that which is there to be seen, such consciousness is reduced in significance to a mere effect of that which impinges upon it. Consciousness can thus be seen as ontologically reversible: it progresses as if by domination, capturing objects it assumes it can know the essence of, as if disseminating its presence to the world like the conqueror Cortez (used in a description of Adam's mind), at the same time that it inscribes the inconsequentiality of its presence in its exercise of power. It is as if in exercising its capacity to take on *anything* as part of itself, it ceases to matter—it writes itself into non-existence through its beneficent virtuosity. Along these lines, we can read the above passage: the tightening of the circle—the claim that consciousness has conquered a certain amount of territory (as Amerigo and Charlotte have finally understood and accepted their situation)—gives way to the dispersive fluidity of the sea, representing the insignificance of consciousness itself, and specifically, the inconsequentiality of what the Ververs would think about their affair. To put it into the terms of the pragmatist, Adam Ververs' consciousness has made a difference for Amerigo, but the "cash value" comes to be taken up by others in such a way that it creates a context in which consciousness becomes insignificant, such that consciousness is only an arbitrary, uninteresting (because incapable of *continuing* to make a difference) selection as a "represented" object of study.

Notably, in the *Prefaces,* James explains that novel form, devised by the young author who works on the "canvas of life," aims to *provide* a circle; it must do that which Amerigo fails to do here. To quote again the famous line: "Really, universally, relations stop nowhere, and the exquisite problem of the artist is eternally but to draw, by a geometry of his own, the circle within which they shall happily *appear* to do so." (*AN* 5) That is, the "circle," here a figure of

novel form, can be read as describing the young novelist's creation of a form of consciousness (for a character) that gives the appearance that consciousness can be made to stop *somewhere*—novel form gives the appearance that consciousness *cannot* become anything. For instance, Rowland Mallet's consciousness in this preface serves its purpose by being "sufficiently limited"; it can be named a part of novel form, a describable technique of employing a "center of interest," because it is a consciousness that can be "bedimmed and befooled and bewildered." (*AN* 16) Novel form, from the point of view of the artist in the process of composition, provides limitations for (characterological) consciousness given in a representation of it. Such form would fail, however, if it did not avoid the imperialistic quality of Adam Verver's essentializing aesthetic of exhibitional quantities: the difference between the authorial consciousness representing the character and the character must be maintained. Novel form then must also include an expression of the author's consciousness, the form that *his* way of thinking takes in its representation of character. The young author's own way of thinking must be so formed as to avoid ontological reversibility; he must be capable of a consciousness that can avoid the situation that Amerigo finds himself in, by which the value that others can be made to have for oneself ends up submitting fully to a situation in which the difference between consciousnesses no longer matters. The challenge for James as a young author in the process of writing and seeking to achieve novel form then would be to achieve a practice of his own consciousness as he writes the novel and expresses himself in the novel that could not only build on the values—the differences made to his own consciousness—that some "germ" indicating characterological consciousness has made possible, but also allow itself, so engaged in such a representation of another, to still be able to expressively retain a version of consciousness, a form of its own thinking, that could be potentially valuable *to* others. This will likewise be Maggie's challenge

in *The Golden Bowl*, as I read it in the next section; her task is to achieve a form for her consciousness that can allow Amerigo to be a value to it, at the same time she must create a way of thinking that allows for her consciousness to have a value *for* him.

Chapter Three: The Growth of Consciousness and The Practice of Novelistic Form

The speaking subject of the *Prefaces* figures the "march" of his consciousness as converging with the "footprints" he made in writing *The Golden Bowl*: "Into his very footprints the responsive, the imaginative steps of the docile reader that I consentingly become for him all comfortably sink; his vision, superimposed on my own as an image in cut paper is applied to a sharp shadow on a wall, matches, at every point, without excess or deficiency." (*AN* 336) In other words, the act of writing the *Prefaces* in general can be understood as an act of self-identification with the *specific* authorial consciousness given in *The Golden Bowl*. Yet *this* authorial consciousness finds itself "engaged in the struggle" and identifying *with* the characters, as if it is part of the novelistic world as a "bleeding participant" in its "great game," at the same time this consciousness is characterized by "the point of view" that will give it the "most… to answer for"—one which *differentiates* itself from character.[1] (*AN* 328) So if the prefacer identifies with the author, who identifies with characters by differentiating himself from them, then the character whose consciousness works by way of an insistence on difference—the method of thinking which I associate with Maggie Verver—can be understood as providing a model for how the prefacer relates to the author, and how the author relates to his character. In a way that resembles my reading of Maggie Verver in this chapter, James figures his consciousness in general in the *Prefaces* as *characterized* by necessary "deviations and

[1] James claims his general method has had the "marked inveteracy" of taking on an "indirect and oblique view of my presented action" and then points to a narrator-like figure who has been an "unwarranted participant" and had an "impression" of "the affair in hand." But *The Golden Bowl* keeps this same "system" *not* by way of the narrator, we are told, but by way of the "consciousness of but two of the characters." In other words, the characters use novel form *as* the author has used his impersonal "deputy or delegate," such that we can read the author as *identifying* with the character in this way. (*AN* 329) Yet, because the deputy is "impersonal," it is an identification that is characterized by its differentiation from the point of view that it identifies with.

differences." He imagines this in terms of a space of contrast: his novels and his consciousness as he wrote these works are represented as "original tracks" in a "shining expanse of snow" (as his "old" consciousness) and they are compared to the "exploring tread" of the revisionist who "break[s] the surface in other places." (*AN* 336-7) As I read this, "deviations and differences" that show mismatches of either "excess or deficiency" can figure a consciousness that thinks by way of what I call here metaphorical contrast. In other words, the prefacer can articulate the *concurrence* of his footsteps as reader with his original authorial consciousness in this particular novel because *The Golden Bowl* represents consciousness as characterized by *divergence*—identifying with authorial consciousness means taking on the same form of consciousness as Maggie.[2]

The Princess has thus far been understood as if she were merely a passive collaborator in Adam Verver's way of thinking: exposed to the same experiences and objects, she shares the "profit" Adam makes by placing objects in his museum and exhibiting them. Yet, as we discover in Book II, her consciousness is actually describable as a "roomful of confused objects, never as yet 'sorted," (*GB* 308) a stark contrast as a "mass of vain things, congruous, incongruous" to the ordered museum of her father's essentializing aesthetic. When we see her dealing with these "accumulations" of her consciousness, we see her throw in a thought that indicates to her what

[2] J. Hillis Miller takes each original track in the snow in this passage as representative of the figures and language that James used to represent the "clear matter"—the main subject of the novel, which has "gone on having a separate existence not only independent of the words on the page but also independent of James's thinking or not." (*Literature as Conduct,* 159) The tracks which do not fit into their former imprints represent James's present consciousness in his act of perceiving this "clear matter." Like my reading, Miller uses this passage to privilege *The Golden Bowl* for its close relation to the consciousness given in the *Prefaces*, although my emphasis on an *act* of identification takes into account the relation*ship* that seems to develop between James as a prefacer and his past self (or selves) as an author of particular novels. He might disagree though with my understanding of this passage in terms of an act of identification with Maggie Verver, since she would presumably be part of the "clear matter." On the other hand, his own reading of the novel later situates Maggie in the position of novelist and also seems to depend on identificatory acts between narrators, characters, authors, and readers. ("The novel, I conclude, is a chain of competing responsibilities, each cancelling the one before," he says, upon having read Fanny, Bob, and the narrator as the reader's "delegates." *Literature as Conduct,* 260.)

she should *never* know—in this particular description of one such mental "object," she recognizes she might never know what Charlotte *really* thinks about her stepdaughter's style of dress. Whereas her father "possesses" objects by maximizing their exhibitional value in the arrangements of his museum, Maggie, in seeing in terms of "*his* idea… the work of his life and the motive of everything he does," (*GB* 9) only defers to judgments that are not her own. When she tells Amerigo that he is a "*morceau de musée*," and an "object of beauty, an object of price," it is in the context of her *father's* collection, rather than her own. In other words, her consciousness may have certain ways of thinking that are similar to those of her father, but they have been more haphazardly adapted from him, while she meanwhile cannot operate for herself the ordered and arranged system within which perceptional value, according to his essentializing aesthetic, can be had.

This combination of her effort to replicate her father's methodology amidst her lack of knowledge is hinted at in her conversation with Amerigo in the opening pages of Book I, where she tries to represent herself to her husband-to-be as sharing in her father's view of value. Here, she uses metaphor, but she does so in a way that can be distinguished from her father's way of thinking. She describes the activity of collection as actually one of burial, play, and secrecy rather than one of display and accumulation. When Amerigo seeks confirmation from Maggie that she knows he does not "lie or dissemble or deceive," for example, she answers him by expanding on the metaphor he has used to express himself, imagining her confidence in him as "water-tight" "compartments" in a ship. As I read this, she regards his value as something that needs to be contained and disguised in a playful metaphor so as to maintain the illusion of its

presence, or at least to conceal her lack of knowledge about it.[3] From the pragmatist's point of view, Maggie's way of thinking prior to Book II is simply a habit that yields no consequences, merely a kind of "play" as she depicts it—she is not yet willing to test for the significance of her lack of knowledge, her difference from her father. In other words, she does not yet know, nor does she want to find out, whether her own consciousness could be made to have a value of its own, different from what her father has dictated, for her social others. Meanwhile, she assumes that these others (Charlotte and Amerigo) are valuable to her because her father has said so; she thinks she shares in his riches as his collaborator. But this is a poor substitute for Maggie's ability to generate these others' value for herself—as we are told by the narrator, if she had taken a look at her "accumulations of the unanswered" questions of what others *really* thought, she would have only been able to "stare." (*GB* 307) Instead, their value to her—represented in the opening scene of Book II as Charlotte's unknown thought about her style of dress is understood as one of these "confused objects"—has been stored away in her mind, as part of the confusion of objects that she neither knows how to order nor how to put to use (to make operative in her mind). The challenge of the novel at this point is for Maggie to develop a form of consciousness that can make such unknown thoughts of others valuable to herself—that allows them to make some difference for how she thinks—while she also retains the capacity of her own consciousness to become valuable to them.

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[3] Ruth Yeazell has also read Maggie's consciousness in terms of her employment of metaphor, as a kind of "means of evasion," although what is "buried" beneath the metaphor for her is unconscious, sexual knowledge, rather than *lack* of knowledge (and as I read it: lack of knowledge about what others think). She also reads this "means of evasion" as a "mode of discovery" though—she also notes, as I will do later in this chapter, that metaphors help Maggie generate additional terms of figuration by way of some of their strange appearances. But for her, the metaphor seeks and disguises knowledge simultaneously, attesting to a conflict within the self, whereas I see Maggie as beginning to overcome an older habit of thinking. Furthermore, she reads the thing to be expressed by way of the metaphor as something already sensed within the "intensely private" "individual consciousness"; my understanding of Maggie's metaphors then can be distinguished insofar as I believe they help her *open* her consciousness to new perceptions and experiences. *Language and Knowledge in the Late Novels of Henry James*, 43-53.

In the previous chapter, I indicated that certain ways of thinking, depicted in the characters of Adam Verver and the Prince, gave rise to representations and practices of consciousness which promoted the insignificance and inconsequentiality of consciousness in a context of others. I suggested that James saw it as the task of novel form to engage in representing consciousness such that it could avoid the problems posed by Adam's essentializing aesthetic and Amerigo's acceptance of his stepfather's understanding of value. In this way, Maggie's social challenge in the novel—to maintain and constitute the social value of consciousness both *for* others and *of* others—parallels the novelist's task as I previously characterized it. In this chapter, I explain how the Princess forms her consciousness by way of metaphorical contrast, and how she conceives of the social problem in the novel from within this way of thinking. I demonstrate that Maggie Verver, through her particular method for thinking about this problem, comes to grow her consciousness, develops the "terms" of her cognition, according to her anticipation of the unknowable value that other consciousnesses *will be seen to have made* for her. She allows her own consciousness to become the context in which her husband's way of thinking has made some difference; it thus becomes the means of expression for the *value* of his consciousness (both for herself and for his desire to see his own value)—further, her consciousness expresses itself as the instantiation of this value. But, that one consciousness can become the "representative" of another's value might mean that the consciousness offering itself for such use loses something of its own expressive potential for the constitution of *its* value. Through her "use" of the *ficelle* Fanny Assingham, who assists in her representation of herself to other characters, and the story of her encounter with the golden bowl, which allows her to subject her husband to an experience of where the limitation of *his* thought of her has been, the Princess also is able to express her *own* experience of consciousness—with a

method of its own—such that it becomes *available* to be read in terms of the difference it might make for her husband.

Likewise, I understand James's novelistic aesthetics as it is written in the *Prefaces* as a practice of consciousness that figures a social problem—how the author can lend his own experience as a means for the expression of the value of another's consciousness, while he also expresses the potential value of his own consciousness in the novel. At the same time that this problem comes to be articulated in language about novelistic form, as a kind of "theory" of the novel, the *Prefaces* present, also by way of such "theory," an *experience* of the form of consciousness that the original author is practicing by way of the act of composition. The *Prefaces* then are being read as novelistic insofar as they emulate an authorial act of identification with character (his "get[ting] into the skin of the creature," *AN* 83) by way of the prefacer's "luxurious immersion" (*AN* 29) in the consciousness of his past self. In a way that parallels Maggie's use of something like novel form (her use of Fanny Assingham and the golden bowl) to ensure the value of one's representation of others and the value of one's representability by others, the prefacer assists in the expression of the experience of his former self by way of novel "theory," to demonstrate how his authorial consciousness can be seen to have had value for his present self. In doing so, the prefacer becomes the context in which authorial consciousness expresses its value, at the same time that he tries to write this past consciousness as having been formed in accordance with the value that the "germ" could be made to have for it. The novel's achievement, its aesthetic merit, is not that of intrinsic value, but rather its value can only be made in its perpetuation in a further practice of consciousness, an offer of the "use" of authorial consciousness to the reader. It is this social value which comes to be made available in James's "talk" about "the art of representation," his theory of the novel.

I. Thinking the Space of Metaphorical Contrast

Whereas Adam Verver had noticed similarities and multiplied the quantity of aspects he could see something *as* by way of his metaphorical comparisons, the Princess's metaphors emphasize *dissimilarities*. They configure what I call the space of metaphorical contrast. In the opening of Book II, Maggie begins to envision the situation of the foursome—the arrangement of their marriages and the retained closeness of the father-daughter relationship—by way of two alternating metaphorical constructions: the situation is figured as a "strange, tall tower of ivory or perhaps rather some wonderful, beautiful, but outlandish pagoda." (*GB* 299) The "ivory tower" is an edifice characterized by its simplicity, a homogeneous block and an image of "ideal consistency" (*GB* 301) which is presented to the "social field," one that allows others to believe the four of them are "people of the highest amiability" and which Maggie herself sees as a demonstration of their "triumph." Yet, in the presence of this tower, the Princess has "ceased to take comfort," feeling that she moves in "the shadow of a false position" (*GB* 301); she imagines herself circling around the architectural figure, searching for an entrance which she cannot find. The image in this way presents the sense of something missing or unexpressed. The pagoda, meanwhile, presents a very different image, made inscrutable as if by the many layered aspects of its surface: it is burdened by embellishments, a "structure plated with hard, bright porcelain, coloured and figured and adorned, at the overhanging eaves, with silver bells that tinkled." (*GB* 299) Both images though, as metaphorical vehicles, are made to appear at odds with that which they ought to represent for the Princess, in contrast with her known experience and her explicit conception of their tenor, the "felicity" of their lives together. It is the common difference in this unusual sense produced by both images (one, by way of excess, the other, by way of exclusion)

which in turn comes to invoke another metaphor: the Princess thinks of the impenetrability and inscrutability of the architectural figure as a "Mahometan mosque" for which she would have to "pay… with her life" to enter—as if there is some sort of sacrifice required for her to represent, within her metaphorical images, that which is to be "known" of the tenor. (*GB* 300)

Her alternation between metaphorical vehicles and what she imagines in the space of their difference from what is known of the tenor can be read as a consequence of a certain practice of selection from the context of her experience, when viewed through the lens of pragmatism. Notably, in her metaphor for the situation of their marriages, she does not treat each participant as an individual—she does not actually replicate how her father takes Charlotte and Amerigo in *as* separate objects, with their own "essences," missing as she is the explicit guidance of his assumed system. At best, she can select their way of living together as some "liberal form" of its own by *distinguishing* it from what she has seen to be the case for "many families, many couples, and still more many pairs of couples." (*GB* 301) Such a figured contrast to these others does not guarantee that the foursome can be treated as an identic whole, as some sort of self-cohering "unit" that can serve as a basis for comparison. From within a pragmatist perspective that selects that which is to be treated in terms of "concepts" or "ideas," from a continuity of associations that could be infinitely divisible and generalized in terms of "relations," her method can also be read in terms of an exclusion, a specified omission that is used as a point of non-relation. This mode of selection operates in the following way: if experience were imagined in terms of a spectrum of colors fading into one another (much like Adam's view of the gradations of the multi-colored human appeal), and we wanted to select the color blue from this continuity, there would have to be a point where a distinction is chosen as one relevant in its contrast to that which is arranged under "blue." As William James puts it:

"By our inclusions and omissions we trace the field's extent; by our emphasis we mark its foreground and its background."[4] Whereas Adam was understood as *capable* of making infinitesimal distinctions, they are not necessarily operative *as* distinctions for how he treats objects, which are assumed to have their essences already from his own imposed system. Maggie meanwhile chooses to mark *certain* distinctions that will come to *function* in how she treats the "objects" in her store room, under what light she considers her metaphorical tenors in terms of a "whole." As I read her metaphor of the pagoda and the ivory tower for the situation of their lives together, that she can make any kind of metaphorical comparison of an architectural structure to her treatment of the foursome as an identic whole is a consequence of her distinction between their way of life and that of others.

Yet, one such point of distinction between, for instance, blue and green would not necessarily mark an ultimate limit outside of which all colors not included in the explicit section designated as "blue" could not later count as blue. We might eventually encounter a color that fits better under the term blue, one that is not already included because it is of a different level of saturation, for example, than what has been represented in the original spectrum encountered in experience. Likewise, Maggie's method of selection marks only one such point of non-relation to take in what is selected as the "object" of her perception, so that what Maggie can associate under particular conceptions can be opened to further testing and re-creation. She is open to the possibility that there might be more experience which has not been yet encountered, which could count as part of this vision of their happy lives together or even add some value to it. She is also open to the possibility that some idea or association is being included in her conception of their lives together which is unnecessary—which adds no value, or even subtracts from the values that

[4] William James, *Pragmatism*, 119.

have been achieved by them. This openness to additions or exclusions is made possible in the novel for her consciousness *through* her metaphorical comparisons, in the space of contrast produced in the insufficiency or eccentricity made palpable by them. So it is that, as she considers the "visible and admirable" ivory tower that they have built together, she begins to conceive of what this picture of their happiness may not account for:

> It had given them [Amerigo and Charlotte] pleasure—as how should it not?—to find themselves shed such a glamour; it had certainly, that is, given pleasure to her father and herself, both of them distinguishably of a nature so slow to presume that they would scarce have been sure of their triumph without this pretty reflection of it. (*GB* 301)

Even as the two spouses offer a "reflection" (they produce the appearance of a mirror image) of the Ververs' "pleasure" in their arrangement, the Princess inserts a doubt—by way of the question as to how it could be that they might feel differently—as to whether they actually *are* able to express their own thoughts within their situation. It is as if her "roomful of confused objects," of which a characteristic mental "object" is Charlotte's thought about Maggie's style of dress, is seeking new terms by which it could finally vocalize itself, as if finding the offered means of expression, that which is associated under the family's current way of living, insufficient. This sense of something unknown points to the deficiency in the family picture made palpable in the image of the ivory tower, characterized by the Princess's feeling that there is something missing from it. Yet, simultaneously, the space of contrast in the metaphorical comparison also produces a sense of excess through the image of the embellished pagoda in its overabundance of surface details. As I read this strange appearance of ornamentation as it comes to be applied to her conception of their lives together, it allows Maggie to consider the "unusual extension" that they have given to their situation as possibly including something unnecessary, something even detrimental to the produced "value" of their social lives—neither marriage has

been "measurably paid for," she notes, having required no sacrifice of the closeness of the father-daughter relationship. (*GB* 301)

What is missing or what is excessively included in their lives together, given figuration within consciousness by way of the strange appearance produced by the metaphorical contrast in the opening pages of Book II, comes to be subjected to a kind of pragmatic experiment, an expressive hypothesis of Maggie's newly developing thoughts. As the narrator puts it, her opening move by which she deviates from her usual custom of waiting for Amerigo at her father's place, has allowed her to "put her thought to the proof, and the proof had shown its edge." She is "no longer playing with blunt and idle tools, with weapons that didn't cut"—her thoughts can no longer dismissed as merely imitative of her father's way of thinking, as the inconsequential play of metaphorical burial. (*GB* 304) Instead, she begins to look to what difference she might make to the family's situation when she begins to introduce her new thoughts into it (even as such thoughts are expressed only by way of her own deviation from the norm—as what they might not know about her); she expects to see some change, some reaction to *her* change, as she "brings about a difference, touch by touch." (*GB* 322) In her opening gesture then, by which she simply waits for Amerigo at Portland Place rather than Eaton Square, she presents something like the strange appearance of her metaphorical imaginings to her husband, as if to see how they might become operative in their lives. This, first of all, takes the expressive form of her presenting to him her own absence, purposefully failing to leave a note as to where he is to find her that evening. It is as if, in subjecting him to an expression in which something (or rather, someone) is notably missing, she is testing whether the excessively included element (envisioned in the overabundance of details on the pagoda) in their situation is herself, whether their arrangement still "works" without her. She considers a picture of their

situation which *should* have presented the four of them together as symmetrical wheels of a coach, as Maggie pieces together the elements of another metaphor for their way of living together. However she sees this mental image "taking an absurd, fantastic shape," as she realizes that Amerigo and Charlotte are pulling the coach, while her father and herself, seated inside, are not even pushing it. In seeing "herself at last…. suddenly jump" from the coach, (*GB* 315) she can be understood as reading into the family picture what she has done by way of her opening move—in thinking about her own uselessness, her lack of contribution to the family's way of living together, she sees what it might look like without her in it.

Yet, this presentation of absence is simultaneously an expression of her own altered state—consciousness has become different from itself, and continues to present itself in terms of this capacity to vary (as Fanny reads Maggie in her sudden decision to wait at her home rather than Eaton Square—an expression of her being "different from herself" *GB* 274). As the Princess envisions herself jumping from the "family coach," she "looked at the person so acting as if this person were somebody else," and she eagerly awaits, in this dissociated state, to see what this figure will "do." (*GB* 315) This indicates how she also reads her "small deviation" from their usual custom in her opening move—in terms of its introduction of something novel and peculiar in their way of living together. The new figure she presents to her husband is like a combined image of the outlandish pagoda, with its overloaded surface and decorativeness, and the forbidding mosque, which presents its strangeness by way of its deadly formality: Maggie feels herself to be "beautifully bedecked" in a frock "sticking out, all round her, quite stiff and grand; even perhaps a little too stiff and too grand…" (*GB* 306) She does not know why she has made this sudden decision to wait at home; it is a produced sign which might be a kind of "large expression," (*GB* 303) as if it seemed to signify *more* than she could possibly have meant by it. It

is as if by offering an excessive appearance of eccentricity, Maggie expects that something new or hidden will finally be able to come into expression. In the opening scene, Amerigo may have, for example, come home first before seeking her at her father's home—he may then have been missing her all along, a sentiment whose expression Maggie can now see because she has given it an opportunity to be heard. In this way, she is offering something of her own consciousness *to* her husband, some thought that presents itself in excess of any assignable meaning of her own. It is as if she is making room for some unexpected expression on *his* part by giving him the means to communicate it.

As the pragmatist would ask: what difference could Maggie's exclusion from and variation within the picture make? What kind of confirmation could she attain that her newly tested version of the picture matters at all for their way of living together? Her "small breach with custom," in which she presents her own absence and introduces her excessive self-difference, can be read as a way of contrasting the picture in which she usually participates (her father's version of value) with the one that she now shows to Amerigo: if the maximized value of the family picture depends on her inclusion in it, then the picture in which she does not appear, or in which she appears different from her former self, can be read as less valuable. This is why Maggie expects that the Prince will recognize her deviation, put it into a verbalized question of "What in the world are you 'up to,' and what do you mean?" and that he can, by doing so, "instantly" bring "her low." (*GB* 309) He could force her to assign some name to, articulate some judgment on, the different version of the family picture she has produced by her introduction of her own absence and inconsistency. (*GB* 310) But that her husband does not force her to name her unexpected breach, and that he does not demand an explanation of her, allows her to begin her realization that she might not have a contributive value for the family

picture, because it still "works"—it seems to make very little difference to the others—when she presents her own absence and self-difference in it. In other words, it is here that she can first suspect the insignificance of her own consciousness to others, her lack of social value, because her own absence seems to make *no* difference, remaining as it does unremarked upon by the others. Notably, the results of Maggie's test could allow for her to accept the *absolute* value of this family picture; she could accept the "pretty reflection" given in their way of living together as one in which her own consciousness makes little difference. But Maggie's development takes place through her repeated unwillingness to accept that her previous conception of their lives together—a picture which seems to have been based on her father's way of thinking, a method which however she cannot herself replicate—is a maximized expression of potential value.

Instead, she insists on *making* something of the difference that she has introduced into the family picture by way of her expressive hypotheses—again, this difference manifests in terms of both her presentation of her own absence (or at least, the absence of that which she has been, since she is now different from herself) and her presentation of a consciousness in excess of itself (an expression which is open to meaning, since it is "larger" than what it might signify). After the initial opening scene in which she deviates from expectation for the first time, she subjects Charlotte and Amerigo to renewed performances of her own excessive self-difference. So, for example, when she departs from her usual "changing of the guard" with Charlotte (by which the daughter arrives at the paternal home to keep her father company, as Charlotte leaves her "post" by her husband to attend to other affairs), she subjects her stepmother to a repetition of what she had "practiced" with Amerigo the previous night, seeing herself as "an actress who had been studying a part and rehearsing it, but who suddenly, on the stage, before the footlights, had begun to improvise, to speak lines not in the text." (*GB* 322) Again, we have a deviation from an

expectation, and a presentation of herself as both absent (seeing herself as an "actress" means seeing herself in terms of a substitute) and excessively expressive (as she "improvises," creates significations divergent from the script *as* an actress who does not reference herself but the part she plays). She begins to interrogate Charlotte about her impressions of Matcham, much as she already has with Amerigo, and she understands her own interested inquiries as making up for the fact that she *has* been absent, that she has not really been a participant in their social lives together. "She wanted him to understand from that very moment that she was going to be *with* him again, quite with *them*, together, as she doubtless hadn't been since the funny changes." (*GB* 317) Yet this introduction of her own presence is understood in terms of her idea *about* them, her realization that she may have "abandoned them." (*GB* 316) So she begins to act on the basis of her "idea" that she will offer to them the "flower of participation," as if she will now introduce *her* consciousness into the picture, but introduce it as that which can manifest by way of its capacity to be different from what it had been. Here that variation is offered as her capacity to share in their experiences, to become the context in which their "impressions" are made to appear "exquisite," as she seeks to "offer" a "welcome… to [such] impressions at second-hand, the amusements, the large freedoms only of others." (*GB* 317)

However, her initial "test" gives her very little confirmation of what she *is* making in this insistence on difference: the Prince does not seem to react to this new version of the family picture as if it *is* new or different. Neither he nor Charlotte takes her up on what I have identified as her offer of excessive expression, nor do they "name" her deviation from the usual family picture: so, for example, the Prince does not come to Portland Place before seeking her out at Eaton Square on the night of his return from Matcham, nor does he remark on the fact that she has done something different or unexpected. Instead, he treats her to his "infinite tact" (*GB* 311)

and a physical embrace, which signify his seemingly knowing and unsurprised acceptance of all she might be communicating. Any spoken testimony to what her presentation might mean is rendered superfluous, as if the "unuttered" words had already been taken in, their meaning already anticipated, justified, and understood. (*GB* 318) "'After all, after all,' since she put it so, she was right," Maggie imagines his thought process as he brings her close to him.[5] Likewise, as Maggie begins to spend more time with Charlotte rather than her father (in yet another instance of the Princess's changed behavior), Charlotte is silent on Maggie's re-arrangements, allowing a "silver tissue of decorum" to be spread over their interactions. This reticence nevertheless is able to anticipate or keep from expression the meaning of Maggie's "improvisations," since it prevents the results of Maggie's test from making much of a difference to their fundamental "equilibrium"—so Maggie imagines that what Charlotte would say, if she felt like remarking upon Maggie's difference, is that their changed relations are simply another instantiation of their amiable identities, as "the way nice people *are*, all round." (*GB* 327) In this way, both Charlotte's and Amerigo's muted and tactful reactions to the Princess's introduced differences make the meaning of her expressions appear merely as already expected variations of what they have always been together. If Maggie is trying to take on *their* consciousnesses as something new within her own, by way of their "impressions" of Matcham, neither Amerigo nor Charlotte allows her offer to be seen as necessary or particularly useful. At best, they respond with pauses and "stares," as if they also do not know what Maggie's excessive expression of her new interest

[5] Initially, she reads the embrace as a response to the meaning of her words, as if he is taking her thoughts into his own consciousness and it is only *words* that are unnecessary, rather than consciousness. But she begins to recognize that the embrace is a response that forces her to *re-write* what she could have meant by her expression because it works as her "virtual assent to the assumption that he had thus made that there was really nothing such a demonstration didn't anticipate of and dispose of, and that the spring acting within herself moreover might well have been, beyond any other, the impulse legitimately to provoke it." (*GB* 318) As I read this, because Maggie assents to the assumption of how her changed behavior is to be "read" by a customary response that "anticipates" it, she allows the meaning of her behavior to be re-written so that it can appear merely as another way of expressing the essential happiness of the family picture.

in them might be *for*. (But such presented "blankness" on their part is only a momentary instant before each of them subjects Maggie to the treatment by which they re-write the meaning of her act—to be surprised, even, would be an indication that Maggie *had* done something different, something that was being read as unjustified or excessive to the others.) However, rather than accepting the Prince's "infinite tact" and Charlotte's "silver tissue of decorum" as indications that the two of them are satisfied with their lives together, Maggie takes these responses as a sign that she may not have deviated *enough* or in the right way from the norm to allow them to express themselves—she senses again and again, something of *their* thoughts, that is unexpressed. So it is that she *continues* to act again and again in ways that depart from their norm, demonstrating her will to *insist* on making and seeing something different from the family's former way of living. Here though, we have her engaging in a process of stubborn repetition rather than construction, since the lack of definitive changes resulting from her "test" mean that she can add little to her conception of what she might be missing of Charlotte and Amerigo's unexpressed thoughts.

In the absence of any indication that her excessive significations can have any value or come to help the others to expression, that Maggie might be in a process of constituting her *own* consciousness, as she insists on seeing and accumulating the differences she notices in Charlotte and Amerigo's faces, actually comes to be a *danger* rather than a hope. In the scene in which Amerigo arrives home after having expected to find her at her father's, she notices "some difference that she couldn't measure" (*GB* 309) in the "blankness" of his face, which indicates a reaction that is to be distinguished from her previous conception of him in experience (and as he is conceived as a part of the family picture)—he looks uncertain, embarrassed; he hesitates. In other words, putting the space of metaphorical contrast to the test in this instance seems to have

made a slight difference in what is there to be seen. But this result might simply be a consequence of Maggie's new way of seeing. It might be because the Princess is now different from herself, having put her thought "to the proof," that she comes to *project* a new difference onto what is to be seen in Amerigo's behavior, as he appears to pause before reacting to her strange move. Notably, Amerigo and Charlotte have already been described as offering a "pretty reflection" of the Ververs' pleasure (in the image of the ivory tower); if it is *Maggie* who has now changed, and changed in such a way that her consciousness excessively expresses itself beyond that which it possibly *could* be thinking, then the face of her husband, engaged in "reflecting" it, would then be marked with an absence of thought indicating only Maggie's projection of what *she* might be doing in her excessive significations onto it. Here, then, consciousness is unable to distinguish between projection and reception: it is unable to figure where it might be said to end, and another consciousness begins; it is made to feel potentially limitless and omnipotent, even as Maggie has already come to question its significance. That all of her excessive significations will end up together referencing *only* the inconsistency of her own consciousness and its attempt to project its variations *onto* others is a danger that becomes palpable for the Princess: if consciousness is not reactive or generous, but instead *only* inventive, then it seems shameful to her. Her "large expression" (her social offer to her husband and Charlotte) could actually be a kind of "self-control" (*GB* 303) by which she expresses only through some very small differences made to the family picture the deeper and deeper rifts within herself that her own consciousness generates by means of her new metaphorical contrasts.[6]

[6] To herself, she indicates that this self-generating lack may be evidence of her uncontrollable passion and desire for her husband, the "violence" of her acting up to the "full privilege of passion" (*GB* 302), the greed of her own "jealous" (*GB* 322) imagination, capable of expanding and inventing beyond all reasonable measure of that which is there to be *actually* seen or noticed.

Nevertheless, the Princess risks the possibility that she will have to take responsibility for even *more* moments of variation which were only projected, insofar as she again and again takes herself as having noticed some slight differences in what she sees in Charlotte and Amerigo—that she has approached them in a different way allows her to see them in a new way. Her initial interpretation of what these differences might indicate (or rather, the way she *acts* upon what they might mean, as demonstrations of what might be unexpressed in their consciousness for which she must provide the space for expression) allows her to accumulate (or rather, "record" as the *Prefaces* will come to express this method) these moments as points to return to, instances which might be subjected to still other revisions. Her first re-engagements with what each of their "blanknesses" may have meant is taken from the point of view that has been subjected to Amerigo and Charlotte's initial treatment of her expressions: if indeed the Princess had thought she was introducing something *new* into the family picture, but her husband and her stepmother's reactions to this novelty show how their lives together had already anticipated and accounted for the eccentric behavior that Maggie displays, then any difference that she comes to newly notice is made into something that has always been there, but which only *Maggie's* limited consciousness had not been able to grasp. For example, even as Amerigo's momentary blankness—his first reaction to her excessive presentation of her self-difference—is explained away as referring to some expected and known sign of their usual way of living together, it comes to be retained for the Princess as an indication of what she had not previously noticed (that *he* might have some process within his own consciousness, "that he *did* see" *GB* 309). Like the consciousness from my previous chapter of the newly bald man who comes to feel the difference between having hair and being bald, Maggie's recognition of Amerigo's pause ends up perceivable as something consciousness can only recuperate once it has become different

from itself, even as what is there to be recuperated might always have been available for consciousness. (This is to be distinguished from the idea that this difference is projected *onto* him, because the Princess, whether justified or not, *treats* his hesitation as if it is "there" to be noticed, rather than only imposed. The fact that she continues to act by way of her excessive self-difference attests to her persistent belief that there might be something unexpressed on Amerigo's mind.) From such a point of view, consciousness can reflect on what has happened and expand on what had been its seeming limitation from some subsequent moment from which it can see where it *had* been limited in the past, because it had not included some element (of what consciousness also could have accounted for) within itself. Whether this had really worked *as* a limitation upon consciousness, however, is contestable—I mean to indicate only that Maggie's consciousness, working by way of *insisting* on some alteration to their lives, stages a return to such past moments to *mark* these *as* moments of limitation that have now been overcome.

Maggie, for fear that all that she has come to see in these instances might be attributable only to her own projection and the monstrous, unjustified growth of only her own consciousness, does not consider what *together* these differences might constitute until she *encounters* an experience that *operates as* a limitation upon her consciousness. Her method has thus far been read as introducing renewed instances of some expression of excessive self-difference to their situation. Failing to see an obvious reaction or difference made as a response to her expressive hypotheses, she nevertheless each time insists on seeing slight differences in what she notices in Charlotte and Amerigo's faces, which initially come to be marked for her as indications of where her consciousness has been insufficient, limited. So, for example, Amerigo's initial presentation of his "blankness" comes to be understood as indicating how Maggie has not previously recognized

how his being engaged in the "business of social representation" of the Ververs must be an "affair of living always in harness." (*GB* 313) In this way, her metaphorical contrast, the tenor of which was "selected" by a distinction made between their way of living and the lives of others, has allowed her, when expressively put to the test, to specify some result as another distinction that should have been made *within* her conception of the "ivory tower" that they have built together. This then allows her to configure in the space of another metaphorical contrast how she might work *beyond* this.[7] His newly noticed difference, in addition to being seen as a limitation that she has now overcome (in terms of what she had *not* noticed before), is taken as indicating that she might "do" more for him by way of another expression of her excessive self-difference. In a renewed instance of her changed behavior, she subjects him to another inquiry about his time at Matcham, this time in front of the dislikeable Lady Castledean and inconsequential Mr. Blint, as if she is offering to assist him in the business of social representation. This means that her next iteration of her expressive hypothesis has built on her conception of what she might do for him, insofar she seeks to demonstrate that she has worked beyond what she has seen as a limitation of her consciousness in the past. As such, it differentiates itself from the eccentric expression that had made the initial newly noticed difference palpable; so she acts in a way that can be considered yet another variation on her own self-difference that shows how it has worked beyond its previous limitation. However, instead of seeing an obvious reaction, Maggie notices that her husband is once again for a moment "visibly beguiled" before he subjects her to a physical embrace that seems to anticipate and "dispose of" what she might have meant. She, in her method of insisting on having noticed something new,

[7] It is here that Maggie comes to think of the family picture in which Amerigo and Charlotte are pushing the carriage, and the father and daughter are not even pulling.

reads his puzzlement retrospectively as signifying that she has seen some "process of weighing something in the balance, of considering, deciding, dismissing" within him, and that there is more for her to "do." (*GB* 318) Here then consciousness appears to again recuperate a moment in which it, having become different from itself in yet another way, can mark some other limitation that its next expression can show that it has worked beyond. Her test can be read as producing some *further* difference to be noticed by consciousness; consciousness then appears to be gradually overcoming limitations that have been obstacles as it seeks to know and represent to itself what another consciousness thinks.

However, when Maggie's changed behavior comes to incorporate Charlotte in her plan of introducing some difference, she recognizes that the newly noticed differences she accumulates in her observation of her stepmother, and which she comes to mark as indications of where her limitations have been (she sees now that Charlotte strives to maintain the "social distinction" between herself and the Princess, that she has a sense of duty to it, *GB* 325), make her repeat a perceptual history that she has already forged in her process with Amerigo. So, as Maggie considers "Charlotte's response to the experiment of being more with her," she recognizes that her "aftertaste" of this response comes to enjoy "a certain analogy with… Amerigo's own determined determinations." (*GB* 323) In other words, that Maggie comes to notice the *same* difference, which in Charlotte's case returns her to the *same* limitation that she had marked for consciousness in Amerigo's case, throws into doubt whether consciousness had really worked beyond any limitation that Maggie had seen her consciousness to have had, and overcome, in her initial presentation to Amerigo. Rather though than giving up on her method, Maggie encounters *this* as an in-the-moment experience of limitation upon her consciousness. This experience comes to be palpable as consciousness sees what it has *not* been able to do; when it had thought

its method was characterized by insisting on differences, it must instead consider what it has been made to do. As Maggie submits the expression on each of their faces to a mental metaphor, as "little portraits" as the faces of a "medallion," she is unable to make any point of distinction between the two: "The miniatures were back to back, but she saw them forever face to face, and when she looked from one to the other, she found in Charlotte's eyes the gleam of the momentary, 'What does she really want?' that had come and gone for her in the Prince's." (*GB* 324) Instead then of being able to progressively ascertain differentiable differences, consciousness has been made to engage in an analogy, since the only thing it comes to observe in each of their faces is their *similarity*.

This moment of experienced limitation comes to be an opportunity for constructing what *has* been made in the accumulations of newly noticed differences in consciousness, as the possibility of pure inventiveness and the monstrosity of an unjustified consciousness is minimized by a consciousness made to feel that it is *not* omnipotent.[8] Maggie can begin to think of her consciousness as having undergone changes as a result of a cause that is *not* of her own invention—this allows her to stage yet another return to the moments that she had marked as indications of her limitation, allowing them to be revised in terms of the experience of limitation that can now be attributed to what the others have done *to* her: "there was … in the air… as an emanation from the same source, a distilled difference of which the very principle was to keep down objections and retorts." (*GB* 328) The differences she has been noticing and marking as limitations of her consciousness can be re-read now as having been noted in reaction to or as a consequence of some unknown process that has *already* worked upon the family picture. By

[8] In direct contrast to my view that Maggie is able to encounter an experience of resistance to the power of her consciousness, Bersani argues that James had set out with the purpose of discovering the resistance of reality to consciousness in the novel, but had ultimately been unable to do so. For him, *The Golden Bowl* is a fiction that is "utterly released from the comfortable superstition of truth." ("The Jamesian Lie," 151)

comparing these differences to one another, Maggie is able to explain to herself what she has been made to think through reconstructing the "principle" and "process" the others have subjected her to—she thus ascertains the fact that the two lovers are working together so that no difference can be ascertained between them, that they take their cue as to how to relate to the Ververs from one another as they work in concert. (As noted in the previous chapter, this analogical presentation is, according to my reading of it, what characterizes their form of consciousness in the preceding volume of the novel.) While the Princess might not know *what* they think, she reconstructs *how* they think—by way of analogical similarity and coordination with one another, as she sees them "signal... from house to house their clever idea, the idea by which, for all these days, her own idea had been profiting." (*GB* 330) In reconstructing this process, Maggie can re-read the meaning of what her thought-of limitations of consciousness *had* been: products of some process to which she had been subjected, the difference that *their* consciousnesses have made to her. *They* have been creating the limitations beyond which her consciousness is not allowed to see: "They had built her in with their purpose," she recognizes, "they had got her into the bath and, for consistency with themselves—which was with each other—must keep her there." (*GB* 330)

With an in-the-moment *experience* of a limitation on her consciousness, we have an occasion in which the accumulations of Maggie's consciousness can be seen as connected to one another, once they have been understood as the consequence of someone else's thought process or action upon it. That *they* might have been "reading" into her "variation a mute comment"—this provides the possible *historical* link between her associative perceptions that had been made in the space of metaphorical contrast. Seeing their "distilled differences" in these terms, she realizes the fullness of her "impression," which prompts in her "a final reflection," out of which

a "light" flashes—a "word that flashed the light, was that they were *treating* her, that they were proceeding with her… by a plan that was the exact counterpart of her own." (*GB* 328) What she has feared for herself (that the family might name and recognize her newly created differences, that which she has projectively created) now comes to determine how she approaches *their* thought: she *names* this difference in their behavior *their* act of "treating" her. Here then we have her seeing where consciousness *had* been marking what might have been its own limitations as having instead been determined by some principle of *theirs*: so she can in turn see some process of thinking going on for them in these instances which present their "blankness." The Princess's own consciousness then comes to be read as a reaction *to* their action upon it; furthermore, she can now see that they have been *re-writing* what she expresses *as* her reaction, rather than anticipating the meaning of her expressions. In re-thinking the accumulations within her own consciousness as having been determined by their coordinated similarities, her consciousness comes to be an instantiation of what we can identify as, in the pragmatist's sense, the *value* of analogical thinking, "authored" as it is by Amerigo and Charlotte. Even as Maggie's consciousness has worked to construct by way of its own forms, it has suspended its own legibility (avoiding self-reference) until it can serve as the means by which another consciousness can be expressed—this though seems to only occur for it in a retrospective reconstruction, occasioned by an encounter with what it perceives to be a limitation on its method. Consciousness can then come to see what it *has* constructed within itself as the context in which this other process—the method of consciousness implemented by Charlotte and Amerigo—has *made* some difference. However, if it were then to finally express itself at this point, the "name" it would give to consciousness would be one in which consciousness would be generally absolving itself of its own responsibility, made as it is to appear the effect of someone

else's thought process. Furthermore, Charlotte and Amerigo's method of re-writing has ensured that any expression would be kept down on Maggie's part—they keep her from "speaking" because they can so arrange that her variations come to be an expression of their "equilibrium," their usual way of living together. This occurs not only in their reactions to her, which appear to anticipate what she will say, but also insofar as they can arrange context so that whatever difference she expresses can appear to be part of only another way of expressing the "special 'form'" (*GB* 317) of their lives. So, for example, when Maggie begins to spend all of her time with Charlotte, Amerigo's "instinct for relations prompted him to immediately to meet and match the difference," as he in turn comes to spend his time with Adam. They act on their context so that any expressed difference the Princess might be introducing to their relations is neutralized in terms of its significance. Nevertheless, the Princess, having seen the process that they have set upon *her* and how it has come to be explanatory and determinative of what her consciousness has produced, considers again *this* limitation as something which she must in turn work beyond, demonstrate some difference that *she* might make. In doing so, she submits herself again to an experience and a process of her consciousness in which she cannot be assured that what she has come to notice and ascertain about the "method" of the other two really *has* worked upon her in the way she has figured it.

II. The Assistance of Novel Form and the Luxurious Immersion in Experience

The Princess's in-the-moment experience of consciousness, as she engages in expressions of her excessive self-difference, has been read as unknowing as to where it might distinguish between its projection and its reception—instead, it experiences something like what the others have created as the social context of other consciousnesses, even if by a method of its own; it is

made to feel simultaneously limitless as it cannot tell where it begins and another consciousness ends, and insignificant, as everything seems to "work" when it tests its own absence. Whatever process might be witnessed here as the Princess's own avoids being assigned reference as such by Maggie herself, who fears that she has no cause for such self-variation and is thereby producing inferior values in the family picture. It also is prevented from coming to significant expression by Charlotte and Amerigo, who make sure that any difference which might be noticed is made to seem only a renewed expression of their "equilibrium." In other words, both the Princess herself and the two lovers, in preventing a consciousness forming itself in this way from claiming the significance of its own expressions, present problems for what we might understand as a representation of it that could have some value—after all, Maggie, in this process, initially seems to "do" very little for the two spouses, who seem to carry on as before. The scene of the "first shock of complete perception," in its use of the narrator, prefigures how her consciousness comes to be exhibited to Amerigo so that he can recognize how he might represent it to himself in a way that will have some value. Notably, the narrator's obtrusive presence is understood as an instance of novel form in the *Prefaces*, a "mode of treatment" that serves as evidence of some "instinct" on the part of the author, in which the "given help of some other conscious and confessed agent" functions to "enrich" the novel itself—that is, the narrator aids in ensuring that the representation of characters can have some value for the reader who speaks in the *Prefaces.* (*AN* 328) The argument in this section will be that Maggie uses techniques that function in a way comparable to novel form so that, in the scene in which Amerigo witnesses the breaking of the golden bowl, she can demonstrate to her husband what difference re-thinking his thought about *her* could make for him.

The Princess's in-the-moment experience of consciousness is expressed simultaneously with some of the future revisions to which its circumstances and new recognitions will subject it. The novel does this in part by way of a narrator, who can speak, *as* he seemingly immerses himself in her experiencing consciousness, with the authority of knowing the future moment in which her retrospective reflection will illuminate the differences she has noticed in Charlotte and Amerigo, such that she can read them in terms of the significance of a "whole impression."[9] When she comes to integrate her own consciousness by reading it as an effect of what the others have done to her, she appears then to incorporate a narrator-like figure into her consciousness, made to appear by the narrative as if it has been there all along, as some dormant potential:

> … the prime impression had remained, in the manner of a spying servant, on the other side of the barred threshold; a witness, availing himself, in time, of the lightest pretext to re-enter. It was as if he had found this pretext in her observed necessity of comparing—comparing the obvious common elements in her husband's and her stepmother's ways of now 'taking' her. (*GB* 329)

However, we can distinguish between the experience that Maggie undergoes prior to this moment, assisted to expression by the narrator, and the one that she ultimately comes to read into the past on her own. In her own in-the-moment experience (prior to her realization of what the others have done to her), she resists the claim that all she comes to see is attributable to her own consciousness—if her excessive self-difference were merely a manifestation of variation with meaning determined entirely by her own consciousness, it could no longer be the social offer which she endeavors to make it. Meanwhile, she engages and experiences the *risk* of the possible limitlessness and expansiveness of her own inconsistent consciousness, as its continued

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[9] This has been called "analeptic prolepsis" by Dorrit Cohn, in her article "'The First Shock of Complete Perception': The Opening Episode of *The Golden Bowl*, Volume II." So we can note his intrusive presence in the following lines, for example: "She was to remember afterwards something that had passed between them on this… he had perhaps also for a moment hesitated… and she was to preserve, as I say, the memory of the smile with which he had [responded to her]. Such things, as I say, were to come back to her—they played, through her full after-sense, like lights on the whole impression." (*GB* 312)

insistence on difference might be projective rather than responsive. The narrator anticipates that this experience *will* come to form some state of consciousness to come—such that the in-the-moment experience of potential limitlessness can be understood as "limited" by his representation of it at least in terms of its operation under some influence it does not know, one that will work *beyond* the limitations it writes for itself—but he meanwhile allows the expression of experience to avoid self-reference, by using his own presence to communicate that consciousness works in ignorance of what is to come. He dissociates himself from his own "immersion" in the Princess's experiencing consciousness, to "mark" moments in terms of their future significance, to anticipate how these moments will be re-written within the Princess's own consciousness. He provisionally links these moments with what are sometimes claimed as his "own" metaphors ("might I multiply my metaphors") or images, such that his own discourse appears potentially replaceable by what the Princess, at the conclusion of the "first shock of complete perception," might come to yield as the terms of her consciousness.

However, his discourse does not fully anticipate everything that will come to pass: his expressions only temporarily substitute for *something like* how she will come to read it, as the limitation that the others have set upon her. The terms that the narrator offers then are potentially insufficient or inadequate—possibly only indicators of *his* own difference from Maggie, his possible limitation in terms of what he can "know" of her consciousness. (This insufficiency seems to be pointed out in the *Prefaces*, rather than the novel itself—here I mean to indicate only that it presents at least the potential to be read in such terms.) His own excessive presence—the obtrusive emphasis on an "I" who is not the subject of the novel, an "unwarranted" and "unintroduced" participant as the prefacer puts it—can be read as an indicator of the potential distinction we can make between "the creative power otherwise so veiled and

disembodied" (*AN* 327) and the central character. Yet, at the same time, that there might be a difference between how Maggie herself constellates the significance of "the first shock of complete perception" at the end of this scene and how the narrator has expressed how she *would* experience it allows us to consider what Maggie's own "reading" might not have accounted for—his own discourse then might still be beyond the meanings she has been able to account for as an effect of what the others have done to her, one that still anticipates some future significance that Maggie herself does not yet know of. So, while Maggie's perspective seems to "catch up" with that of the narrator at the end of the first thirty pages of Book II, we see later on that this might not have been the case: in the scene of the broken golden bowl, Maggie returns to her "impression" of Amerigo in her opening move once again, and she comes, at this later point, to definitively "know how hugely expert she had been made" by her vision of Amerigo's expression after his trip to Matcham. (*GB* 432) For the reader, the effect of this is that we *experience* the potential indistinction between consciousnesses even while knowing that we ought to be able to make some distinction; we cannot exactly draw a line between what counts as the anticipating projection of the narrator and the experiencing consciousness of the protagonist. It is in this way that we are sharing in something *like* Maggie's own experience of consciousness from within *our* "immersion" in the narrator's perspective on the novel, something that at least has the potential to insist on seeing (and eventually making) differences and figuring points of limitation, while being made to sense the "risk" of accumulating instead its own self-varying projections. In the *Prefaces*, this experience, apparently had by the prefacer who becomes a "curious critic" of his own works, is taken as evidence of *authorial* consciousness, as this author forms "attaching young lives and characters"; so the prefacer speaks of the "general privilege of

the artist," as he "values it, all sublimely and perhaps a little fatuously, for itself—as the great extension, beyond all others, of experience and of consciousness." (*AN* 29)[10]

If we read this experience (the reader or prefacer's "immersion" in authorial consciousness by way of the narrator) along the same terms that the narrator has offered to the Princess, assisting as he does in expressing such unknowing experience as working in view of some limitation it might yet overcome and anticipating some value it will achieve, we could engage in a practice that resembles the narrator's own to understand how these offered terms have only been *the author's* presentation of *his* experience of his own excessive self-difference for another consciousness. This is what I read to be the project of the *Prefaces* in how it reads novel form in general. The prefacer, who both immerses himself in his past consciousness and presents his own difference from this point of view (such that he almost seems to be in an interpersonal "relationship" to it, as Eve Sedgwick puts it,[11] as if his former self were another person), assists the author (like the narrator aids Maggie) in providing the terms by which provisions made for characters by way of novel form can be read as expressions of the "growth" of authorial consciousness. In a way that I will elaborate on in the next section of this chapter, the prefacer reads the act of writing novels as the author's expressive hypothesis that a certain "germ" (which

[10] The structure of this passage, from the preface to *The American,* is quite complicated; my reading here glosses over some of the details for reasons of economy. The "luxurious immersion" of one consciousness in another seems first of all to be the experience that the prefacer can have *because* he actually is the same person as the author; he can recuperate the "attendant facts" of what authorial consciousness experienced because it was a state of his past consciousness. But the way this experience "grows up" and is "formed" is then compared to the way "young lives and characters" have been formed. So when he speaks of the "general privilege of the artist," he appears to be speaking both of the author's immersion in the consciousness of character, and of the prefacer's immersion in authorial consciousness. While this would seem to be specific as a reading effect only to James himself, I understand the prefacer as standing in for what *could* happen for a reader, if he decides to "take" the *Prefaces* and the novels in a certain way, as representing to him the value of authorial consciousness which he could "assist" to expression.

[11] Eve Sedgwick, in her reading of the *Prefaces* as a performance of queer identity through shame, has noted the way in which James creates a space across which he relates to his younger self and his novels (or the characters in them)—characterizing his relation to his past as if it were "a relation*ship,* intersubjective as it is intergenerational." This distance is "relished" and even "eroticized" for her; what he can establish here seems to even motivate the project of the *Prefaces.* ("Queer Performativity: Henry James's *The Art of the Novel*," 7-8)

will "grow" into characterological consciousness) has some value; the author then seeks to use the "depths" of his "own mind," (*GB* 221) his "heterogeneous back-shop" (*GB* 47), to help bring this value to expression. But this author meanwhile must engage the risk of his own self-reference in a way that resembles Maggie's journey, as he is the "creative power" who might very well be projecting whatever he conceives to be characterological consciousness out of his own capacity for self-variation. He instead seeks to offer his own excessive self-difference to assist in the expression of characterological consciousness, so that his own consciousness can be read into a novel only insofar as it has become the means for expression for some other consciousness. The prefacer meanwhile, in what I will read as an emulation of the narrator's "assistance" given to Maggie Verver, anticipates *for* the author that these acts of composition, now viewed in terms of acts of consciousness, will be able to achieve something of its *own* value in its accumulated expressed moments of self-difference. Authorial consciousness, as it offers its assistance to the Princess by way of the narrator and other instances of novel form, can be read in the same terms that Maggie's is; this then means that we could anticipate *for* it, as the *Prefaces* do for the authorial self and by way of its "theory" of the novel, that it is working in view of some limitation that is yet to come—that it will be able to achieve something of all its accumulated expressed moments of self-difference is what the speculative "interest" of the prefacer assures for it. Meanwhile, authorial consciousness comes to be written by the prefacer as the place where we could find the context in which Maggie's form of consciousness as well as those of other characters will have made a difference, insofar as *its* legibility for itself, as it reads itself "in" its novels, seems to be deferred until it can first figure its own consciousness in terms of what certain circumstances and the impression made upon it by the "germ" have done to it.

Maggie comes to employ Fanny Assingham in a similar capacity as the narrator, in the way she represents herself to her husband. Her deviations from custom, when they are *not* taken up by Charlotte and Amerigo as social offers for some unexpected expression on their part (which they never are), can be made to appear, by way of her friend's assistance, as merely repeated playful elaborations on their usual way of living together. So she thinks of Fanny as allowing her to appear as if she is merely going "a-maying," as if the presence of this inconsequential social companion can give the illusion to the others that her own consciousness is merely engaged in the metaphorical burial of her former way of thinking (particularly insofar as she liked to play up how easy the liberal form of their lives was, in contrast to the lives of others). As Maggie thinks of it, Fanny allows her to "escape from being herself suspected of suspicion," with her "power to cover, to protect and, as might be, even showily to represent her—represent, that is, her relation to the form of life they were all actually living." (*GB* 372) Fanny's presence, in other words, allows the Princess to avoid the kind of self-reference that would need to take responsibility for *all* her introduced differences before Maggie can conceive of what they might indicate other than her own inventiveness; so when the Princess asks her to name her a "low-minded little pig," as if requesting a judgment of consciousness in terms of what it might be unjustifiably introducing into her father's aesthetic, her friend refuses to do so. Maggie's use of Fanny, who gives her the courage "not to be afraid *not* to speak," (*GB* 386) allows her to defer the moment at which she would have to take responsibility for all the differences she has come to notice in her consciousness until she has constituted this superior value, and become the "heroine" of the novel as Fanny wants to see her. As Fanny tells her husband Bob, she thinks of herself as "gaining" Maggie "time." (*GB* 396) Further, Fanny assists in representing the limitations of her consciousness to the others in a way that the Princess does not know about,

insofar as both Charlotte and Amerigo believe that their friend would not speak of the secret history she knows that they have had together.[12]

But she then secretly attests to a process in which Maggie is coming to work *beyond* this limitation, allowing for a "record" of what changes the Princess may be undergoing to be indicated, as the latter confides in her friend what she has begun to suspect. In lieu of telling the Princess the possible explanatory cause for her suspicions (that secret history between Charlotte and Amerigo), Fanny provides the provisional links of her own "interest" in the Princess—her faith and belief that what she will constitute, in her difference from her father, some value *beyond* and possibly better than their former way of living. Her conversations can be read as part of the record given in the novel for what a treatment of consciousness as something worthy of representation—before this value is constituted—can appear to be. Fanny meanwhile enables the *expression* of Maggie's consciousness (both to the reader, and to Amerigo and Charlotte) by providing such a representation of a distinction between what her consciousness has to work with and what it does not yet know, by providing a view of the limit towards which it reaches, even while the Princess herself experiences her consciousness as potentially unlimited, as if she is to go on and on without knowing whether her suspicion is invented or reasoned. As I read this, by preventing Maggie from having explicit knowledge of their history, Fanny observes from behind a "barred threshold" such that Maggie's thoughts and suspicions—the creation of her "depth" (as

[12] Fanny Assingham, as a *ficelle*, has often been understood as the "reader's friend" (as James describes Maria Gostrey of *The Ambassadors*)—she assists in making the moral problems of the novel intelligible, and she indicates the reader's situation as a participating, responsible interpreter of the events. See for example J. Hillis Miller's *Literature as Conduct*, particularly pages 239-240. My reading points to how Fanny is employed as something *like* what we come to recognize as novel form by Maggie in her representation of herself to the others in the confines of the fictional world; this is not at odds with the interpretation of her as a point of identification with the reader—in fact, she serves as an instance of novel form that provides continuity to our acts of identification in the novel, insofar as through her, we seem to be identifying with a position created in the novel for a character, *and* with a principle of composition that will help us read the novelist's representation of his own "marks" of consciousness, given by the novel.

Fanny calls it) and the intensity of her passion—appear to Maggie still as possibly her own projected reflections onto the spouses. At the end of the "first shock of complete perception," she still cannot be assured that she has ascertained any reality of Amerigo and Charlotte's thoughts, since what she has taken as an encounter with a limitation as such cannot be confirmed after the fact.

The links provided by Fanny come to be partially replaced—they are only anticipations of the meaning to be achieved, and Fanny is left behind to "cast about her for the links she missed," once Maggie discovers the golden bowl and the history it has to tell. When the shopkeeper visits the Princess out of guilt for having made her overpay for the golden bowl, he sees a portrait of Charlotte and Amerigo and recounts the moment of the pair's secret outing. The shopkeeper's function in the novel is similar to that of Fanny; he is also a "witness" to a hidden past of what Maggie has not known, one who can play a part in providing some links—such links come to surface by his "interest" in Maggie. Having been put in possession of knowledge of a previous, intimate relation between the two spouses by way of the shopkeeper's story, seeing where the limitations of her consciousness *have* been in terms of her lack of knowledge, Maggie can finally explain all her suspicions as attributable to that which they have kept hidden—as if all her metaphorical contrasts, the entire mechanism of her newly produced consciousness, had been initiated by a suspicion of a truth present all along. "Amerigo knew Charlotte—more than I ever dreamed," she informs Fanny. Seeing this disparity between the truth that Amerigo had presented to her, and the truth of what he and Charlotte were, Maggie begins to read all her accumulated perceptions as consequences of this hidden sum, a baseness that had been present all along, disguised beneath the picture of their happy lives together, one which could explain the changes in her consciousness as caused by their transgressions: "If such things were already then

between them they make all the difference for possible doubt of what may have been between them since. If there had been nothing before there might be explanations. But it makes to-day too much to explain. I mean to explain away," Maggie tells Fanny. (*GB* 422) However, Maggie actually gets this wrong. Fanny explains to her that, even though the two spouses had a past together, they married with the best intentions: she allows Maggie to see that she is projecting *too* much of all the developed differences of her consciousness onto the depths that they have kept disguised, as if her consciousness were *only* a consequence of this hidden truth. Fanny, as one of the instances of novel form that has functionally provided the distinction between Maggie's knowledge and her imagined suspicions, here works in a kind of editorial capacity in view of what can be known from the shopkeeper's story, where she is able to provide some of the links and explanations that cannot wholly be attributed to an original transgression, a treacherous plan that had been hatched from before the time of Maggie's marriage. This allows Maggie to re-read her produced consciousness then as a matter of a difference *she* had made, as beginning with the new difference she had seen between herself and her father when she had realized her marriage had created a new situation for him. "Then it's a good deal my fault—if everything really began so well?" she asks Fanny.

In other words, Fanny shows that the experience of being able to work beyond the "barred threshold" of something that can be read as a past limitation of consciousness, while it might help explain *some* of the differences consciousness has noticed by attributing it to a historical cause, does not absolve it of the possibility of its *own* invention. While Amerigo's secret can be seen as having made a difference to Maggie's consciousness, her "growth" can also be attributed to an idea that *she* had had and a difference she had made, when she had recognized her father as a "distinct thing," when she had tried to cover this difference she had made to his life in his

"personal precinct" having been made vacant by her marriage to the Prince. (*GB* 114) While consciousness might be explained in terms of some differences made by others to oneself, it also makes something *of* these differences. Being able to see that for which consciousness has been responsible, as opposed to the changes it has undergone by way of its historical receptivity, comes to be legible by way of a comparison of the provisions made by *different* instances of novel form, which have helped to also "mark" what might have been only projections rather than historical evidence—here, Fanny's meddlesome interest in the affairs of the foursome and the coincidence of the shopkeeper's interest in Maggie and memory of Charlotte and Amerigo.

We have here then Maggie figuring for herself what the value of her consciousness may have been, in the difference it made to their lives together and in her recognition of her own responsibility in what their situation has become. However, the *persistence* of such value depends on her ability to communicate to her husband that what she has been able to thus constitute as her own consciousness, given both her recognition of the difference she has made to him and the value his own consciousness has had for her, might still provide something for him. The representation of the "social value" of her own consciousness here, in other words, would entail allowing him to experience anew what he has been to her and to get him to reconceive what she still might be for him. She does this by making him reconsider his own past consciousness in terms of his *limited* conception of her thought about him—the problematic conception of which has been "recorded" in the figure of the golden bowl for him—as well as his limited conception of her, a representation which Maggie has seemed to promote with her "use" of Fanny. Notably, our acquaintance with Adam Verver's consciousness in the previous chapter of this dissertation allowed us to see how the precious object of the "gilt cup" adequately represented Mr. Verver's approach to his son-in-law. It is introduced by the dealer to Amerigo

in a way that accords with Mr. Verver's essentializing aesthetic: its appearance indicates its substance and value ("as formed of solid gold it was impressive"); it is named a "possession" of the dealer ("My Golden Bowl" he emphasizes); and it presents itself for metaphorical comparison, in a way that highlights some ways of seeing it *as* (it is a goblet, a cup, a drinking-vessel, and a bowl). In spite of its authoritative declaration of value in its rich appearance, the Prince immediately "knows" that it is flawed—we have here something that seems to substitute for his judgment of the Ververs' way of thinking about him, a judgment which brings about his moment of crisis in the opening of the novel, insofar as he cannot figure their representation of him as something that would have some *value*. The bowl becomes a "*ricordo*" insofar as his judgment of it (that it has no value) comes to stand in for the thought that he does not have about the Ververs (he cannot figure how they conceive of value)—it comes in this way to indicate a moment that can be returned to as a demonstration of where the limitations of his consciousness had been. The situation in which the Prince originally encountered the bowl can be read as marking some possibility that he had excluded from his thinking because of an inherent limitation of his analogical thinking. His method was understood as trying to "build" on *positive* relations only—choosing to see through one relation in particular, his relation to Charlotte for example, while presenting many possibilities for further relations that might be illuminated, also entails exclusions. The choice to have certain *positive* relations or see primarily through them, such as his marriage to Maggie, ought to simultaneously exclude other relations—namely, his intimacy with Charlotte. When he sees the golden bowl again, this time with Maggie present, we can see him encountering some perception that he has previously had, one whose meaning he had not explored and which he had not really allowed to be retained by his consciousness, as he is "reminded… unmistakably though confusedly, of something known, some other unforgotten

image." (*GB* 432) More specifically, if he were to further consider the meaning of this outing with Charlotte, he would have to contend with the possibility that it is a breach of Maggie's trust.

The scene is doubly reminiscent of that which he had been *unable* to think, or perhaps what he had *almost* thought, because of its incorporation of Fanny Assingham: as discussed in the previous chapter, he had once turned to Fanny during his own opening crisis on the eve of his marriage, as if needing her intermediary relation to the Ververs, and her own relation to him, in order to see *them* better. In her smashing of the bowl, she returns him to this prior moment of crisis *and* the memory of his inadequate vision, as if demonstrating to him again that her refusal to help him see had been a *challenge* to his consciousness—and that he must now surmount that obstacle by learning to see by way of the cracks, by way of contrasts and exclusions rather than similarities. As the narrator tells us, Amerigo's interaction with Fanny allows for "something that took up that tale and that might have been a redemption of pledges [between himself and Fanny] then exchanged," as his friend then "simply referred him to his wife." (*GB* 431) It is as if what she had refused to give him previously—guidance as to how to approach the Ververs—is now being given in a negative form. Her guidance is to *not* provide guidance, to show him where he himself must instead look for reference—to his wife. Further, Fanny has been "employed" by the Princess as a way of promoting his idea that his wife has all the while been the same, so that her declaration as she smashes the bowl against the marble floor, "Whatever you meant by it—and I don't want to know now—has ceased to exist," which Amerigo arrives just in time to witness, points to the insufficiency of the Prince's previous representation of his wife. Fanny's lesson then can also be taken as indicating that if he is to come to see beyond his previous limitations, he must start from a recognition that his conception of Maggie has been

incomplete, and that revising *this* representation might in turn allow him to expand his own consciousness.

When he happens upon Fanny breaking the golden bowl, then, he is being subjected to a renewed experience of his former judgment of the object as a "record" of his previous, unexplored thought, alongside a realization that his own conception of Maggie needs to be subject to revision. When Fanny Assingham leaves the two alone, Maggie makes him observe a process in which she appears to reconstruct the golden bowl, as she "occup[ies] herself as with the attempt to fit the morsels together." (*GB* 433) As he is doubly reminded of two previous instances in which he had failed to think beyond the limitations of his consciousness, Maggie reveals to him that "she *knew,* and her broken bowl was proof that she knew." Here we can read her as establishing that these past limitations of his consciousness, demonstrated in this distinction she can show him now between what he had thought and the point beyond which he had *refused* to think, has been something *she* has been able to think by way of. That this *has* been the "barred threshold" of his consciousness, she demonstrates has made a difference *to her*: so she wants to say to him, "Take it, take it, take all you need of it; arrange yourself so as to suffer least, or to be, at any rate, least distorted and disfigured. Only *see*, see that *I* see, and make up your mind, on this new basis, at your convenience." (*GB* 434) She is showing that while he has thought her ignorant, as if what has been a limitation to his consciousness had worked as one for herself, she has been able to get beyond the "cracks," to build by way of it, to make herself *different* from it. "My only point now… is the difference, as I say, that it may make for you. Your knowing was—from the moment you did come in—all I had in view… Your knowing that I've ceased… to be as I was. *Not* to know." (*GB* 447) In showing him that his representation of her needs to be revised, it is as if she can exhibit to him what *he* has been to her, in lieu of what

he had thought had been her representation of him. Not only does she show her superior knowledge of what he has thought (about the Ververs' way of seeing him), but she also shows herself in a process of constructing something by way of these cracks. If it appears to be the same as it once was, presenting some appearance of its aesthetic value, it is sustained only by way of the Princess's own labor: so we are told, the "bowl might still… have passed for uninjured," when Maggie holds its shattered pieces together with her hands. In showing that the object might appear the same but *be* different, she demonstrates to him that if he had all along thought of her representation of him as consistently the same, then it is only because his own conception of what *her* consciousness has done and has been, particularly his conception of her thought about him, was insufficient. In the scene of the broken bowl then, he is made to see *the difference made for her* both by what he has and by what he has failed to think—she has not only been able to discover the "circle" of his consciousness in its limitations, which he had previously failed to recognize for himself as such, but she has also been able to grow her consciousness *by way of these limitations* and *beyond* them. So it is that she believes she is demonstrating to him that he must "look… at the truth that still survives in that smashed evidence and at the even more remarkable appearance that I'm not such a fool as you supposed me. Look at the possibility that, since I *am* different, there may still be something in it for you—if you're capable of working with me to get that out." (*GB* 437) Maggie demonstrates the value that he has had to *her*, and what she has been in turn been able to make *of* everything he has done to her. Yet, at the same time, what this at best can show him is that she is different from what he had thought she was—he can only comprehend what value her consciousness might have for him by subjecting himself to an experience and method of consciousness that emulates hers.

So it is that she returns him to re-evaluate "these three months" in which she had begun to suspect his affair, pointing to the illusory "cover" that Fanny has given her, as if demonstrating to him that he must re-interpret the provisional links of a history he thought he had known the meaning of. Further, in this scene, she offers him an encounter with that which has worked as a limitation of his consciousness as a moment by which he can re-interpret his history—as if she is inviting him to re-read that which he and Charlotte had thought of as their "safety" in terms of the distinctions he had failed to make—the points of non-relation he had failed to make operative. She is thus inviting him to "think," (*GB* 433) as the narrative makes clear ("he would have to think—this she knew even better still"), to integrate what has been a "barred threshold" for him so that he can expand on his own consciousness beyond its previous limitation. As she points out to him how he has all the while had "*two* relations" with Charlotte, she is making him re-interpret—"re-arrange"—everything that he *has* thought and done according to the distinction he must now recognize should have been operative. She thus offers him, in subjecting him to an experience of what his past limitations have been to her, the value *she* can have for him, insofar as now he can gain, by way of her demonstration here, a perspective on what difference his limited consciousness has made to their relations: namely, his failure to work by way of seeing and thinking about the exclusions entailed in his analogical thinking has resulted in his insufficient conception of his wife. Amerigo's task would then be to demonstrate to *her* that her changed consciousness—changed by way of *him* and some failure of his own way of thinking—can be made valuable to himself. This is how Maggie interprets his gesture of lying to Charlotte about the reason he breaks off their intimacy. As she reads him:

> I put him in possession of the difference; the difference, made, about me, by the fact that I hadn't been… too stupid to have arrived at knowledge. He had to see that I'm changed for him—quite changed from the idea of me that he had so long been going on with. It became a

> question then of his really taking in the change—and what I now see is that he is doing so. (*GB* 455)

He demonstrates that he can go beyond his previous limitation—that he can think by way of the "cracks." He does this by learning to *exclude* Charlotte—further, he does this in such a way that the difference he introduces into their social situation is open in its reference, insofar as his mistress now is left unknowing as to why he has broken off their affair. Yet, what he also seems to be expressing to his wife by way of this open reference is that his own consciousness is still insufficient to know all that she has known; a new "necessity" is born in him in that he cannot explain what he himself has become to her. So the Princess senses that for the first time, her husband would have "a new need of her, a need which was in fact being born between them in these very seconds." Each of his expressions can then be taken as giving the Princess some space to declare some meanings of her own, as *his* social offer to her: "She never, at present, thought of what Amerigo might be intending, without the reflection, by the same stroke, that, whatever this quantity, he was leaving still more to her own ingenuity." Thus we can read him as engaging in an emulation of what she had tried to do in her opening gesture to him—offering his own consciousness in excess of itself, in a way that seems to be a social offer to *her* consciousness, as he acts in a way that has yet to have its full meaning constituted for it.

III. The "Growth" of Consciousness in The Prefaces

We can now return to the curiosities of presentation in the *Prefaces* with which I began the previous chapter of this dissertation. In what way is the "growth" of the "whole operative consciousness" of the author exhibited in *The New York Edition*? How do James's anecdotal impressions of the circumstances of writing and publication, given alongside the "terms" of

novel "theory," serve to advance a certain kind of representation and practice of consciousness? And what might this tell us about Jamesian novelistic aesthetics, and what the "terms" of novel "theory" might do for its value? The means by which Maggie begins to think of the social problem in the novel—the question of her own contributive value to the family picture and her conception of something unknown about others—can be compared to the way that the novelist approaches the act of composition, as he is represented in the *Prefaces*. She begins to develop her consciousness by way of her difference from her father in his essentializing aesthetic; likewise, as I show in this section, the novelist is portrayed as engaging in an activity of thinking about his difference from other art forms and other novelists as he writes his novels. The process by which Maggie seeks to "offer" her consciousness to another and the way she "uses" Fanny to do so—which, as I have demonstrated, comes to be a matter of figuring the value of another consciousness to it while expressing the experience of this method of thinking—is comparable to how the author is written as engaging with novel form for the expression of a "germ." The novels themselves then, as the *Prefaces* read them, are made over into the expression of the value of characterological consciousness, insofar as the prefacer can express *authorial* consciousness as the experiential context in which these characters have been seen to have made some kind of difference. Many other critics have identified Maggie's drama of consciousness specifically with the act of aesthetic composition—her consciousness and the novel itself is, on these terms, understood as helping James to express something about the power he saw in narrative fiction.[13] My own reading can be distinguished from these insofar as it is not Maggie who assumes the subordinate position—as an aid to the novelist in his figuration of the problem of novel form—

[13] Bersani, for example, sees her point of view as representative of the artist's; her activity is synonymous with the "designs" of art. ("The Jamesian Lie," 146). J. Hillis Miller sees her as inaugurating a "fiction" on the basis of whose rules everyone else must act. (*Literature as Conduct* 287)

but rather, it is the novelist who assists the character, insofar as he becomes the context in which this consciousness will have made some difference. And it is only *in* this act of assistance that he constitutes his own consciousness.[14]

However, answering the question of novelistic value as if it were a matter of demonstrating that an author has had a significant experience of another consciousness describes only part of the project of the *Prefaces*: the "high price" of the novel, as noted in the previous chapter, might have to be "paid," if in writing about the versatility of the author's consciousness as it becomes the medium for another's expression, we lose the sense of what we might consider the author's own originality—the difference that the author, by way of his novel, could show that his consciousness could make for a reader's consciousness. The value of the novel, therefore, must be sustained in another act of consciousness that could in turn be made over into the contextualizing consciousness in which the author, having been read "into" his novels as presenting something of his own thinking and experience of consciousness, will in turn be seen to have made a difference. The question of aesthetic merit of the novel, having once been translated into a question of the difference that characterological consciousness might have made to authorial consciousness, can then be read as sustained by the prefacer in what *his* consciousness might be offering, *as* it employs the "terms" of novel "theory," to "assist" in the expression of the experience of authorial consciousness. That we, as readers, could engage with

[14] My reading therefore has much in common with Dorothy Hale's understanding of James's "social formalism." For her, his social formalism is characterized by the belief that novelistic representation itself is the "source of a social experience," even as the social element (as the "experiential interaction between human subjects") comes to be written about as a "formal property of the novel." (*Social Formalism,* 14) The novel then is "about" the "successful instantiation of the object's interesting identity" ("almost a subjectivity," as she says—and this object must be able to appear as having its own independent existence) by the author, who must assist the object to realize its value by making it into the subject of his art, but who, on the other hand, cannot be so obtrusive that the object's interestingness appears to be only an effect of his capacity to be interested. It is only after the "successful instantiation" of the identity of the novelistic subject then, that James can return to his novels and consider them as expressions of an interesting object in their own right—the object of authorial identity, once it has already been socialized by way of what it has done *for* the character. (*Social Formalism*, 37)

the prefacer by offering him *our* assistance to expression of *his* experience, allows us to participate in the "whole chain of relation and responsibility" within the "religion of doing" that maintains the value of the novel, as James puts it in his final preface. "The more we consider it the more we feel that the prose picture can never be at the end of its tether until it loses the sense of what it can do." (*FN* 35)

In a way similar to *The Golden Bowl*'s depiction of Maggie's initial unknowing imitation and metaphorical burial of her difference from her father, the *Prefaces* invoke the young novelist as thinking about and approaching his own task by way of a metaphor to the dramatist or the painter. But what appears to be an identic similarity, between, for example, the artist approaching his canvas and the author's beginning to write a novel, also ends up figuring the "painter of life" in an unusual activity: he comes to be seen as an "embroiderer" making "perforations" into the canvas by way of his "needle." (*AN* 5) In another preface, James depicts the young author using his "intellectual nostril" to detect the "fragrance" of the inspirational germ for his "paintings." (*AN* 141) In a metaphor of the drama to the novel, the young author sits at his writing desk as if "occupy[ing] the proportionately ample interests of the mightiest dramas," such that the "fruit" of his "tolerably copious artistry" appears as the "inter-acts" between scenes, when the curtain is down and the scenery shifted. (*AN* 212) Just as Maggie's previously hidden differences from her father come to be asserted by way of some strange appearances in the space of metaphorical contrast, so too do the figurations of the novelist as an artist or as a dramatist often produce atypical images—a painter embroidering and smelling his work of art, a dramatist concerned with the technicalities of his theatrical production between scenes and behind the curtain rather than the action of the play itself. Like Maggie's embellished pagoda and her ivory tower viewed as metaphors for the family picture, the appeal to terms from painting and the theater recognizes

some associational similarities between these arts and what James sees in his novels and in his act of composition, while it simultaneously figures some outlandish associations and exclusions—notable by way of their eccentricity, their deviation from identic conceptions—that allow him to refer to something about the art of the novel that is still unknown. The author, in the act of composition, is working with some impression that has been made upon him, by way of his encounter with the "germ," and he has a hypothesis that this particle taken from life experience has some value of its own, one which he only needs to *lend* some expression to. What constitutes this value however is unknown to him; it must be subject to a process of testing—as it is described in the *Prefaces,* the act of writing the novel as if it were an act of consciousness—in order to confirm hypotheses about what is really to be seen "in" the germ.

So it is that the strange appearances made in the space of metaphorical contrast help James articulate his theory of the "germ"—a generalization about what happens to the seed of inspiration as it comes to be realized as the "subject" and "idea" of particular novels and the entire process of novelistic composition as the value of the "germ" is tested and experimented with. The comparison between the novelist and the painter helps James figure the negative nature of the "germ," the thing encountered that was thought to be interesting enough to be the subject of the novel. For example, the painter who becomes an "embroiderer" in the preface to *Roderick Hudson* can be said to appear again in the preface to *Spoils of Poynton*, as someone whose imagination has been "pricked" with the "needle-like quality" of some experience or overheard situation, as if the germinal impression were the original "hole" that "invite[s], solicit[s], persuade[s]" the author to begin his process of composition. (*AN* 6) It solicits by virtue of its production of the sense that something is missing, that something in this interesting object has yet to be given expression, much as Maggie senses that she is missing something about what

Charlotte and Amerigo think.[15] From within such images, James recognizes that the author only has his own experience to draw from, such that his relation to the germ is that of letting it play out within the context of his own consciousness, which provides the "soil" for the growth of the seed. "One never really chooses one's general range of vision," he admits. (*AN* 201) The personal states of his characters, "the embarrassments and predicaments studied," can only be "intelligibly fathered but on his own intimate experience," drawn "preponderantly from the depths of the designer's own mind." (*AN* 221) Once the author has "borrowed his motive" from the object that is to become the novelistic subject, the remaining act of composition comes to be a matter of his "seeing all for himself," as he must "lay together the blocks quarried in the deeps of his imagination and on his personal premises. (*AN* 122) The writer is portrayed then as "representing" in his novels the accumulations of his own consciousness, by way of gathered thoughts of his own, constituted of a "handful of impressions" (*AN* 8).

However, he provides the "relations" within his own consciousness on the basis of the *hypothesis* that something *unknown to him* had yet to be given expression, as indicated by the vision of the negative space created within the "shadow" cast by the original impression. In this way the novelist can "grow" the germ within his own mind with the perspective that the relational associations within his consciousness need to be put to work *for* this unknown, but

[15] J. Hillis Miller has considered this same figure as symptomatically expressing a general "impossibility" of narrative fiction, whereas my own reading treats this figure in terms of a personal effort where the unknown or excluded thing will come to be understood in terms of another person's consciousness. For him, catachresis is the rhetorical term that "names" what is happening for the author by way of this figuration: the artist's "flowers" that he sews onto the canvas are ways of elaborating on that for which there is no actual referent. ("The Figure in the Carpet," 109) The figure itself "breaks down" for him in that it cannot fully carry out, in its spatial logic, the novelist's impossible task of representing the "human story," in terms of how James conceives of it (constituted of infinite relations, with no defined boundaries). In some ways, his reading echoes my own, insofar as he points to the metaphor's deficiency—also, the "impossibility" of narrative, the thing for which there can be no literal name, is the "representation of states of consciousness and interior experience." But my focus is on the social relationality that we can read as being constituted here on the model of what has happened between characters in the novel, while he is interested in some "obedience to the law of the compulsion to repeat which seems intrinsic to signs" (117)—a kind of necessary dynamic given life within the logic of narrative itself.

hypothesized value in the "interesting particle" taken from life. This is explicitly described as a "transfer" and a matter of "transplanting" the germ to another "soil" distinguished from the associations within which it is first encountered. As I have read this in the previous chapter, his own imagination re-constellates the associations within his mind in view of the potential seen within the germ by way of the positive associations of analogical thinking—demonstrating the value that the interesting particle can be made to have for authorial consciousness, insofar as this particle is that which makes a difference to it, helps illuminate it anew. But, because such relations are re-arranged in view of an expression of some element *foreign* and *unknown* to the author's own experience, they must avoid self-reference and pre-determined meaning in advance of the germ's expression of its unknown value by way of them. The author comes to be subordinated to an uncreative function, a "sedentary part," engaged in "ciphering" as a "chief accountant," as he provides possibilities for the "logic" of the germ to be expressed. (*AN* 312) In a way similar to how Maggie sought to provide the terms of expression to something unknown about her husband, we can read the author's act of "matching" the "big piece with the snippet"—finding the right relations from within his own experience through which the germinal impression can best express itself—as a social offer to the object interesting enough to become the subject of the novel, a social offer which often allows the "germ" to go on to actualize itself *as* a depiction of characterological consciousness.[16]

Inversely, the space of metaphorical contrast in a comparison of the drama to the novel allows the author to think of the potential excessiveness of the germ's suggestiveness. Although the *Prefaces* do not always present an exact correlation between the thought of something

[16] As in, for instance, *The Portrait of a Lady*, where the character of Isabel Archer herself is the "wind-blown germ," *What Maisie Knew*, where the "precious particle" is the "small expanding consciousness" of a child, and *The Spoils of Poynton*, in which James considers how Fleda Vetch must have been latent in the original "virus of suggestion."

missing in the germ with the language of painting and the thought of excessiveness with the language of theater, the former does seem, generally speaking, to be enlisted to help the young author to think of that which has yet to be given expression, while the novel-as-drama is associated with "intensity" and "liveliness"—with the germ's potential prodigality. Again, this thought is generated by way of a metaphoric comparison that produces a contrast: in his preface to *The Awkward Age,* he sees the English novel, as it is usually practiced, as "the perfect paradise of the loose end," with "fifty excursions, alternatives, and excrescences" in its exhibitional productions, to the play, characterized by tight "cross-relations" which together make a "tapestry," to which any loose "thread" would be only a "grave dishonour." (*AN* 114) *The Awkward Age* is constructed as if it were a play, as James says—but the very neatness of his formal plan of this novel-as-drama (described as a "neat figure of a circle consisting of small rounds disposed at equal distance from an object" and the "respective divisions of my form to the successive Acts of a Play") allows him to see that his "subject was probably condemned in advance … to almost preposterously appreciative, over-treatment." (*AN* 114) The final result, the finished novel as it has been published, appears to him as a "comparative monster," given the smallness of the original germ. The contrast, then, helps him think of the "germ" as possibly carrying *too* many associations—even though he had anticipated that his seed for this novel would only create a small work, he notes that it had an "unforeseen principle of growth," as the storyteller finds himself "floundering in a deep warm jungle… producing complications beyond reckoning." (*AN* 101) The interesting particle, become subject of the novel, demonstrates its capacity to form within the environment in which it is placed, "a little world of exercise and agitation," (*AN* 121) with *too* many questions to be answered, with *too* many possibilities that could be attached to it. As some seed of inspiration is developed into a story, it reveals that it has

an energy by which "it simply makes for itself," like an "impudent… spoiled child of art." (*AN* 315) Because the germ then potentially provides *too* many possibilities, the author's task must be figured not only in terms of addition but also in terms of exclusions. "The felicity… of the artist's state dwells less, surely, in the further delightful complications he can smuggle in than in those he succeeds in keeping out." (*AN* 312)

When read through the lens of Maggie's method for thinking, the author can be seen as developing his novel by way of producing points of non-relation as a way of conceiving of what his "metaphorical tenor" (the germ itself) might be—more things that he can "keep out" by generating contrasts between what "belongs" to the subject of the novel and what is more properly left out. Notably, what is being "compared," in metaphorical figurations of the novel, the novelist, the artistic process of composition, and the inspirational impression, is variously determined by way of what the germ leaves open as its possible reference. Similar to the way Maggie selected her original point of non-relation by way of a contrast (of their way of living, to the life of others), so too does James often emphasize a certain dramatic situation or moment of crisis as motivating his novel, as opposed to something with a determined identic conception.[17] In writing *Lady Barbarina*, he emphasizes that he had seen, time and again, young American women making the migration eastward to marry into European families, and it is the potential contrast in outlooks that invites his "interest" as a writer, because these contrasts define dramatic situations: "On the interest of *contrasted things* any painter of life and manners inevitably much depends… the dramatic side of human relations consists of course on contrast." (*AN* 199) As we see in *The Awkward Age,* the author, "infinitely addicted" to "noticing" the smallest changes in a

[17] Walter F. Wright has noted that most critics have mistaken the germ for characterological consciousness, but he claims that the germ "is" instead an "incident or situation." In contrast, I am noting the tendency James has to associate the "germ" with the sense of some limitation encountered by consciousness. *The Madness of Art: A Study of Henry James.*

social situation, selects his germ by seeing the crisis created by a young girl, "previously perched aloft," who has come of the age to be "'sitting downstairs." (*AN* 100) But James sees the initially noticed sense of some contrast (indicative of some alteration in the social situation—as the young lady is now sitting downstairs, rather than upstairs) as rather arbitrary—an invitation for his "speculative sense" as he tries to figure out what would happen in such a situation. James finds it less useful to take this contrast as he is given it in experience, but rather he is interested in making something *different* from it. The act of novel writing gets its start on the basis of imagining some *further* difference to the already noted contrast in the instance of *Lady Barbarina*—having noticed the tendency of American women to head eastward, James writes about a European woman who marries an American. It is her "immitigable Anglicism" which is then "thrown into relief" against the "projection of New York elements and objects"—such a contrast, different from the contrastive situation already common in James's time as part of his social situation, prompts the author "to put it to the imaginative test." (*AN* 104) It allows him to see certain associations that his character should have added or attributed to it. But the part of the process that he finds "interesting" for the challenge of novelistic composition is that the character (Lady Barbarina in her "Anglicism") that comes "all of a piece" (as if certain positive associations can be attributed to her character) allows him to see "shades" in the character of Jackson Lemon, the man whom she marries and to whom *she* can now serve as a contrast. In other words, the process of novelistic composition here is "interesting" in that it becomes a matter of imagining more and more differences, created by way of contrasts.

Maggie has been read as engaged in a pragmatic experiment which tests the significance of her own consciousness by way of a presentation of her own absence, alongside a proposition that her own consciousness might be employed *for* the expression of another, in its offer of

excessive self-difference. James, as his own prefacer, sees in the novel an expression of the "quality and capacity" of the "soil" of the author's mind—his "prime sensibility" that can articulate a vision with "freshness," such that the novel becomes a measure of the value of the consciousness of the author, in its ability to present something different and original. But, just as Maggie expresses an attempt to make provisions *for* the consciousness of another, the prefacer also sees authorial activity as the employment of the relations within his mind in service of some other consciousness—authorial consciousness can be "used" because it becomes available for such use by pointing to its own *absence* by way of novel form. So the novel also must be the result of some "*direct* [my emphasis] impression or perception of life"—it needs to become the means of expression for the value of another by way of a "straight" and "sincere" representation of the object. (While the germ is not strictly identifiable as "another consciousness," the compositional practice of expressing what is not known about the germ often comes to be a matter of lending the terms of expression *to* another consciousness.) In other words, the novelist expresses his own original consciousness in his novels, while he offers his own experience as the means for a non-obtrusive representation of something that has not been merely created within his own mind.[18] The *Prefaces* attempt to account for the value of novels in terms of their achievement of both of these goals, even though they might easily be read as opposed to one another. Instead of a straightforward consideration of what is original or valuable in novels as self-expressions of the novelist's consciousness, James presents his past self in terms of

[18] Dorothy J. Hale has a similar reading of the relation between artistic vision and the "interesting particle" whose identity comes to serve as the motive and aim of the novel. She notes the danger that the novelist might be projecting the value of that which he sees onto the germ: "How does the interest of the object, which the artist transforms into her subject, amount to anything more than the artist's projection of a 'sense' that life otherwise lacks?" She shows that James' introduction of the mystery emphasizes his desire to preserve the "alterity" of the object, its status as an "autonomous substance," even as it is the author's own consciousness which becomes the medium of expression (in her terms: it is the author's 'own subjective mediation' which 'becomes the material of alterity, the 'quarter in which the subject most completely expresses itself.'") *Social Formalism*, 33-5.

impressionistic accounts of the scene of writing and publication, notable more often for their *obtrusive* presence as they manifest in specific novels, their tendency to produce or signify errors in his compositions.[19] Meanwhile, accounts of the germ seem to claim that its value is *intrinsic* to it, or at least not given to it by way of the author, even though the story of such value *would* be a "history of the growth of the imagination" of the author, if it could be written. So James reflects on the value of the original germ for *The Portrait of a Lady*, "If the apparition was still all to be placed how came it to be so vivid? … one could answer such a question beautifully, doubtless, if one could do so subtle, if not monstrous, a thing as to write the history of the growth of one's imagination." (*AN* 47) By bringing my reading of Maggie to bear on the *Prefaces,* we can see the way in which a particular experience of authorial consciousness is being presented—an experience of a consciousness *as it is* engaged in a certain formal method that can be likened to the Princess's insistence on difference.

In a way similar to how the Princess again and again improvises and acts strangely as if to offer some space for the expression for her husband or for Charlotte, the author is depicted by the prefacer as repeatedly engaged with, and offering expression to (by means of the material of his own consciousness), germs that have some life of their own—each of which has some "energy [by] which it simply makes for itself." (*AN* 315) Yet the author is still unable to know whether he is making the right provisions for a particular novelistic subject *as* he writes. This is most notable in that the prefacer often elaborates on the mistakes that the author made—sometimes portrayed as excessive elements of expression which were merely part of the "treatment" rather than the "subject." For example, Henrietta Stackpole from *The Portrait of a Lady* (in an image that

[19] As in, for example, the preface to *The American*, where the liveliness of Paris seems to "witness and intervene" in the story; a depiction of which, we can speculate, is part of the unbroken "charm" that James holds responsible for his having written a romance rather than a novel. (*AN* 23)

recalls Maggie Verver's thought of her insignificance in the family picture, as she jumps from the "coach" which the others push along) "may run beside the coach…" but does not "get her foot on the step" (*AN* 55), and she thereby "exemplifies… in her superabundance, not an element of my plan, but only an excess of my zeal." (*AN* 57) So this *ficelle*, James's word for a novelistic technique of using an excessive character who does not add to the actualization of value of the main subject (but who may help expressively exhibit it), does not contribute to the expression of the value of the consciousness of Isabel Archer, much as Maggie's improvisational offers were not taken up by Charlotte and Amerigo. Such errors come to be emphasized and even converted into the terms of novel theory because they can be read as assisting in a depiction of the author's method and experience of consciousness, even as they are not ultimately "taken up" as offers of consciousness by the germ. Meanwhile, as attested to by the fact that such mistakes are discovered in the act of re-reading *after* the novel has already been written and published, the process by which the author expressively tests the value of the "germ"—the act of novel writing—is not being depicted as necessarily yielding direct results in the *moment* of experience. Instead, for the elaboration of these moments, we are returned to impressionistic scenes of writing, an enumeration of some "attendant facts" of the circumstances of publication and composition.

As I read this, the prefacer, in his identification with his past self, presents in such scenes the *experience* of thought by way of novel writing as characterized by its *insistence* on its difference from the absolute value of a representational aesthetic of other art forms and other authors. We already noted how the author's form of thinking by way of metaphorical contrast is implemented without yet looking at its consequences in the context of James's present consciousness as a prefacer who "immerses" himself in his past experience as an author. In a way similar to how, in

the face of the tendency of Charlotte and Amerigo to neutralize her introduced differences, Maggie continued to *insist* on reading their reactions *as* newly noticed differences signifying something unknown, the prefacer revisits his past consciousness so as to recuperate newly noticed elements of his writing environments that his consciousness can now remark upon. The process of writing is in this way translated into an experience of possibly untethered, imaginative growth, characterized by a certain form of consciousness, which "builds" without anticipating what it will yield. This is what James calls the "luxurious immersion" of one consciousness in another, as the prefacer coincides with and identifies with his former self in such depicted experiences—an immersion compared to the way "attaching young lives and characters" "grow up" for and "are formed" for the author, as the ability to take on a "great extension… of experience and of consciousness" (*AN* 29)—the ability to "get into the skin of the creature." (*AN* 37) As I read this, the mediation (by way of the author) of the experience of consciousness for a character is compared to the mediation (by way of the prefacer) of the experience of consciousness for the author—the *Prefaces* can be read as novelistic in this portrayal of what consciousness is made to endure as it insists on a particular process. So it is that the prefacer-as-author reads environmental influences "lurking between the lines" of his novels, as elements of consciousness to be emphasized and noted for the pressure they exerted on his novels—a difference which he can *now* notice had an influence on his novels.[20] In other words, the prefacer, in his identification with his past authorial self, is coming to "mark" certain moments as

[20] In *The Spoils of Poynton* preface he experiences the "opera box of a terrace" (the view that he had as he wrote) and the "great green umbrella" (under which he wrote) as things that are "between the lines" of the text (*AN* 126); in *The American* preface he re-lives the "splendor" of Paris city life, "playing up like a flashing fountain," as it comes to "intervene" in the novel (*AN* 23); and he finds the "bristling curve of the wide Riva" and the "repeated undulation of the little hunchbacked bridges" within the "pages of the book" in the preface to *The Portrait of a Lady* (*AN* 41). These fragmentary recollections have often puzzled critics in that they add very little to a biographical history of the young author—they do not seem to fit into a larger narrative of his development into an authoritative master.

indicating some previous limitation upon consciousness which he now sees have had some affect upon it. In view of what Maggie is made to experience by way of her pragmatic experiment that does not yet yield results, we can understand these reminiscences as instead offering a "luxurious immersion" in the experience of authorial consciousness characterized by its insistence on difference.

The author, so engaged in such an experience, could be accused of developing his novel only out of his own lack of self-consistency of consciousness, much as Maggie was made to undergo the risk of self-reference. Similar to how Maggie fears her own self-variation and the depth of her own passion as the causes for what she is now made to notice, the author risks engaging in an imaginative growth unattached from what is there *to be* perceived—his depicted experience of consciousness in the *Prefaces* attests to a process that might be *projecting* some elements onto the germ. The thing to be expressed in a germ might end up being developed in the act of writing the novel such that the author is no longer "observing," no longer has "some form of reference or control" (*AN* 26) for the thing he intends to depict. On the one hand, being a "dupe" of his "prime object" (*AN* 297) is understood as part of the development of the *existence* of the author: his process of growing the germ through his imaginative projection by offering the terms of his own consciousness to it is part of the constitution of himself as an author because it is a means by which he writes his novel.[21] But, on the other hand, this same process might threaten the offer made to the germ. In a way similar to how Maggie feared being "named" in her introduction of the new complication of her unjustified "growth" of consciousness—an imaginative process potentially "monstrous," without assurance as to its reference in a reality

[21] That is, he must believe that what he sees is attributable to the value intrinsic of the germ. "How much and how often, and in what connexions and with what almost infinite variety, must he be a dupe, that of his prime object, to be at all measurably a master, that of his actual substitute for it—in other words at all appreciably to exist?" (*AN* 297)

other than its own lack of self-consistency and abysmal jealousy—so too the author might fall prey to imagining "relations" for his subject which have no reference to "the way things happen." This is what James calls a "romance" rather than a novel: the represented "developments" for the romance end up being an "experience disengaged, disembroiled, disencumbered, exempt from the conditions that we usually know to attach to it." (*AN* 33)

In a way that resembles Maggie's "use" of Fanny Assingham to suspend reference of her improvisational offers to her changing consciousness, the task of novel form then for the author comes to be a matter of ensuring the suspension of reference to his own consciousness, so that he can become the means, in building the "piers of his bridge," (*AN* 297) by which the germ expresses a value which he himself did not project *onto* that germ. Meanwhile, this same process comes to be engaged with as the author's social offer to the germ, insofar as the author allows his experience and the terms of his own consciousness to be employed for "use" by another consciousness, as his imagination "preserves, protects, enjoys" the figure that has been "placed" within the "back-shop" of his mind. One example of such an employment of novel form (to suspend self-reference while offering certain excessive significations to become the means for the expression of another's consciousness) occurs in the author's tendency to use an "indirect view," as already noted, in the "deputy or delegate" of the narrator, "the creative power otherwise so veiled and disembodied." (*AN* 327) As a stand-in for the author, the narrator's perspective (the deputy or delegate here) is used as a way of disavowing the "majesty of irresponsible 'authorship'" as James puts it—it presents the "absence" of the author, or at least defers the perception of his intrusive presence. At the same time, the narrator is used to create a view of the events of the novel that has its own interest in the affair, such that this introduced absence comes to be palpable by way of its excessive presence, a detached observer that has little

to do with the affair at hand—who is not a "participant," as James says. The *ficelle,* the technique of using a minor character such as Fanny who is only part of the "treatment" rather than the "subject" for expositional purposes (Fanny ultimately is not a part of the main social complication of the novel), is likewise a kind of excessive addition, a kind of loose thread as implied by its name, which might help the germ articulate itself, but which is employed to suspend reference to the author's own perspective, his self-presentation in his own novel. As a third example, when the events of the novel concern author figures as characters—these characters, such as Hugh Vereker, Ralph Limbert, and Neil Paraday, come from "the depths of the designer's own mind"—James emphasizes that the significance of these "supersubtle fry" is presented by way of the *lack* of actual reference to "chapter and verse." They are formed so as to prevent reference to his own writing and to prevent reference to some other known texts or authors.

The author's use of novel form then can be read as a pragmatic test that seeks to know, express, and open itself to the difference that the germ might make to consciousness (although we have yet to consider how this value is actually constituted so far in this chapter) at the same time that it experiences this quest as potentially endless, unable to arrive at conclusions about the value of consciousness. The issue then for the *prefacer* comes to be how he is to *represent* such consciousness. The terms of novel theory, by which such a representation would be communicated, often appear to refer to the novelist's engagement with novel form, and the process by which he starts writing the novel, as merely inconsequential play with known aesthetic means and products, borrowed from the drama, painting, or other novelists—they, like Fanny Assingham's representation of the Princess to other characters, provide "cover" so that the author's way of thinking used to produce his novel, as presented by the prefacer, *appears* to refer

to established aesthetics. Again, these other art forms come into play often by way of some odd appearance in the space of metaphorical contrast; the prefacer allows novelistic aesthetics to appear as if it were striving for the same honors of these other arts by employing their vocabulary. So we have terms like the *ficelle*, suggestive of the "liveliness" of theater and the necessity of amusing the audience; the novelist's engagement with the limited "frame" and a finite "canvas" for the depiction of life; his "embarking" under the "star of 'representation'" in an emulation of Balzac; and the "stage" for dramatic developments. What the author means to do by way of writing a novel comes to *appear*, in the prefacer's representation of it, in terms of certain imposed limitations because of the "cover" these terms provide. Yet, while this generalizing language given to novelistic aesthetics allows the author's quest for form to *seem* to aim for already established representational and aesthetic goals, it actually allows for the creation of the "record" of the growth of a consciousness that is forming itself by way of its difference from such aesthetics.

From the "private history" of "attendant facts" which make up a large part of the depiction of authorial consciousness in the *Prefaces,* the prefacer comes to feel himself in the presence of a "recording scroll or engraved commemorative table." (*AN* 4) Much as Fanny witnesses Maggie's process of change by providing the provisional links of her "interest" in her conversations with the Princess, the prefacer allows for a "record" of authorial consciousness to be indicated as he documents the "attendant facts." Yet, this "record," as it appears in the text of the *Prefaces,* focuses on *errors* made in novels in order to create a representation of authorial consciousness's limitation, its inability to know the value of that which it intended to work towards. So as newly noticed differences are accumulated as the "notes" of consciousness, the prefacer provides the provisional links of his own "interest," faith that some value *will* be constituted by novelistic

aesthetics different from other art forms and that authorial consciousness can *exceed* the limitation that it does not yet know it seeks to work beyond, even as he seems to only take "notes" on the differences that consciousness comes to notice in his return to the scenes of writing. Much as Fanny anticipates, but is unable to articulate, Maggie's potential creation of values by way of her own consciousness, the prefacer claims that he has no idea what sort of principle or method he will discover within his novels, even as he is sure that there will be some kind of achievement unique to his own novelistic aesthetics—that the "Novel" can be read as the "most prodigious of literary forms," (*AN* 326) and that his "re-perusal" will help "repay… the confidence that he has invited or imagined." (*AN* 345) (He actually *fears* discovering such a principle insofar as it might demonstrate that authorial consciousness might have imposed that which it had read to be "in" the germ, its intrinsic value: so he thinks that it would be "detestable" if, in the process of revision, "the moment a stitch should be taken or a hair-brush applied the *principle* of my making my brood more presentable under the nobler illumination would be accepted and established." *AN* 338) Much as Fanny provides the provisional links of her "interest" to anticipate the value that Maggie will come to create, the prefacer, in focusing on such accumulations of these differences, is actually only expressing his faith that the author, even as he undergoes an experience that risks projecting its differences onto another, will have constituted the values of his consciousness, first of all, in view of some difference that another has made to it.

The prefacer likewise proclaims that he is generating "notes" that will form the "record" (*AN* 3) of authorial consciousness, as he attests to its "growth" by making notes of his own speculative and anticipating "interest." He depicts authorial consciousness as limited by pointing to the seemingly arbitrary "accessory facts" of a case, as what the author appeared to work under

the influence of, without necessarily knowing that he was. So, for example, the young author labors under the influence of Balzac in the preface to *Roderick Hudson*, believing that he ought to be engaged in precise representation of the New England town of Northampton, Mass., while meanwhile he is *actually* engaged in representing a "local type"—a conception in his own mind constituted of a "handful of impressions." Fanny lies *for* Maggie in attesting to a process of growth that she believes will work beyond its limitations as she helps prop up the appearance of such limitation for others. Likewise, we can read the prefacer's emphasis on the "accessory facts"—the conditions of publication and writing his works, recalled by the prefacer—and the *errors* in his composition as a kind of "lie" to the reader of the *Prefaces.* The prefacer's emphasis allows authorial consciousness appear to be limited, insofar as emphasizing mistakes and the potential intrusions of a distracted consciousness gives the appearance that the author did not yet know what the prefacer would come to know about the art of novel form.

So the form that the novel gives to characterological consciousness by way of the author's representation of it also seeks a potential to extend *beyond* the circle in which the latter indicates the limits of and his own difference from the former's consciousness. Novel form, to re-read the famous line about "relations" in terms of the ambiguity it capitalizes upon,[22] must be able to also give the appearance that relations stop *nowhere*—that there is a form of consciousness which, even if depicting the encircled limitations of one character's consciousness, in allowing this consciousness to make a difference *to* it, can in turn promise the continued significance of

[22] To quote this line again: "Really, universally, relations stop nowhere, and the exquisite problem of the artist is eternally but to draw, by a geometry of his own, the circle within which they shall happily *appear* to do so." As noted in the previous chapter, this line can also be read to mean that novel form allows relations to "happily" appear to stop, allowing them to seem limited or finite, rather than allowing them to appear to stop nowhere. That this line contains this ambiguity is an observation I owe to David McWhirther. See his article "'The Whole Chain of Relation and Responsibility': Henry James and *The New York Edition*," in *Henry James's New York Edition: The Construction of Authorship*, 11.

consciousness, one that can make a difference for still more others. That is, it is not enough for consciousness to be given as limited within novel form; that (characterological) consciousness can be so represented by the original author can only retain its significance if the author expresses his own form of thinking, as it differentiates itself from characterological consciousness, as one that can potentially be significant for his reader. However, the difference such a form of thinking could make is one that must be tested—drawn into a context by which it could express its "value." This context is the one created in the *Prefaces* in the depiction of the "growth" of the "whole" of James's consciousness, as prefacer representing the original author. It follows then that the task of novel *theory* would be to also *think by way of* a form of consciousness by which the prefacer, as it represents the young author's value for itself, could potentially present his own consciousness to another as significant:

> The art of representation bristles with questions the very terms of which are difficult to apply and to appreciate; but whatever makes it arduous makes it, for our refreshment, infinite, causes the practice of it, with experience, to spread round us in a widening, not in a narrowing circle. Therefore it is that experience has to organize, for convenience and cheer, some system of observation—for fear, in the admirable immensity, of losing its way. (*AN* 3-4)

James is here portraying novel theory, the bristling terms and questions of the art of representation, as the means by which one can perpetuate the difference made to one's own consciousness in its representation of the consciousness of another—the circle of novel form can continue to be significant in this way, "spreading round us." Such a perpetuation through theory is understood as a continuation of practice *in* the novel (performed by characters) and *of* the novel (performed by the author in the process of writing).

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