MASKS OF REALITY

THE RHETORIC OF NARRATION
IN THE EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY ENGLISH NOVEL

By

SYDNEY JAMES BUTLER

B.Ed., University of Alberta, 1963
M.A., University of Alberta, 1968

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in the Department
of
ENGLISH

We accept this thesis as conforming to the required standard

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

June, 1974
In presenting this thesis in partial fulfilment of the requirements for an advanced degree at the University of British Columbia, I agree that the Library shall make it freely available for reference and study. I further agree that permission for extensive copying of this thesis for scholarly purposes may be granted by the Head of my Department or by his representatives. It is understood that copying or publication of this thesis for financial gain shall not be allowed without my written permission.

Department of English

The University of British Columbia
Vancouver 8, Canada

Date August 20, 1974
ABSTRACT

The development of the English novel during the eighteenth century is illustrated in this thesis by the concept of the author's "mask of reality," or the rhetorical stance adopted by the novelist for the telling of his story. The novelist creates and populates a fictional world, or Kosmos, and the success of his work depends on his power to invest this illusory world with an air of reality. Through the medium of the printed word, he convinces the reader of the truth of his vision.

My examination of the modes of narration in the major novels of the period clarifies their authors' use of the mask of reality. Defoe's novels seem to exclude the author from the life of the novel, allowing him to appear only on the title-page and in the editor's prefaces. Defoe uses his heroes and heroines as narrators to conceal his own presence as the creator of their world of perceptual experience. Nevertheless, the themes, images, syntactic patterns, and diction, which recur throughout the Defoe canon, enable the reader to discern, behind the mask, the existence of the author who controls and evaluates the fictional Kosmos. In Richardson's novels this authorial presence becomes more explicit in the critical prefaces and postscripts surrounding the fictional letters. Moreover, Richardson's correspondents themselves exemplify the process of fiction as they record and evaluate their fictional experiences through the medium of writing, while their letters, becoming a part of the action of the novel, bridge the gap between the fictional world of the Kosmos and the actuality of the printed text - the two realities of life and art. In Fielding's and Sterne's novels the role of the narrator becomes still more explicit with the result that the reader's attention is diverted from the contemplation of the imaginary life of the Kosmos to the
consideration of the work as a piece of fiction. The novelist's rhetoric involves the reader in the process of fiction by making him conscious of the novel as a created artifice rather than as the simple verbal representation of the world of imaginary or real experience.

This pattern of development which shows the eighteenth-century English novel becoming increasingly self-conscious is examined in this thesis in relation to Cervantes' *Don Quixote*, which achieved renown during this period. Cervantes' influence is shown both in the minor and major works of English fiction. Charlotte Lennox, Smollett, and Richard Graves use the quixotic theme mainly to pit the presumed reality of their contemporary world against the literary fantasies of their protagonists. Fielding, however, emulates the perspectivism of his Spanish predecessor in the creation of his narrator-historian as his mask of reality, achieving a more complex, ironic view of the fictional Kosmos. Sterne, too, borrows many elements from Cervantes. His narrative mask of Tristram demonstrates the interaction between language and experience, as the novel displays its form in the dialogue between novelist and reader. The self-consciousness of *Tristram Shandy* as a work of narrative art results in a relativistic, ambiguous attitude to remembered experience, and shows many of the qualities that make *Don Quixote* an example of the art of mannerism. In *Tristram Shandy* Sterne emphasizes the narrative techniques by which Tristram re-creates the world of the Shandy family. Sterne's Shandean mask of reality fuses the self-conscious display of the art of the novelist with the fictional life of Shandy Hall.
## CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chapter I</td>
<td>The Significant Form of the Novel</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter II</td>
<td>Romance and Reality - The Eighteenth-Century View</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter III</td>
<td>The Novel as Chronicle</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter IV</td>
<td>The Novel as Document</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter V</td>
<td>Perspectivism in the Novel</td>
<td>157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter VI</td>
<td>The Self-Conscious Novel</td>
<td>198</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter VII</td>
<td>The Reality of the Novel</td>
<td>246</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bibliography</td>
<td>List of Works Cited</td>
<td>269</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abbreviation</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRITQ</td>
<td>Critical Quarterly</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DA</td>
<td>Dissertation Abstracts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELH</td>
<td>Journal of English Literary History</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JEGP</td>
<td>Journal of English and German Philology</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JGE</td>
<td>Journal of General Education</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MLN</td>
<td>Modern Language Notes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MLQ</td>
<td>Modern Language Quarterly</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MP</td>
<td>Modern Philology</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N&amp;Q</td>
<td>Notes and Queries</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PMLA</td>
<td>Publications of the Modern Language Association of America</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PQ</td>
<td>Philological Quarterly</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEL</td>
<td>Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SP</td>
<td>Studies in Philology</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHR</td>
<td>Western Humanities Review</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The air of reality seems to me to be the supreme virtue of the novel— the merit on which its other merits . . . helplessly and submissively depend.

Henry James
CHAPTER I
THE SIGNIFICANT FORM OF THE NOVEL

The critical problem peculiar to any form of narrative art—whether it be ballet, theatre, opera, film, television, ballad, epic poetry, or prose fiction—is that the story may seem to take on an existence independent of the artistic medium by which it is created. The story, however it is made manifest, is essentially a series of actions, implying that there are characters who participate in these actions, and that the actions occur within some sort of time-dimension. Whether the characters are portrayed as people living in the contemporary world, or in historical times, or as animals on a farm or in a jungle, or as imaginary creatures called hobbits or Houyhnhnms, their actions inevitably raise questions of human values. Although the story itself may be no more than an idea abstracted from the work of art, its appeal to the audience's natural interest in humanity may make the story seem to encompass the whole of the work. "No, but I saw the film" is thus the cliché of literary conversation which expresses the view that the speaker has shared the experience of the person who has read the book, because both film and book share the same story. Few people would regard the reading of the story of Swan Lake as an adequate substitute for attendance at a performance of the ballet, where the combination of sound, movement, light, and colour not only creates the story, but also conditions the audience's response to it. The novel, however, tells its story in a language that may be indistinguishable from the language of everyday human discourse, as if the writer had merely chosen the most convenient and unobtrusive medium for recording the events of a story which he had structured in the theatre of his imagination. Story, according to E.M. Forster, is the "simple and fundamental aspect of the novel"; but the story appeals only at the level
of primitive curiosity of wanting to know what happens next, so there is a tone of sad
deprecation in Forster's grudging admittance: "Yes—oh, dear, yes—the novel tells a
story."¹

The novel is essentially a story told in the language of printed or manuscript
prose. While there is no disputing the fact that the novel exists as a structure of words,
it is also true that the reader usually remembers his experience of the novel in terms of
its characters, the world they inhabit, and what happens to them—that is, the story.
Only rarely, as for example, with the opening paragraphs of A Christmas Carol or Ulysses,
does the familiarity or distinctiveness of the prose enable the reader to remember the actual
words of the narrative, as one remembers the words of a poem, rather than the events of its
story. Consequently a novel is often described according to the type of life it depicts in
its fictional world, and the reader makes judgments about the credibility of the characters,
the probability of their actions, and of the moral values they display, perhaps discriminating
the novels of "the great tradition," as F.R. Leavis does, by their significance "in terms of
human awareness," and insisting that the great classic novels be on the side of life.² By
dealing directly with the fictional world, this approach to the criticism of the novel seems
to deny the primacy of its language by implying that the real materials of the novelist's
craft consist, not of words, but of the characters and objects with which he populates and
furnishes his imaginary universe. By this view the language of the novel has simply a
referential function as the medium through which the novelist translates the story prefigured
in his imagination.

To separate the story from the language which gives it concrete expression seems
dangerously like reviving the "form-and-content" controversy in the criticism of art. Yet
the novel, because of its inevitable concern with human experience, will always refute
Pater's aphorism that "all art constantly aspires towards the condition of music." Music, of course, can only be representative of its own form of created patterns of sound. The sounds themselves, unlike the human language of the novel, have no referential value which can be applied to non-musical areas of experience, so there can be no separable content to a piece of music, which thus becomes the model of a "pure" form of art. But the novelist can only discover and shape his imaginary world through the use of language, so that it is axiomatic that the medium of the novel is its language rather than patterns of imaginary life of re-created experience.

This critical assumption of the primacy of language has been staunchly defended by David Lodge, who rejects the assertion made by Christopher Caudwell that novels are composed, not of words, but "of scenes, actions, stuff, people, just as plays are." Lodge's argument for the integrity of the text as a structure of words parallels the position pioneered by the exponents of the "New Criticism" in regard to poetry. While recognizing that the reader is usually less conscious of the novelist's use of language than of the poet's, Lodge denies that poetic language is qualitatively different from the language of the novel; in his view there is no clear distinction between the "emotive" language of poetry and the "referential" language of prose fiction. Rather, they both exist on a continuum, with poetry tending to emphasize the affective use of language, while the novel begins with the cognitive or denotative effects of language. Nevertheless, both aspects, the cognitive and the affective, are inseparable in the very nature of human language, so that poetry can never divorce itself from the referential meanings of its words, and the words of the novel must necessarily have emotive effects. According to Lodge, the paradox of the novel is that we "tend to experience and recall a novel, not as a system of words, images, symbols, and sounds, but as a system of actions, situations, settings, and we continue
to find the terms 'plot' and 'character' indispensable. The fact remains that these latter concepts are abstractions formed from accumulated messages conveyed through language."⁷ Lodge's methodology for the criticism of the novel leads him to close textural analysis, both in the detailed examination of selected passages as microcosms of the whole, and in tracing language patterns and images which are given significance by repetition and reveal the structure of the work.

Lodge's critical approach by means of verbal analysis is typical of the linguistic and stylistic approach to literature.⁸ Despite the logical validity of his argument, there is a danger that such an examination of the novel at the detailed level of its language may fail to account adequately for the total effect of the novel. Malcolm Bradbury notes the limitations of such a "neo-symbolist" approach in his essay, "Towards a Poetics of Fiction: An Approach Through Structure."⁹ For him the novel "is a complex structure by virtue of its scale, prose-character and matter" [my italics], again suggesting in his emphasis of its "referential dimension" a separation between the verbal form of the novel and "those materials in life" which he considers its matter or content. While stressing that the novel is concerned with "life," Bradbury suggests that it is necessary to bridge the gap between the verbal structure and the story it depicts: "If we say that the novel is determined by conditions within the medium itself and outside it in life, then we may move freely between language and life, and find order and unity in the kind of working that a novel has. . . ."

I think that the problem can be clarified by an examination of the relationship between the language of the novel and the imaginary world, or Kosmos, which it creates.¹⁰ There is general agreement that the successful novel must be realistic, whether because the imaginary life of its Kosmos is akin to the familiar, everyday life which we experience, or whether because the novel creates an air of truth which convinces the reader of the integrity
or reality of its fictional life. In either case, the effect of realism is achieved through
the novelist's use of language. Thus, the essence of the novel is not that it merely tells
a story, but that the reader must be able to maintain his belief in its fictional world.
The experience of the novel becomes therefore an exercise in rhetoric, by which the
novelist uses language to convince the reader of the truths revealed within his Kosmos.

No matter how fanciful or how close to life is the novelist's creation, the
suspension of the reader's disbelief may be achieved when the narrative appears to take
place in a fully integrated world, functioning according to the "natural" laws and logic
devised by its creator. This Kosmos, or as Susanne Langer terms it, "virtual world," may
be considered as the central fact of the novel, because it is through this imaginative and
coherent abstraction from the life of experience that the art of the novel achieves the
"semblance of life," which, according to Langer, is "the primary illusion of literature." 11
Consequently, the main concern of my study of the development of the novel during the
eighteenth century is the representation of reality in prose fiction, or more specifically,
the modes of narration by which the novelist discovers and creates his Kosmos. 12 For this
purpose I have found the term "Mask of Reality" to be a convenient label to describe and
define the various rhetorical stances adopted by the novelists of the period—a "mask" in the
sense of the disguise by which the novelist pretends to be representing real, experiential
life in the everyday world, but also "mask" in the sense of an obvious, recognizable façade
which distinguishes the reality of the art from the reality of life. Hence my "Mask of
Reality" may be equated with Langer's "frame of illusion" which she sees as the foundation
of the novel's illusion of experience:

Every successful work of literature is wholly a creation, no matter what
actualities have served as its models, or what stipulations set up its scaffold.
It is an illusion of experience. It always creates the semblance of mental
process—that is, of living thought, awareness of events and actions, memory, reflection, etc. Yet there need not be any person in the virtual "world" who sees and reports. The semblance of life is simply the mode in which virtual events are made. The most impersonal account of "facts" can give them the qualitative imprint which makes them "experiences," able to enter into all sorts of contexts, and taking on significance accordingly. That is to say, literature need not be "subjective," in the sense of reporting the impressions or feelings of a given subject, yet everything that occurs in the frame of its illusion has the semblance of a lived event. This means that a virtual event exists only in so far as it is formed and characterized, and its relations are only such as are apparent in the virtual world of the work. (p. 245)

My emphasis on the techniques of prose narration is also in accord with the view of Mark Schorer, who points out that it is only through technique that the writer creates his reality, "for technique is the only means he has of discovering, exploring, developing his subject, of conveying its meaning, and, finally, of evaluating it."¹³ Schorer's essay is important because it reaffirms the inseparability in art of form and content, or in his terminology, "technique and subject matter." Because the novel in its creation of the illusion of experience so often appears like a documentary report of contemporary or historical reality, the reader is often tempted to respond to its characters and events as if they were real people. One of the marks of success of a novelist like Dickens is his creation of so many characters whose impact on the public consciousness gives them an apparent reality, as if they had an existence outside the Kosmos of the novel.¹⁴ In such cases the illusion of reality is so effective that the character seems as much a part of our own experiential world as of the novel's Kosmos. It is inevitable that the life depicted by the novel may have its own intrinsic interest, and that the psychological, sociological, historical, cultural, political, philosophical, religious, moral, mythic, or archetypal patterns discernible in its action challenge the reader to compare them to his own and other people's ideas in the realm of psychology, sociology, etc. Nevertheless, the ideas
of the novel are realized only through the writer's technique, and Schorer warns the
critic against dealing with these abstractions from the novel as if they constituted the
novel itself:

The novel is still read as though its content has some value in itself, as
though the subject matter of fiction has greater or lesser value in itself,
and as though technique were not a primary but a supplementary element,
capable perhaps of not unattractive embellishments upon the surface of
the subject, but hardly of its essence. Or technique is thought of in
blunter terms than those which one associates with poetry, as such relatively
obvious matters as the arrangement of events to create plot; or, within plot,
of suspense and climax; or as the means of revealing character motivation,
relationship, and development; or as the use of point of view, but point of
view as some nearly arbitrary device for the heightening of dramatic
interest through the narrowing or broadening of perspective upon the
material, rather than as a means toward the positive definition of theme.
As for the resources of language, these, somehow, we almost never think
of as a part of the technique of fiction—language as used to create a certain
texture and tone which in themselves state and define themes and meanings;
or language, the counters of our ordinary speech, as forced, through
conscious manipulation, into all those larger meanings which our ordinary
speech almost never intends. Technique in fiction, all this is a way of
saying, we somehow continue to regard as merely a means to organizing
material which is "given" rather than as the means of exploring and defining
the values in an area of experience which, for the first time then, are being
given.  

Schorer claims that the experience of life is meaningless until the shape of the
novel makes it understandable and gives it value. Susanne Langer makes the same point
when she states, "Life is incoherent unless we give it form" (p. 400). Although she is
discussing the significance of form in art generally, Langer chooses an incident from
D.H. Lawrence's Sons and Lovers to illustrate this principle, by showing "a person's need
of composing dreadful events in order to make them definite, emotionally significant,
before coping with them practically and morally" (p. 400). In the novel the pregnant Mrs.
Morel suffers an emotional shock when she quarrels with her drunken husband, who then
throws her out of the house:
Mrs. Morel, seared with passion, shivered to find herself out there in a great white light, that fell cold on her, and gave a shock to her inflamed soul. She stood for a few moments helplessly staring at the glistening great rhubarb leaves near the door. Then she got the air into her breast. She walked down the garden path, trembling in every limb, while the child boiled within her. For a while she could not control her consciousness, mechanically she went over the last scene, then over it again, certain phrases, certain moments coming each time like a brand red-hot down on her soul; and each time she enacted again the past hour, each time the brand came down at the same points, till the mark was burnt in, and the pain burnt out, and at last she came to herself.

Here Lawrence has depicted his character in an enactment of the creative process through which an emotional experience is given shape and meaning as it is re-lived in the memory. At first Mrs. Morel is shown in a state of involuntary physical reaction, shivering and trembling in a turmoil of seething emotions, but as she composes the scene, structures its images in "certain phrases," she becomes calm and collected again, the incident having been transformed or distanced in the art of composition. Similarly, Lawrence's reconstruction of the scene in the preceding pages has made what presumably was his childhood experience a part of the fictional world of the novel, in which the emotions of life no longer have the same intensity or validity. In re-telling her story to herself, Mrs. Morel is made to illustrate the function of the novelist whose narrative technique enables him to perceive the reality of his experience in making it a part of his story. Hence, the term "fiction" can be understood in its original sense of "something made or formed" rather than in the librarian's sense of "a lie" contrasting to the truth of non-fiction. The examination of the novelist's technique in perceiving experience through language enables us to perceive more clearly how his particular Kosmos is constructed and to understand the forces and symbols that constitute his vision of the world. There are, of course, many valuable studies of individual novelists based on their narrative technique in the fullest sense of Schorer's definition. Moreover, by focussing
our attention on the language of fiction, the same critical approaches will be valid regardless of the novelist's intention in writing his fiction, or the use to which his work has been put, or whether his work is classified as fiction or non-fiction. Erich Auerbach, in *Mimesis*, has already demonstrated how a critic's response to the verbal and syntactical structures has enabled him to trace a line of development in the representation of reality in some of the major works of western civilization, ranging from Homer and the Bible to Petronius and Virginia Woolf. In a more limited way Wayne C. Booth in *The Rhetoric of Fiction* has surveyed "the rhetorical resources available to the writer of epic, novel, or short story as he tries, consciously or unconsciously, to impose his fictional world upon the reader." Booth has restricted himself to the discussion of what he distinguishes as "non-didactic fiction" such as *Tom Jones*, *Middlemarch* and *Light in August*, because his principal concern is the role of the narrator within the work, which is seen more clearly in these works than in such didactic fictions as *Gulliver's Travels*, *Pilgrim's Progress*, and *1984*. Nevertheless, with the emphasis on technique, it is possible to compare all modes of prose narrative: fiction as well as non-fiction, didacticism as well as entertainment, satire as well as pornography, romance as well as the novel. As Auerbach shows in *Mimesis*, it is unnecessary to distinguish amongst the purposes of fiction or the novelist's supposed intentions as long as we confine ourselves to the question of the representation of reality, and how effectively the writer achieves within his work the illusion of experience, without recourse to extraneous sources of authentication. Such a basis of comparison is particularly convenient for the study of a historical period because it allows us to view within the same critical perspective such novelists as Richardson and Fielding, whose works are so different that they are quite commonly viewed as being the founders of discrete species of the novel. At the same time we can include within the
scope of our work fictions that are not normally classified as novels. Gulliver's Travels and Rasselas are as amenable to the central question of the illusion of reality created by their authors' rhetorical stances as Tristram Shandy or the Castle of Otranto, or Fanny Hill and A Modest Proposal.

There is, of course, a considerable difference between my approach to the study of the technique of fiction through its language, and Northrop Frye's categorization of the modes of fiction according to the life depicted in the work. Frye uses the criterion of "the hero's power of action" (p. 33) in relation to the social and natural environment of the world to distinguish five modes of narrative fiction: myth, romance, high mimetic, low mimetic, and the ironic (pp. 33-4). These categories are very useful in describing the broad sweep of literary history, as each can be seen to be a dominant tendency during a particular period: the myth in pre-mediaeval times, romance in the later mediaeval age, the high mimetic mode during the Renaissance, the low mimetic mode in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and the ironic mode in the modern world. In Frye's view, the history of narrative literature shows a shift between what he considers are the "two poles of literature": on one hand is "the tendency to verisimilitude and accuracy of description," while its opposite is the tendency towards myth (p. 51). Yet, of course, Frye recognizes that any particular work in any of these periods may partake of the conventions of more than one of these modes.

Similarly, in discussing the forms of fiction Frye distinguishes between romance and the novel according to the life depicted, as in his view "the essential difference between novel and romance lies in the concept of characterization" (p.304). Hence, the novel deals with "real people," "with characters wearing their personae or social masks," while in romance there are "stylized figures which expand into psychological archetypes" (pp.304-5).
Having made this primary distinction between novel and romance, Frye then differentiates the novel from other forms of fiction, which he calls the "confession" and the "anatomy," on the basis of their narrative methods. As the basis for comparing and evaluating individual works according to the traditions and conventions of one of these particular forms, Frye's system of classification has considerable value, although he admits that there are many works that cannot be neatly pigeon-holed because they overlap two or more of his categories. Frye, however, also admits that his system is a "relative or Copernican view" of prose fiction in contrast to the "Ptolemaic perspective" of the "novel-centred view" (p. 304). It is an important distinction because he allows for the possibility that a work such as a novel by Trollope may, with the passage of time, be read as a romance, implying that any novel can become a romance when the type of life which it portrays becomes a part of history, so that Frye's distinctions between novel and romance will depend on the responses of the reader rather than on integral qualities of the work in question. Perhaps the weakness of Frye's system of classification is that he distinguishes the confession and the anatomy from the novel on the basis of their narrative form, whereas the distinction between the novel and romance depends upon the type of life which each portrays. Whereas the romance has a tendency to become allegory, the novel tends towards history, which is another way of saying that the novel is more "realistic." The distinction becomes blurred with the passage of time as, Frye notes, "a novel becomes more romantic in its appeal when the life it reflects has passed away." If this is so, then the distinction between romance and the novel can only be decided by the reader's response, unless we can show how the work of fiction creates through its technique its own air of reality, which, because of the permanence of art, will have the same validity for all generations.
Perhaps the difficulty of distinguishing the novel from the romance is best illustrated by the history of interpretations of Don Quixote, often regarded as the archetype of the modern novel, because the problem of reality and illusion, the confusion of history and romance, is central to its whole conception. Jorge Luis Borges expresses this fusion of the two tendencies in his "Parable of Cervantes and Don Quixote":

Weary of his land of Spain, an old soldier of the king sought solace in Ariosto's vast geographies, in that valley of the moon where misspent dream-time goes, and in the golden idol of Mohammed stolen by Montalban.

In gentle mockery of himself he conceived a credulous man who, unsettled by the marvels he read about, hit upon the idea of seeking noble deeds and enchantments in prosaic places called El Toboso or Montiel.

Defeated by reality, by Spain, Don Quixote died in his native village around 1614. He was survived only briefly by Miguel de Cervantes.

For both of them, for the dreamer and the dreamed, the tissue of that whole plot consisted in the contraposition of two worlds: the unreal world of the books of chivalry and the common everyday world of the seventeenth century.

Little did they suspect that the years would end by wearing away the disharmony. Little did they suspect that La Mancha and Montiel and the knight's frail figure would be, for the future, no less poetic than Sinbad's haunts or Ariosto's vast geographies. For myth is at the beginning of literature, and also at its end.21

Borges' parable illustrates the inadequacy of trying to judge a novel's reality by appeal to historical or contemporary evidence to corroborate the life created in its fictional Kosmos. Another example is provided in Roderick Random by Smollett's description of life at sea in the British navy of the 1740's. There is no doubt that Roderick's experiences at the siege of Carthagena closely parallel Smollett's journalistic accounts of the battle, and that both are based on Smollett's own experiences in the navy. For the eighteenth-century reader familiar with life aboard a man-o'-war Roderick's account would have a sense of horrifying actuality. The modern reader, who no longer
lives under the threat of being press-ganged into such circumstances, must depend upon the "illusion of experience" created by the narrative. In Roderick Random Smollett's technique may be sufficient to create that sense of belief in his vision of an eighteenth-century world of strife and struggle; but this world will be as remote from the modern reader as that created in the Hornblower series by C.S. Forester, who was inspired and aided by an eighteenth-century sailing manual. Forester's theoretical knowledge would seem to be an inferior source in comparison with Smollett's first-hand experience, but the "reality" of their respective fictions can be compared only by the coherence of the world which each creates through the language of fiction. Although by Frye's criteria both works should be considered in the "low mimetic mode," yet the unfamiliarity of their way of life today might justify their both being classified as romances rather than novels. Hence, the separation of fiction into these categories may be the result of the reader's subjective response rather than any intrinsic quality of the work itself.

Many eighteenth-century writers made the same sort of distinction between their contemporary novels and the romances of the earlier ages. In The Rise of the NovIan Watt justifies their view by suggesting that the prose fiction of the eighteenth century can be distinguished from the earlier romances by its "formal realism" which "may be regarded as the lowest common denominator of the novel genre." In recognizing that the "problem of the correspondence between the literary work and the reality which it imitates" is more crucial to the novel than any other literary form, Ian Watt suggests that the question of the novel's realism is an epistemological problem which he attempts to solve by examining the philosophical and psychological ideas of the period (p. 11). By "formal realism" Watt means the "set of narrative procedures which are so commonly found together in the novel" by which it achieves its "air of total authenticity" by pretending to
be "a full and authentic report of human experience" (p.32). Watt emphasizes three major aspects of this "formal realism": the novel's tendency to create plausible, named characters, suggesting that "they were to be regarded as particular individuals in the contemporary social environment" (p.19); its "insistence on the time process" to demonstrate its "closeness to the texture of daily experience" (p.22); its emphasis on geographical locations and the physical objects of the environment (p.26-7). These three characteristics of "formal realism"—personal identity and the co-ordinates of space and time—are linked by Watt to the tradition of empirical philosophy as it develops in the works of Descartes and Locke, suggesting that their determination to accept nothing on trust, but to arrive at truth through the individual's perception and manipulation of ideas is reflected in the development of the novel within the convention that "the novelist's primary task is to convey the impression of fidelity to human experience" (p.13).

As long as the novel is regarded as a documentary record of life lived, or imagined to have been lived, in the ordinary world of everyday reality, then it is clear that the rise of the novel in eighteenth-century England is connected with the philosophy of experience manifested in John Locke's *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1690), which became the "philosophical Bible" for the age of Enlightenment and rationalism in the succeeding century. Locke's *Essay* is important because, having denied the human mind any innate ideas, Locke finds the source of human knowledge in "Sensation" and "Réflexion." His model of the mind presupposes first the existence of an external reality, which impinges on the senses of the individual and becomes the source of its ideas. Secondly, by "Reflection," Locke affirms the ability of the mind to be conscious of the reality of its ideas, and of its power to combine and manipulate them. In his view all human knowledge is the product of ideas derived from the objects of man's
senses, and from the mind's consciousness of its own operations: "External objects furnish the mind with ideas of sensible qualities, which are all those different perceptions they produce in us, and the mind furnishes the understanding with ideas of its own operations" (I, 124). Locke effectively lays the foundation for an epistemology of the eighteenth-century novel by accepting the reality of an outer, physical world, while asserting that ultimate and complete knowledge of this world is unattainable. Aspects of this world, its primary and secondary qualities, are perceived by individuals, but because of the differences in individual perception, each man will perceive the world in different ways. Every man, therefore, furnishes his own world with the real ideas which he derives from the twin principles of Sensation and Reflection, and the sort of mental world which he creates will depend on his experience. This is Locke's answer to the questions he poses concerning man's knowledge of reality: "Let us then suppose the mind to be, as we say, white paper, void of all characters, without any ideas:—How comes it to be furnished? Whence comes it by that vast store which the busy and boundless fancy of man has painted on it with an almost endless variety? Whence has it all the materials of reason and knowledge? To this I answer, in one word, from EXPERIENCE" (I, 121-2).

Locke's Essay provides a rationale for the novel by giving importance to the recording of experience. While it is impossible to prove a causal relation between the philosophy and literature of any particular age, nevertheless the documentation of external objects in narrative prose, the recording of personal experience in terms of the objects, sights, actions, and impressions of the contemporary world—the narrative devices of "formal realism"—provide an analogous relationship between the novel and Locke's model of the human mind.
So, too, may the novel provide the reader with an image of the novelist’s mind at work, as he manipulates the images and ideas of "formal realism" to create his Kosmos. This sense of the author within his work, the sense of the creative intelligence which speaks to us through the novel, inviting us to share his vantage point in re-creating his world, parallels Locke’s description of the idea of personal identity. According to Locke the only realities present in the mind are its ideas, being representative of an external reality, and of the mind’s consciousness of its own working-power. While the first is indicative of Locke’s acceptance of an outer reality, the latter becomes the foundation of the concept of self: "For, since consciousness always accompanies thinking, and it is that which makes every one to be what he calls self, and thereby distinguishes himself from all other thinking things, in this alone consists personal identity, i.e. the sameness of a rational being: and as far as this consciousness can be extended backwards to any past action or thought, so far reaches the identity of that person; it is the same self now it was then; and it is by the same self with this present one that now reflects on it, that that action was done" (I, 449). The creation of the self through its consciousness depends largely on its power of memory to make the necessary connection between its past and present ideas, and memory, of course, is the substantive mode of the novel.

Ian Watt’s concept of "formal realism" has been of great value in suggesting my line of enquiry into the nature of the novel, and its development during the eighteenth century. The distinction between the "reality" of the new novel and the fantasy of the old romance becomes one of the commonplaces of eighteenth-century thought, which I shall examine more thoroughly in Chapter II. Yet it is necessary to make a clear distinction between Locke’s model of human understanding and perception of a real world
of external objects, and the novelist’s recording of real or imagined perceptions in his prose narrative. The danger is to confuse the word with the object; objects in the external world may result in the real ideas which the mind perceives, while words in a novel can create only the illusion of the reality of objects existing in a real world.

Locke’s model of the human understanding provides an important analogy of the relationship between the novel and the illusory reality of its Kosmos, but David Hirsch points out the fallacy when Ian Watt tries to explain his sense of belief in Defoe’s fiction by reference to Locke’s philosophical system:

The consequence of Watt’s method, of first providing a definition of reality rooted in empirical philosophy and then showing that the representation of reality in the novel is an outgrowth of the philosophical definition, is that he is forced into the position of having to make a leap from ‘reality’ as he thinks it is defined by the empirical philosophers to the ‘reality’ of fiction. And this leap, no matter how hard he tries, Watt simply cannot make successfully. Like Dr. Johnson, he can only kick rocks and tell us that he knows from the pain in his toe that the rocks are real. But since he is dealing with fictions and not rocks, his assertions are not particularly impressive. Presumably, we will all feel pain in our toes if we kick rocks, but we do not necessarily all feel the things that Watt says we are supposed to feel when we read the fictions he discusses. It is one thing to say that matter is ‘real’ because it occupies a locus in time and place and resists any intrusion of other matter; it is another to say that a fictional watch is ‘real’ because it is a ‘real watch,’ or that a fictional character is ‘real’ because that character’s ‘actions are the result of the complexities of her situation and of the feminine code.’

My own reservation about Watt’s theory is that his concept of “formal realism” does not adequately describe the technical resources available to the novelist in his efforts to create an air of authenticity. It is true that the creation of individualized characters existing in a definite locus of time and space may help to achieve this aim, but all of Watt’s arguments are applicable to Gulliver’s Travels as much as to Moll Flanders. Swift’s work, in fact, can be shown to contain a great deal more circumstantial evidence to guarantee the reality of its narrative than Defoe’s, yet no reader would claim that
Gulliver's Travels is a more "realistic" document of ordinary human experience than Moll Flanders.

The other, and perhaps more important, difficulty of Watt's thesis, is that he is unable to maintain his concept of "formal realism" to include the later developments of the novel after Richardson. "Formal realism," in fact, becomes the "realism of presentation" which "implies a narrative surface that is more or less identical with its meaning." In his analysis of Tom Jones Watt perceives that Fielding made a departure from the tradition of "formal realism" to achieve another type of realism—"the realism of assessment," which, "achieved through explicit authorial commentary, militated against realism of presentation." It seems that Watt has changed horses in mid-stream, abandoning one standard of realism which he had first established as the distinguishing mark of the new genre of the novel, in order to encompass a work which differed considerably in its structure from previous novels, and yet which was undeniably itself a novel. In his "Serious Reflection on The Rise of the Novel" Watt admits that the relationship between his two definitions of realism was considerably more complicated than he had thought. Watt's final position, therefore, seems close to that of Lee T. Lemon who suggests that there are two distinct species of the novel. Both depend on creating the illusion of life, but whereas the orthodox novel maintains the unbroken illusion of a world in which its characters live under specific circumstances, the other strain of the novel is further justified by the novelist's "interest in life," when the story of its characters provides an opportunity for the exploration of the fullest possible imaginative power of its author. On the one hand there is the tradition represented by the "Zola-James axis," which includes Defoe and Richardson, and all novelists who attempt to separate themselves from their Kosmos to preserve its illusion of life unmodified by art, as if the novel were an elaborate trompe-l'œil
pretending to be, not an illusion of life, but life itself. The other tradition is "implicit in
the works of Fielding, Sterne, Smollett, Dickens, and Thackeray—and such romancers as
Charlotte and Emily Bronte, Hawthorne, and Melville," who seem to say, 'Let's explore;
let's poke around all the corners of human experience and see what we come up with"
(pp. 66-7). 29

Such a division is possible on the basis of some standard of authorial intrusion, but
there are two strong objections. Recent studies in the language of fiction suggest that the
author is never absent from his work. 30 The term "authorial intrusion" does not describe an
absolute quality, but rather indicates the degree of subtlety of the author and the extent to
which the manipulation of the narrative is apparent within the language of fiction. At one
extreme the narrator within the novel becomes a fully realized persona who comments on and
digresses from the action of the fictional characters. But it is also clear that even the most
seemingly factual or objective record of events within the novel's Kosmos is still controlled
and evaluated by the novelist's choice of language. While it is easy to see that there is a
difference between the narrative methods of such novelists as Melville and Jane Austen,
nevertheless a comprehensive theory of fiction should be applicable to both. It is also
questionable whether the novels of the "orthodox" category do evoke a different kind of
response from the reader because of their fully integrated Kosmos. Such a theory seems to
assume that the reader is completely deceived in his experience of reading the "orthodox"
 novel to the extent that he confuses the work with the reality it represents, failing to
distinguish between the artistic symbol and everyday life.

In Feeling and Form Susanne Langer suggests that "where the establishing of the
primary illusion entails a semblance of so-called 'real life' there must be, of course, a
constant safeguard against the possibility of confusing the work with its model..." (p.292).
To this point, following the lead of Ian Watt's formal realism, or the realism of presentation, I have considered the novel mainly according to the way it seems to imitate life, or to represent external reality. Langer's work, therefore, is an important counterbalance because her discussion of prose fiction is part of a comprehensive theory of art developed from her *Philosophy in a New Key* (London, 1953), which is itself based on Ernst Cassirer's *Die Philosophie der symbolischen Formen*, 3 vols. (Berlin, 1923-29). In her consideration of the novel as a work of art Professor Langer points out that "the second major concern of literature, therefore, correlative with having to give a work 'the air of reality,' is the problem of keeping it fiction" (p.292). She continues: "Many people recognize the devices whereby a writer attains lifelikeness; but few are aware of the means that sustain the difference between art and life--the simplification and manipulation of life's image that makes it essentially different from its prototype. Style is determined in large measure by the ways in which authors handle these two basic requirements" (pp. 292-3).

Langer's "style", like Mark Schorer's "technique", suggests the novelist's language of fiction, the devices with which his vision of life is given symbolic form.

These then are the two opposing tendencies of fiction, which are realized in the form of its "virtual world" or Kosmos. The author's technique enables him to create a world which seems like a representation of the experiential world of everyday reality, but simultaneously with the act of creation this world is given value and meaning. Susanne Langer's chapter on "Virtual Memory" has an epigraph from Proust: "La réalité ne se forme que dans la mémoire" (p.258). Fiction, because it is essentially a re-creation of things remembered, is realized in the "mnemonic mode" having the semblance of a memory or history (p. 263), and to Langer the act of memory is an imaginative act capable of changing the perception of the original experience. So also does "poesis," the art of creating
in language, transform the experience of life into the experience of art:

Everything actual must be transformed by imagination into something purely experiential; that is the principle of poesis. The normal means of making the poetic transformation is language; the way an event is reported gives it the appearance of being something casual or something momentous, trivial or great, good or bad, even familiar or new. A statement is always a formulation of an idea, and every known fact or hypothesis or fancy takes its emotional value largely from the way it is presented and entertained.

(p. 258)

The novel may therefore be considered as a verbal structure which mediates between the demands of life and art—between the articulation and recording of the life of its imaginary world, and the selection and arrangement of its events into art. It must preserve a balance between the random chaos of life-like experience, and the formulated patterns of art—between the never-ending stream of events in life, and the sense of completion that is the product of art. One measure of its success in achieving this precarious equilibrium is the sense of reality which invests its Kosmos. As one of the mimetic arts, the novel has often been judged by its verisimilitude—its truth to life, as if its language were simply a transparent medium for viewing its created life, the value of which depends on the similarity between its imaginary characters and events and those of the real, everyday or historical, world.

If language could function in a purely referential capacity, devoid of human value or bias, as for example, the symbol systems of physics or chemistry, the novel would be no more than a direct imitation of its created life, just as history, biography, or journalism could be considered to be true records of actual life. In this case the principle of mimesis would suggest that the imaginary life of the novel imitates the real life of everyday experience. Such a naïve view of the neutrality of human language is no longer tenable, as we realize that the absolute objectivity of the news report, whether in print, film, or video-tape, is a fallacy. To some extent, whether through the selection of events to be
recorded or through the language with which events are recorded, all history, biography, or news-reports are fictions, in the sense that they are narratives created by authors out of language, in much the same way as the novelist creates his Kosmos.

The novelist, however, is still able to make use of the mimetic principle by alloying his work with those histories, biographies, memoirs, chronicles, and reminiscences, which are recognized as truthful because they deal with events corroborated by extrinsic experience. The novelist may adopt the authoritative voice of the historian who can reveal the truth of a train of events, or he may use the bland, depersonalized tone of a news report, or he may write in the persona of a character who has witnessed or participated in the events of the story. The language of reportage may create the illusion of being completely neutral and unbiased, and its apparent objectivity may create the sense that the created Kosmos has a prior existence, and demand the same sense of belief on the part of the reader as does the article in the daily newspaper. Paradoxically, the newspaper story, which purports to be true and which relies on the extrinsic authority of an editorial staff and agency sources for its credibility, may seem to be less convincing than the events of a novel which creates an intrinsic illusion of truth around the "facts" of its Kosmos. Truth may not only be stranger than fiction, but also less credible.

This tendency of the novel to pretend to be a direct imitation of a "real" world blurs the distinction between the realities of art and life. The classic case-history of this mode of fiction is Defoe's Memoirs of an English Officer (1728), which I shall examine in more detail in Chapter III. This work is supposedly the military memoirs of a Captain George Carleton, and was accepted as such for nearly two centuries. Boswell records that Dr. Johnson was very impressed with its historical truth:

'But, (said his Lordship,) the best account of Lord Peterborough that I have happened to meet with, is in Captain Carleton's Memoirs . . . '
Lord Eliot sent it to Johnson, who told Sir Joshua Reynolds that he was going to bed when it came, but was so much pleased with it, that he sat up till he had read it through, and found in it such an air of truth, that he could not doubt of its authenticity, adding, with a smile, (in allusion to Lord Eliot's having recently been raised to the peerage,) 'I did not think a young Lord could have mentioned to me a book in the English history that was not known to me.'

Arthur W. Secord has since established that the work is "entirely a fiction." Conversely, Defoe's A True Relation of the Apparition of Mrs. Veal (1706) illustrates many of Defoe's fictional techniques in his use of significant details and quotation of vernacular dialogue. The conflict between its air of reality and its fantastic events might make it seem to be an inspired ghost story, had not literary research of its sources proved it to be a piece of second-hand reportage. The merging of the two fictions of the novel's Kosmos and the reporter's perception of the everyday world is inevitable when the novelist seeks to create an air of reality around his Kosmos by borrowing the natural credibility that belongs to the world of experience. The novelist has traditionally incorporated into his fictional Kosmos the images of famous figures and events of history. But Defoe's modern successors have created the "New Journalism" which glories in the reporter's ability to give shape, meaning, value, and credibility, to the events of the day by filtering them through the conscious personality of the narrator who uses all of the linguistic resources of fictional technique to create his perceptions. Capote's In Cold Blood (New York, 1965) is called his "non-fiction novel," while Tom Wolfe's The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test (New York, 1968) transmutes its real-life events into the matrix of fictional art. The novel also merges with the world of biography. It is possible that Defoe would have encountered many people who could have been the original inspiration of his Moll Flanders (1722), just as Alexander Selkirk suggests a model for Robinson Crusoe (1719), and George Carleton's exploits provided the framework for the Memoirs of an English Officer. Conversely, Tropic of Cancer has been described by Henry Miller as...
being completely true to his life, an autobiography rather than a novel, while Norman Mailer's *Marilyn* advertizes the fictional nature of biography by the presence of "factoids"—items of information originating in Mailer's imaginative guesswork, having little or no factual corroboration.

The effect of the "New Journalism" has been to show how language creates its own reality, rather than objectively mirroring a world that already exists in fact or in the imagination. Norman Mailer's *The Armies of the Night* proclaims itself "History as a Novel--The Novel as History," revealing Mailer's thesis that the novelist's "personification of a vision" is necessary, not merely to recount his personal experiences which make up the first part of the work, but also, in the disguise of historical style, to analyse the meaning of the whole episode:

However, the first book can be, in the formal sense, nothing but a personal history which while written as a novel was to the best of the author's memory scrupulous to facts, and therefore a document; whereas the second, while dutiful to all newspaper accounts, eyewitness reports, and historic inductions available, while even obedient to a general style of historical writing, at least up to this point, while even pretending to be a history (on the basis of its introduction) is finally now to be disclosed as some sort of condensation of a collective novel—which is to admit that an explanation of the mystery of the events at the Pentagon cannot be developed by the methods of history—only by the instincts of the novelist.33

Mailer's statement that the factual account of personal experience is "therefore a document" is scarcely to be taken seriously. Rather, both parts of this work illustrate how the writer of fiction re-creates his experience and evaluates its significance through the medium of language. In discrediting the theory of the capacity of language to imitate experience, Mailer does however suggest another way in which the novel can be considered as a mimetic art. If the "document" which he claims Part I to be had another mode of existence outside of the novel, we could show that in his fiction Mailer was imitating another
literary form. There are many forms of continuous prose by which man records (or re-creates) his experience of life, and any of these might become a part of the substance of the novel, adding the credibility of real documents to the fictional world in which they are embedded. Defoe incorporated Robinson Crusoe's "Journal" within the framework of the pseudo-travelogue. A Journal of the Plague Year is punctuated by the "hard evidence!" of the Bills of Mortality, and its tone of factual reportage is bolstered by the incorporation of the presumably genuine text of the Lord Mayor's Orders, while Moll Flanders' credibility is supported by the mid-wife's three versions of the bill to be paid on account of Moll's pregnancy.

On a larger scale, the popularity of the traveller's tale and the sea-voyage as accounts of personal hardship and exotic sights provided the novelist with the model of a "true" narrative which could be imitated in fiction. So, too, did the publication of such collections of correspondence as Pope's or Swift's letters create the format for the epistolary novel. In the same way the modern novel may imitate, like Wilder's The Ides of March, a collection of police reports, or like Barth's Giles Goat-Boy, the transcript of a tape-recording, or like Kaufman's Up The Down Stair-case, a collection of administrative memoranda. Perhaps the most unlikely example is Nabokov's Pale Fire, in which the novel takes its outer shape from the Foreword, Commentary, and Index, attached to a poem of four cantos.

Such imitation of an existing mode of writing can provide the novel with little more than an external structure, or what Robert Donovan calls, its "outer form." This structure provides no more than a platform from which the novelist can begin to create his Kosmos by his perception of the virtual life within the supporting structure, just as a system of scaffolding is necessary before a building can assume its complete form. Donovan distinguishes between this outer form, which is little more than the recognition of its fictional genre, and "the inner form." The latter, according to Donovan, "is the objective result,
in the work itself, of the author's way of looking at experience, and it stands in the
same relation to structure (or architectonics, which is the science of structure) as the
imagination to fancy. Art is more than a craft; it is a way of seeing."

Whatever the narrative stance adopted by the novelist, the problem of the novel
is to perceive through language the reality created through the novelist's vision, whether
we term this reality the "significant form" of the novel, or the imaginative world of its
Kosmos. Finally, it is the novelist's belief in the truth of his fiction which gives value
to his vision. The miracle of the novel is that it achieves its effect through the words on
the printed page. William H. Gass expresses his sense of awe before the miracle of the
novelist's art: "It seems incredible, the ease with which we sink through books quite out
of sight, pass clamorous pages into soundless dreams. That novels should be made of words,
and merely words, is shocking, really. It's as though you had discovered that your wife
were made of rubber; the bliss of all those years, the fears . . . from sponge."36

My study of rhetorical techniques in the novel is based primarily on the major
novels of the half-century that separates Robinson Crusoe from Tristram Shandy, although I
have found it enlightening to examine the novels of Aphra Behn and the later works of
Smollett, which extend beyond this period of time. There is a general agreement that
this period sees the beginning of the English novel as we recognize it today, although
whether the "first" novel is found in the works of Defoe, Richardson, or Fielding is an
unresolvable argument. What is apparent is that both in the major and the minor works of
fiction, this period provides a wealth of entertaining reading for the general reader, and a
fine collection of case-studies for the literary critic.

There are first of all many works based on the assumption that language imitates
reality, and that the "plain style" provides an objective record of events that happen in
the everyday world or in the author's imagination, to the extent that the two are almost
indistinguishable in the "non-fiction novels" of Defoe. I have used the term "chronicle" to label this type of narrative, because the word denotes an account of a series of happenings taking place within a definite period of time, avoids the problem of its truth or falsehood as does the term "History" with its connotations of academic respectability, and suggests that its events are of smaller scale and within the dimension of individual experience. By my use of the word, a chronicle is a series of related events which purport to have taken place in the everyday or historical world, told with the assumed authority and objectivity of a careful and trustworthy reporter. The myth of the truthfulness of the printed word was exploded in the rash of "true histories" that flooded the bookseller's market during the second and third decades of the eighteenth century, and is obviously mocked by Swift in the elaborate paraphernalia of pseudo-authenticity upon which Gulliver's experiences are based.

The eighteenth-century also provides the classic example of the novel which imitates the actual documents of human experience in its representation of the personal letter. The epistolary novel is one of the dominant modes of fiction throughout the eighteenth century, not only in England but also in the major novels of Marivaux and de Laclos in France. Richardson's works are outstanding, not only because he fully exploits the potential of this type of fiction to represent multiple points of view and to suggest a psychological reality within the persona of the fictitious letter-writer, but also because he makes his fictitious letters become a part of the action of the novel, thus bridging the gap between the imaginary Kosmos and the printed word on the page.

Finally, my study culminates in an examination of the self-conscious novel, of which this period provides the prime example in *Tristram Shandy*. All of the questions I have raised about the "form" of the novel as a work of art can only be answered by reference to particular novels. Any definition of the novel can be no more than a working hypothesis
which is refined, elaborated, and modified with every novel we read. My starting point, like E.M. Forster's, was that the novel tells a story, and "telling stories" is a childish euphemism for "telling lies." The problem of the novelist is how to make the telling of a story seem like truth—how does one translate human experience into ink-marks on a page of paper? These are the questions which Sterne plays with when he sets Tristram at work to write his autobiography. While Defoe and Richardson work within the accepted theories of mimesis by which art represents life, Sterne, and, to a lesser extent, Fielding examine the process of novel-writing simultaneously with the writing of the novel.

Tristram Shandy reverses the endeavours of Defoe, who tried to make his fiction appear like truth; Tristram Shandy makes truth appear like fiction. For this reason Tristram Shandy has been acclaimed as the most typical novel, and as Robert Gorham Davis explains, it points the way to the contemporary novel:

Since fiction is lying, since the events it describes occurred nowhere, its very being is non-being. It is big with negation, and the author has to know when to avow what he is doing, when to deny it, when to support lies with other kinds of lies, when with truths, or the appearance of truth, when with probabilities or improbabilities, possibilities or impossibilities, and when to make of all these a structure that has its own independently satisfying mode of being. To ask just where this structure has its being, whether in human minds, or on paper, or in a fixed sequence of verbal significations, is—as we shall see—like asking where thoughts exist in space. But it is a question which Tristram Shandy properly asks over and over again in an ingenious variety of ways.

In the next chapter I intend first to examine the critical attitudes of the period towards fiction, and especially the growing realization that the new novel was more realistic than the old romance. I shall illustrate this belief in the realism that comes from the representation of contemporary life by tracing the Quixote myth as it was adapted in various eighteenth-century novels. These will exemplify the belief that the reality of the novel stemmed from its depiction of life in the contemporary, everyday world, just as
the mind, in John Locke's model, derived its real ideas from the sensation of external objects. The original Don Quixote is itself based on the contrast or conflict between the commonsense view of an earthy, everyday reality as perceived by Sancho Panza, and the romantic, literary ideal of the deluded Don Quixote. Cervantes, however, does not leave us with such a naïve view of the representation of reality. The multiple levels of irony in the structure, language and events of the novel question both of these stances—literary idealism penetrates the world of commonsense reality, and the result is an ambiguous, relativist attitude in which both the practical and theoretical views of reality are held in suspension in the ultimate reality of the novel itself. While the imitations of Don Quixote in the works of Charlotte Lennox, Smollett, and Graves may be seen to lack completely this dialectical quality of Cervantes' original, nevertheless Fielding and Sterne show more affinity to the Cervantic spirit. My study of the development of the English novel will attempt to show the growth of a self-conscious awareness within the novel which, like Cervantes', reveals its own fictitiousness, and creates the sense of the controlling personality behind the authorial mask of reality.
NOTES

1 E.M. Forster, Aspects of the Novel (New York, 1927), pp. 43, 42.

2 The Great Tradition (Garden City, 1954), p. 10.


4 "Programme Music" may be said to tell a story. Actually the notes in the programme tell the story, while the music matches the moods of its events.


6 Lodge gives considerable weight to "the modern critical doctrine that a poem is autotelic, non-paraphrasable, non-translatable, a verbal object in which every part is organically related to every other part and to the whole, something which 'should not mean but be.'" See his Language of Fiction (New York, 1966), pp. 7, 70-71.

7 Ibid., p. 17.

8 Karl Kroeber, in his Styles in Fictional Structures (Princeton, 1971), pp. 23-25, for example, notes: "A characteristic of much fiction is apparent formlessness. It is plain that the illusion of formlessness (which is a factor whenever fiction is "realistic") will affect details of language manipulation. Stylistic analysis of fiction must aim at elucidation of these hidden manipulations. For this reason syntactic or vocabulary analyses founded upon ordinary definition of sentences and words are likely to fail. Stylistic analysis of fiction has to begin with redefinition of "the sentence" and "the word." A sentence in a work of fiction looks like a "nonfictional" sentence but in reality is significantly different, because its function is different. The same is true of words. One must begin a stylistic analysis of fiction with some characterization of the total form of the novel being studied, because it is that form which determines the function of subordinate parts." In his Bibliographical Appendix, pp. 199-208, Kroeber surveys stylistic and linguistic approaches to the study of fiction.


10 Rene Wellek and Austin Warren use the term "Kosmos" to define the "pattern or structure or organism, which includes plot, characters, setting, world-view, 'tone.'" See their Theory of Literature (New York, 1942), p. 203. Walter Allen also argues that "we may quite legitimately talk about a novelist's 'world.' We mean by it the whole realm of his imagination as he has put it down on paper, and we mean further that this realm, fictitious though it is, is yet somehow a self-contained entity consistent in itself and conforming to the psychological laws which govern its creator and his response to life." See his The English Novel (Harmondsworth, 1958), p. 17.
11 Susanne K. Langer, Feeling and Form (New York, 1953), p. 217. Langer notes that the facts of experience can be transformed into the imaginative creation: "For the primary illusion of literature, the semblance of life, is abstracted from immediate, personal life, as the primary illusion of the other arts--virtual space, time, and power--are images of perceived space, vital time, felt power." Subsequent references to this edition will appear in my text.


14 E.M. Forster distinguishes between homo sapiens and homo fictus. The fictional character belongs "to a world where the secret life is visible, to a world that is not and cannot be ours, to a world where the narrator and the creator are one. . . . in the novel we can know people perfectly." Aspects of the Novel (New York, 1927), p. 63.

15 Schorer, 68.

16 D.H. Lawrence, Sons and Lovers (Harmondsworth, 1948), p. 34.

17 The emotional movement from passion to calm in Lawrence's character makes an interesting contrast with Wordsworth's statement that "Poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings: it takes its origin from emotion recollected in tranquility: the emotion is contemplated till by a species of reaction the tranquility gradually disappears, and the emotion, similar to that which was before the subject of contemplation, is gradually produced, and does itself actually exist in the mind." "Preface to Lyrical Ballads, 1800" in Poetry and Prose, ed. W.M. Merchant, (London, 1955), p. 230.

18 Without the corroborative evidence of historical or scientific research, fiction, or any imaginative literature, is not the sort of truth that would satisfy a court of law. Wellek and Warren point out that "the word 'fiction' still preserves this old Platonic charge against literature, to which Philip Sidney and Dr. Johnson reply that literature never pretended to be real in that sense; and still preserving this vestigial remnant of the old charge of deception, it can still irritate the earnest writer of novels, who knows well that fiction is less strange and more representative than truth." Theory of Literature (New York, 1942), p. 202. Northrop Frye also suggests that "it is difficult to see what use such a distinction [between fiction and non-fiction] can be to a literary critic." He points out that if fiction is seen as an autotelic structure of words, like a poem, then the question of its factual content is immaterial: "Surely the word fiction, which, like poetry, means etymologically something made for its own sake, could be applied in criticism to any work of literary art in a radically continuous form, which almost always means a work of art in prose." See his Anatomy of Criticism (Princeton, N.J., 1957), p. 303.
Wayne C. Booth, in his Preface to The Rhetoric of Fiction (Chicago, 1961).


In assessing the credibility of fiction it may be necessary to take into account the effect on the reader when a fictional world is expanded or duplicated in a series of novels or short stories. Perhaps each succeeding re-creation of the fictional Kosmos adds to its credibility like the repetition of a lie for political propaganda, or the reiteration of advertising jingles in the world of commerce. Such fictional worlds as Dickens' London, Hardy's Wessex, or Faulkner's Yoknapatawpha County seem to develop an increased sense of "livingness" as locations, characters, and events are repeated from book to book. The same phenomenon may also explain the required length of the novel as a work which needs an extended time in the experience of reading in order to establish a Kosmos, the apparent reality of which survives the gaps between its separate parts, chapters, or volumes.

Ian Watt, The Rise of the Novel (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1957), p. 34. Subsequent references to this edition will appear in my text.


In his Fiction and the Shape of Belief (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1964), Sheldon Sacks distinguishes between the autotelic novel, which he calls the "Represented Action," and other forms of narrative fiction such as the satire and the apologue, which are organized according to external principles.

Wayne Booth must take credit for pioneering this line of enquiry, first in his essay "The Self-Conscious Narrator in Comic Fiction before Tristram Shandy," in PMLA, 67 (1952), 163-185, and in The Rhetoric of Fiction (Chicago, 1961). His work has inspired at least two doctoral theses from Wisconsin involving an examination of the

---

35. Ibid., p. 11.
CHAPTER II
ROMANCE AND REALITY—THE EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY VIEW

Scattered through the essays, prefaces, pamphlets, reviews, and letters of the eighteenth century are many comments on the nature and effects of prose fiction.¹ They reveal a growing consciousness that there was developing a "new species of writing."² Fielding's Preface to Joseph Andrews (1742), in which he refers to his work as a "comic epic-poem in prose,"³ may be read as an attempt to gain classic respectability for his new kind of writing, as well as an exercise in critical definition. For a standard of comparison, the writers looked back to the seventeenth-century taste for translations of the French heroic romances, and quickly perceived two important distinctions in their contemporary popular fiction: its brevity and its realism.

During the first three decades of the eighteenth century the term "novel" was often used to distinguish the shorter English stories from the voluminous French predecessors. The works of such prolific writers as Mrs. Manley, Mrs. Davys, Samuel Croxall, Mrs. Jane Barker, Mrs. Haywood, Mrs. Pendarves, and Mrs. Aubin were in such demand that they were reprinted in various collections,⁴ attestation to the public avidity for light reading, especially among the women of the middle classes.⁵ In her Preface to The Secret History of Queen Zarah (1705), Mrs. Manley claims that her "little Pieces which have banish'd Romances are much more agreeable to the Brisk and Impetuous Humour of the English, who have naturally no Taste for longwinded Performances."⁶ Similarly, Edward Phillips, in The New World of Words (1706), defines a novel as "an ingenious Relation of a pleasant Adventure, or Intrigue; a short Romance, or pretty Story,"⁷ and Sir Richard Blackmore, in his Essays Upon Several
Subjects (1716), remarks that the "voluminous Romances, the Delight of the past Ages, are no longer demanded, but lie by as neglected Lumber in the Shops, while short Novels and Tales are become the common Entertainment. . .".

Throughout the eighteenth century French romance is assumed to portray a world of extravagant fantasy. Just as the term "novel" was first a counter to its inordinate prolixity, so the term "history" was used to suggest stories that were true to real life rather than the products of a wild imagination. The dichotomized, true-or-false view of prose narrative characterizes much of the critical discussions throughout the eighteenth century. This distinction between novel and romance is expressed in William Congreve's Preface to his Incognita (1692):

Romances are generally composed of the Constant Loves and invincible Courages of Hero's, Heroins, Kings and Queens, Mortals of the first Rank, and so forth; where lofty language, miraculous Contingencies and impossible Performances, elevate and surprize the Reader into a giddy Delight, which leaves him flat upon the Ground whenever he gives of, and vexes him to think how he has suffer'd himself to be pleased and transported, concern'd and afflicted at the several Passages which he has Read, viz. these Knights Success to their Damosels Misfortunes, and such like, when he is forced to be very well convinced that 'tis all a lye. Novels are of a more familiar nature; Come near us, and represent to us Intrigues in practice, delight us with Accidents and odd Events, but not such as are wholly unusual or unpresidented, such which not being so distant from our Belief bring also the pleasure nearer us.

Congreve here expresses several concepts which were to become the critical commonplaces of the eighteenth century. The novel is to deal with the familiar, everyday life of ordinary people; the novelist may contrive unusual situations and actions; the reader derives pleasure from believing, at least temporarily, in the life depicted in the novel. By 1740 these assumptions had been incorporated into a dictionary definition of the word "novel" as "a pleasant, ingenious story, in which
the relater dresses up an invention of his own as a real fact, with all the
embellishments of art, to render it agreeable and instructive...10 Johnson
writes about "the comedy of romance,"11 Fielding calls his work "a comic Epic-
Poem in Prose,"12 Richardson calls Clarissa a "history,"13 --nevertheless there is a
general agreement that the new species of writing gains its effect from its adherence
to nature as seen in the people and society of the times. By 1760 the term "novel"
had become established to define those fictions whose actions were confined "within
the narrow bounds of probability."14 Both the anonymous author of The Campaign
(1759) and Arthur Murphy, in An Essay on the Life and Genius of Henry Fielding
(1762), see Fielding as the founder of this form of fiction.15

Nevertheless, while the novel gained respectability during the course of the
century, it was still regarded as a species which had evolved from the earlier
romances, and one of the recurring themes of eighteenth-century criticism is the
tracing of the history of this genre. Mrs. Manley's Preface to The Secret History of
Queen Zarah (1705),16 Stephen Lewis's translation of Huet's The History of Romances
(1715),17 Sir Richard Blackmore's "An Essay Upon Epick Poetry" (1716),18 and
Jeremy Collier's Appendix to Morery's Dictionary (1721)19 all trace the history of
romance from the myths and ballads of pre-history, through the epic literature of the
classics and the Renaissance, to the French heroic romances of the seventeenth
century. Even after the novel had been accepted as a modern genre, the fascination
with its origins in romance can be seen in Richard Hurd's Letters on Chivalry and
Romance (1762), John Moore's A View of the Commencement and Progress of Romance
(1780), Hugh Blair's Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres (1783), and James Beattie's
Dissertations Moral and Critical (1783).20
In *The Progress of Romance* (1785) Clara Reeve acknowledges her debt to her predecessors in the history of romance before making a more useful distinction in the evolution of novel and romance. Her work is in the form of a dialogue between two ladies and a gentleman who spend several evenings discussing first the development of fiction through the ages, and then reviewing the works of their contemporaries. Euphrasia, characterized as the knowledgeable, well-read authority on the origin of romance, defines the difference between the two species:

The word *Novel* in all languages signifies something new. It was first used to distinguish these works from Romance, though they have lately been confounded together and are frequently mistaken for each other . . . . The Romance is an heroic fable, which treats of fabulous persons and things. — The Novel is a picture of real life and manners, and of the times in which it is written. The Romance in lofty and elevated language, describes what never happened nor is likely to happen. — The Novel gives a familiar relation of such things, as pass every day before our eyes, such as may happen to our friend, or to ourselves; and the perfection of it, is to represent every scene, in so easy and natural a manner, and to make them appear so probable, as to deceive us into a persuasion (at least while we are reading) that all is real, until we are affected by the joys or distresses, of the persons in the story, as if they were our own.

(pp. 110-111)

In tracing the development of romance, Clara Reeve follows the lead of other critics, although she perhaps gives more emphasis to the contribution of English writers—Chaucer, Lyly, Sidney, and Barclay, whose Argenis Euphrasia claims to have translated as *The Phoenix* (pp. 82-84). Where Clara Reeve’s work shows a departure from earlier views is in her tracing a separate lineage for the development of the novel. According to Euphrasia, the tradition begins with the Italian novellas of Giraldi and Boccacce, followed by Cervantes’ *Exemplary Novels* (1613), *le Roman Comique* of Scarron and the works of *le Sage* (pp. 112-5). She considers the English novel to begin with Robert Baron’s *Cyprian Academy*, and among the early novel-writers she
finds Mrs. Behn, Mrs. Manley, Mrs. Heywood, Richardson, and Fielding. Robinson Crusoe, in her view, is a special case, because it partakes of the nature of both novel and romance, so that she concludes it is a work of "a different species from either," a work that is "singular and original" (p. 127).

The Progress of Romance is notable because Clara Reeve not only attempts to trace the history of the development of prose fiction, but also criticizes and evaluates the works of her contemporaries. Here she exhibits the major preoccupation of the eighteenth-century critic in dealing with prose fiction—its effect on the morals, and implicitly the sexual behaviour, of its readers. The perennial argument ranges around both extremes of romantic and realistic literature. On the one hand heroic romance may be seen to be so remote from life that the reader cannot be swayed by the behaviour of its characters; on the other hand, heroic romance creates a fairy world of impossibly high ideals of love and honour which the young reader adopts with the danger of disillusion when his expectations are unfulfilled in the real world. Conversely, because the novel deals with ordinary situations of everyday life, the young reader might be warned of the dangers and pitfalls of the way of the world, or he may be swayed by his admiration of a hero to emulate any of his immoral activities. Following the popular success of Roderick Random (1748) and Tom Jones (1749), Dr. Johnson found it necessary to warn the readers of his Rambler No. 4, of March 31, 1750, of the dangers of "the works of fiction, with which the present generation seems more particularly delighted, ... such as exhibit life in its true state, diversified only by accidents that daily happen in the world, and influenced by passions and qualities which are really to be found in conversing with mankind." In this essay Dr. Johnson repeats the familiar distinction between the heroic romances of the previous age and the
"comedy of romance" of his present age. He recognizes that the contemporary writers based their works on their experience of life, necessitating an "accurate observation of the living world," in order to become "just copyers of human manners" (1, 20). Although it is "the greatest excellency of art to imitate nature," Dr. Johnson argues that "greater care is still required in representing life, which is so often discoloured by passion, or deformed by wickedness" (1, 22). Implicit in Dr. Johnson's argument is his recognition of the power of art to transmute the experience of life. As long as fiction is regarded as the faithful representation of everyday reality, its vision of life necessarily includes the depiction of behaviour which contravenes normal standards of morality. Dr. Johnson, in his role of Augustan moralist, is concerned that the writer's Kosmos should reflect and uphold official morality in its representation of immoral behaviour: "Vice, for vice is necessary to be shewn, should always disgust; nor should the graces of gaiety, or the dignity of courage, be so united with it, as to reconcile it to the mind. Wherever it appears, it should raise hatred by the malignity of its practices, and contempt by the meanness of its stratagems; for while it is supported by either parts or spirit, it will be seldom heartily abhorred" (1, 24).

The development in narrative fiction from the fantasy of chivalric romance to the reality of the contemporary novel, with its concomitant power to corrupt the immature reader, becomes a part of the popular belief of the eighteenth century. In Sheridan's The Rivals (1775) the heroine Lydia has hurriedly to hide the copies of Smollett's and Sterne's works, which her maid has brought from the circulating library, in order to preserve her air of respectability. Similarly, George Colman's Prologue to his play Polly Honeycombe: A Dramatick Novel of One Act (1760) traces the history of popular fiction from romance to the novel, recognizing the effect of Don Quixote
in discrediting extravagant, magical fantasies, but playfully gloating on the power of
the novel to corrupt its female readers:

Hither, in days of yore, from Spain or France
Came a dread Sorceress; her name, ROMANCE.
O'er Britain's Isle her wayward spells She cast.
And Common Sense in magick chain bound fast.
In mad Sublime did each fond Lover woo,
And in Heroicks ran each Billet-Doux:
High deeds of Chivalry their sole Delight,
Each Fair a Maid Distrest, each Swain a Knight.
Then might Statira Orondates see,
At Tilts and Tournaments, arm'd Cap-a-pè.
She too, on Milk-white Palfrey, Lance in hand,
A Dwarf to guard her, pranc'd about the land.
This Fiend to quell, his sword Cervantes drew.
A trusty Spanish Blade, Toledo true:
Her Talismans and Magick Wand He broke—
Knights, Genii, Castles—vanish'd into smoke;
But now, the dear delight of later years,
The younger Sister of ROMANCE appears:
Less solemn is her air, her drift the same,
And NOVEL her enchanting, charming, Name.
ROMANCE might strike our grave Forefathers' pomp,
But NOVEL for our Buck and lively Romp!
Cassandra's Folios now no longer read,
See, Two Neat Pocket Volumes in their stead!
And then so sentimental is the Stile,
So chaste, yet so bewitching all the while!
Plot, and DEVELOPMENT, passion, rape, and rapture,
The total sum of ev'ry dear— dear— Chapter.
'Tis not alone the Small-Talk and the Smart,
'Tis NOVEL most beguiles the Female Heart.
Miss reads—she melts—she sighs—Love steals upon her—
And then—Alas, poor Girl!—good night, poor Honour! 24

The whole controversy about the effects of novel-reading is a testament in itself
to the power of fiction to create a sense of belief. 25 Behind most of the arguments,
including Dr. Johnson's, there is the unquestioned assumption that the reader will take
fiction as a true record of the life around him, and is therefore likely to model his
behaviour on the actions ascribed to the fictional characters. The eighteenth century
already had one example of such behaviour in the person of Don Quixote, but whereas
the absurdity of the Manchegan Knight's confusion of romance and reality was patently obvious, it was not understood why a contemporary reader should or should not believe in the fiction he was reading. Sophronia, in Clara Reeve's *Progress of Romance*, in discussing Mrs. Sheridan's *Sidney Biddulph*, remarks that "the language is so easy and natural, that every thing seems real in it, and we sorrow as for a well known and beloved friend;" Hortensius notes that the Critical Reviewers had also spoken of this book "as if it was a true history," which leads Euphrasia to the conclusion that "perhaps there is not a better Criterion of the merit of a book, than our losing sight of the Author." (p. 24) Such a comment seems to anticipate the Jamesian theory of the novel postulated by Percy Lubbock, and may also explain why Dr. Johnson thought that Defoe's *Memoirs of an English Officer* has "such an air of truth, that he could not doubt of its authenticity." Richardson, too, was concerned with the reader's belief in his fiction, as shown in his letter to Bishop Warburton, rejecting the Bishop's offer to write a preface for *Clarissa*:  "Will you, good Sir, allow me to mention, that I could wish that the Air of Genuiness (sic) had been kept up, tho' I want not the Letters to be thought genuine; only so far kept up, I mean, as that they should not prefatically be owned not to be genuine. . . ." Perhaps Richardson wanted to avoid a repetition of the incident when, after a reading of *Pamela*, the villagers of Slough rang their churchbells to celebrate the heroine's marriage, yet at the same time he realizes that the effectiveness of the fiction entails at least a suspension of the reader's disbelief. In his continuation of the letter he hints at this difference in the responses to literature and life: "and this for fear of weakening their Influence where any of them are aimed to be exemplary; as well as to avoid hurting that kind of Historical Faith which Fiction itself is generally read with, tho' we know it to be Fiction."
The most comprehensive eighteenth-century discussion of the nature of belief in fiction can be found in David Hume's *A Treatise of Human Nature* (1739-40). According to Hume's analysis, belief is a sentiment or feeling capable of bestowing on ideas the same force and vivacity as to make them as real as impressions. The difference between "impressions" and "ideas" is fundamental to Hume's conception of the working of the mind. Whereas "impressions" are the "sensations, passions and emotions" which have the most "force and liveliness," "ideas" are "the faint images of these in thinking and reasoning" (p. 1). Belief, therefore, has the power to make "ideas" as effective as "impressions" in influencing the working of the mind. Hume illustrates the difference which belief can make to the reading of a book:

If one person sits down to read a book as a romance, and another as a true history, they plainly receive the same ideas, and in the same order; nor does the incredulity of the one, and the belief of the other hinder them from putting the very same sense upon their author. His words produce the same ideas in both; tho' his testimony has not the same influence on them. The latter has a more lively conception of all the incidents. He enters deeper into the concerns of the persons: represents to himself their actions, and characters, and friendships, and enmities: He even goes so far as to form a notion of their features, and air, and person. While the former, who gives no credit to the testimony of the author, has a more faint and languid conception of all these particulars; and except on account of the style and ingenuity of the composition, can receive little entertainment from it. (pp. 97-8)

In this example, because the reader believes in the truth of the book, he perceives its ideas with greater force and liveliness, and therefore experiences more stimulation of his passions and imagination, while "an idle fiction has no efficacy" to achieve this degree of entertainment (p. 119). For this reason "poets themselves, tho' liars by profession, always endeavour to give an air of truth to their fiction; and where that is totally neglected, their performances, however ingenious, will never be able to afford much pleasure" (p. 121). Because truth has this effect of procuring "an easy
reception for the ideas, and to make the mind acquiesce in them with satisfaction" (p. 121), poets, therefore, tend to borrow the names of their characters and copy the events of their works from familiar history in order that the "mixture of truth and falsehood" will make a "deeper impression on the fancy and affections" (p. 122).

Yet, according to Hume, if belief strengthens the imagination, the converse is also true, and "a vigorous and strong imagination is of all talents the most proper to procure belief and authority" (p. 123). In an extreme case "when the imagination, from any extraordinary ferment of the blood and spirits, acquires such a vivacity as disorders all its powers and faculties, there is no means of distinguishing betwixt truth and falsehood; but every loose fiction or idea, having the same influence as the impressions of the memory, or the conclusions of the judgment, is receiv'd on the same footing, and operates with equal force on the passions" (p. 123). Fortunately, poetry has a lesser effect as "the least reflection dissipates the illusions of poetry, and places the objects in their proper light" (p. 123).

Although this analysis accords with the guiding principle of Hume's system of psychology—the association of ideas—Hume is still faced with the difficulty that the human imagination is capable of emulating all of the ideas and techniques of history in creating a fiction which will still not be read with the same feeling of belief. In 1748 Hume returned to the problem when he rewrote Book I of the Treatise as part of his Philosophical Essays concerning Human Understanding, which later became An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding (1758). In the Enquiry he gives full credit to the power of the imagination:

"Nothing is more free than the imagination of man, and though it cannot exceed that original stock of ideas, furnished by the internal and external senses, it has unlimited power of mixing, compounding, separating, and
dividing these ideas, in all the varieties of fiction and vision. It can feign a train of events, with all the appearance of reality, ascribe to them a particular time and place, conceive them as existent, and paint them out to itself with every circumstance, that belongs to any historical fact, which it believes with the greatest certainty. 30

Yet there is still a difference between "fiction and belief," which is no more than "some sentiment or feeling which is annexed to the latter, not to the former," and Hume can do no more than assert that this belief which is excited by nature is "nothing but a more vivid, lively, forcible, firm, steady conception of an object, than what the imagination alone is ever able to attain" (pp. 79–80). Hence, the belief which distinguishes a real object from an imaginative fiction "consists not in the peculiar nature or order of ideas, but in the manner of their conception, and in their feeling to the mind" (p. 80). Hume admits that this is an unphilosophical solution, and in appealing to the commonsense of his readers as a means of distinguishing truth from fiction, he is, in effect, doing no more than Dr. Johnson who pretended to prove the existence of a rock from the pain which he felt from kicking it.

The problem of belief in the illusion of art is not confined to the reading of fiction, but in fact becomes more obvious in relation to theatrical performance. From Dryden onwards, English critics concerned themselves with the "rules" of drama and the question of the three unities of action, time and place which were usually deemed necessary in order to preserve the dramatic illusion. In his Preface to Shakespeare (1765) Dr. Johnson scorned the common view that "the necessity of observing the unities of time and place arises from the supposed necessity of making the drama credible," or that because "the mind revolts from evident falsehood . . . fiction loses its force when it departs from the resemblance of reality." 31 Dr. Johnson takes the commonsense view that at the theatre "the spectators are always in their senses, and
know, from the first act to the last, that the stage is only a stage, and that the
players are only players" (1, 77). Dr. Johnson makes a clear distinction between life
and art when he considers the effects of a drama; even the evils exhibited in a tragedy
can be viewed with pleasure because "the delight of tragedy proceeds from our
consciousness of fiction" (1, 78). In his Treatise Hume had first taken the similar view
that fear and terror give pleasure as the subject of both drama and religious discourse
because "the imagination reposes itself indolently on the idea; and the passion, being
soften'd by the want of belief in the subject, has no more than the agreeable effect of
enlivening the mind, and fixing the attention" (p. 115). However, in Book II of
The Treatise Hume develops his concept of sympathy in his explanation of the passions,
and suggests that the pleasure of tragedy stems, not from disbelief, but from the
intensification of emotion created by the audience's sympathy for the characters in the
drama. If this were so, then there would not be any difference between the responses
to life or art, so in his essay "Of Tragedy" (1757) Hume modifies his argument by
suggesting that the experience of art has the power to convert the pain of witnessing
evil into the pleasure of imitation:

It is certain, that, on the theatre, the representation has almost the effect
of reality; yet it has not altogether that effect. However we may be
hurried away by the spectacle; whatever dominion the senses and imagination
may usurp over the reason, there still lurks at the bottom a certain idea of
falsehood in the whole of what we see. This idea, though weak and disguised,
suffices to diminish the pain which we suffer from the misfortunes of those
whom we love, and to reduce that affliction to such a pitch as converts it
into a pleasure. We weep for the misfortune of a hero, to whom we are
attached. In the same instant we comfort ourselves, by reflecting, that it
is nothing but a fiction: And it is precisely that mixture of sentiments,
which composes an agreeable sorrow, and tears that delight us.32

In this essay Hume gives full recognition to the power of art to arouse passions and to
transform feelings which are the normal responses to life situations. He concludes
with the suggestion that the same principle applies to the reading of fiction, in that it is the manner of narration that controls our response rather than its subject: "What so disagreeable as the dismal, gloomy, disastrous stories, with which melancholy people entertain their companions? The uneasy passion being there raised alone, unaccompanied with any spirit, genius, or eloquence, conveys a pure uneasiness, and is attended with nothing that can soften it into pleasure or satisfaction" (p. 448).

Despite Hume's realization of the importance of the rhetoric of fiction, the more typical eighteenth-century view was to assume that contemporary fiction, because it dealt with everyday life of the times, had therefore a reality which was lacking in the romances of earlier ages. The best illustration of this attitude can be seen in the various English works derived from Cervantes' *Don Quijote de la Mancha* (1605, 1615). In this work an elderly Spanish squire of the seventeenth century attempts to emulate the heroes of the romances which have been his favourite reading. He sets out on a knightly quest, interpreting the people and objects of everyday life in terms of the romances of chivalry. The problem of trying to equate everyday reality with fictional reality is central to the whole work, and justifies its designation as the archetypal novel of western literature. If, as Lionel Trilling suggests, "The novel is a perpetual quest for reality," then Cervantes' story of Don Quixote's quest becomes a metaphor for the novelist's attempt to capture reality in his prose fiction. This "first great example" contains, therefore, the "whole potentiality of the genre," so that "all prose fiction is a variation on the theme of Don Quixote," in which Cervantes "sets for the novel the problem of appearance and reality" (p. 234).

The impact of the Spanish work on English literature is particularly an eighteenth-century phenomenon, despite its first appearance in England in Thomas
Shelton's translations of Part I in 1612 and Part II in 1620. Shakespeare, of course, could conceivably have read the first part of Cervantes' work before his death in 1616, and there is evidence that knowledge of the work became more widespread during the seventeenth century. Beaumont and Fletcher's *The Knight of the Burning Pestle* (1613), Robert Anton's *Moriomachia* (1613), and Samuel Butler's *Hudibras* (1663, 1664, 1678), among other works, probably owe their conception to the Quixotic idea of burlesquing the knightly quest. Altogether there are some eighty allusions to *Don Quixote* in English books published from 1607 to 1660. Nevertheless, apart from Shelton's translation, the two most comprehensive treatments of the work reveal a lack of insight that seems incredible in the light of modern understanding of the complexity of the novel. Edmund Gayton's *Pleasant Notes Upon Don Quixote* (1654) characterizes the hero as a "sly coward," "an unabashed liar," "a vagabond," "a hypocritical thief," "a sly fox," and a "mealy-mouthed courtier." The Notes consist mainly of a series of inane comments on quotations from Part I of Shelton's translation, interspersed with facetious anecdotes and poems which have only the most tenuous connection with Cervantes' work. For Gayton, *Don Quixote* is no more than a farcical story of a mad buffoon, providing the occasion for some trivial jokes and suggestive comments. The work shows no hint of any sympathy for the Don or understanding of the subtlety of his characterization. According to Edwin Knowles, Gayton's work sets "the prevailing fashion" for the period as "the forty years from the Restoration to 1700 saw the misbegotten, farcical approach to Don Quixote reach its full flowering." The same tone characterizes John Phillips' translation of 1687, based on Shelton's, in which the settings are transposed to England and the characters are made to speak a Billingsgate slang. The view of *Don Quixote* as a bawdy farce
culminates in the plays of Thomas D'Urfey entitled *The Comical History of Don Quixote* (Parts I and II, 1694, Part III in 1696) in which the hero is no more than an amusing old fool, while D'Urfey's treatment of the village girls was censured by Jeremy Collier in his *A Short View of the Immorality and Profaneness of the English Stage* (1698).

Finally, before the stature of Cervantes' work begins to gain full recognition during the eighteenth century, Ned Ward published *The Life and Notable Adventures of the renowned Knight Don Quixote de la Mancha, Merrily translated into Hudibrastic Verse* (1711), another of what Knowles calls "Gayton's progeny of false Quixotes." 39

Perhaps the turning point in Cervantes' English reputation is Sir William Temple's reference to *Don Quixote* as a satire in "the best and highest strain that ever was, or will be, reached by that vein." 40 A.P. Burton suggests that Temple was continuing a tradition, which started with Rapin's *Reflexion sur la poetique d'Aristotle et sur les ouvrages des poètes anciens et modernes* (1674), that Cervantes was avenging a personal slight by ridiculing and bringing into disrepute the nobility of Spain. 41

To make Cervantes responsible for the decline of Spanish chivalry may suggest an exaggerated view of the power of satire to reform the world. Yet every age to some extent reinterprets a classic work according to the tenor of the times, and satire is one of the characteristic modes of Augustan literature, so it is not surprising that Cervantes was associated with Lucian and Rabelais as one of the world's greatest satirists. In the eighteenth century *Don Quixote* is celebrated as a satisfying testament to the satiric power of literature. 42 Eventually this critical commonplace came to be treated epigrammatically in William King's couplet, *"Cervantes brought true Wisdom to the height, and taught the distance betwixt Vain and Great."* Later Horace Walpole was to write in a letter that "Cervantes laughed chivalry out of fashion,"
anticipating Byron's dictum that "Cervantes smiled Spain's chivalry away." 43

Further insight into the nature of Cervantes' achievement, as well as growing sympathy for his quixotic hero, develops throughout the eighteenth century, and is marked by the availability of the novel to English readers, accompanied by increased knowledge of its author. The translations of John Stevens (1700), Peter Motteux (1700), Charles Jervas (1742), Tobias Smollett (1755), George Kelly (1769), and C.H. Wilmot (1774) testify to the novel's popularity. Evidence of the novel's prestige is shown by the luxury edition in Spanish which was commissioned by Lord Carteret for Queen Caroline's "Library of Merlin the Wise," edited by Peter Piñeda and published by Jacob Tonson in 1738. This work is also a milestone in the development of Cervantic scholarship because it includes a "Vida" by Don Gregorio Mayans y Siscar, which for a generation became the standard source of biographical information on Cervantes. 44 Another notable landmark is John Bowie's Anataciones (1781) which publicized new information about Cervantes' life, and which laid the foundation for modern understanding of Cervantes' novel.

There is no doubt that Don Quixote came to be recognized during the eighteenth century as a classic work of literature. What is especially interesting is that its greatness was seen to stem from its adherence to "reality," because in the novel the false world of chivalric romance is contrasted with the "real" world of Cervantes' Spain. Cervantes' prose creation of seventeenth-century Spanish life is accepted as real in distinction to Don Quixote's interpretation of its people and buildings in terms of chivalric romance. Thus in Chapter 21 of Don Quixote when the Knight sees "a man on horseback who wore on his head something that glittered like gold," he declares first that it is "the helmet of Mambrino," and then asks Sancho if
he too sees the man "with a helmet of gold on his head." Sancho replies that he sees only something which shines, and Quixote tells him again that it is Mambrino's helmet. Now the Narrator (supposedly el Cide Hamete Benengeli) interjects with "the truth of the matter concerning the helmet," adding a paragraph of corroboratory details to show that the object is simply a barber's brass basin which had recently been scoured. After Quixote has scared the barber off his mule, he orders Sancho to pick up "the helmet," which he does, characteristically declaring that "the basin is a good one and is worth eight reals if it is worth a farthing." At first Sancho laughs at Quixote's fancy, but then disguises his incredulity by admitting that the helmet "is all the world like a barber's basin." Thus, while Sancho appears to accept Quixote's definition of the object, Quixote admits that the object does have an ordinary appearance: "This object . . . seems, as you say, to be a barber's basin. But to me, who know what it really is, its transformation makes no matter. . . ." For Quixote it is a helmet disguised as a basin, for Sancho it is a basin defined as a helmet. Both interpretations effectively confirm the Narrator's "truth of the matter concerning the helmet," making the object seem to be a part of the everyday reality of the seventeenth century, although as an image in Cervantes' ambiguous Kosmos, the reader is still left with an element of doubt about its reality.

An eighteenth-century reader, however, distrusting Cervantes' ambiguity, would probably deny my last statement because he would argue, a barber's brass basin has more probability than any sort of a helmet, and the incident therefore has a greater degree of vraisemblance. To call the object a basin is truthful, to call it a helmet is fantasy. Such a view of the truthfulness of fiction is characteristic of the three English novels which are direct descendants of Don Quixote. Charlotte
Lennox's The Female Quixote (1752), Tobias Smollett's serialized novel Sir Launcelot Greaves (1763), and Richard Graves' The Spiritual Quixote (1773) are all re-workings of the Quixote story, and all emphasize the truthfulness of the reality described in the narration in contrast with the fantastic interpretations made of it by the central characters. Like Don Quixote in the original novel, Charlotte Lennox's Arabella, Smollett's Launcelot, and Graves' Wildgoose all suffer from delusions, imposing their own romantic concepts of life onto the everyday reality described in the story. As their false view of the world affects their behaviour, so do the other characters in the novels come to question their sanity. The plot of each novel is to rid the protagonist of his delusion so that he can perceive reality in the same way as the rest of his society, and thus be restored to sanity.

Arabella, the heroine of The Female Quixote is a later version of Biddy in Richard Steele's The Tender Husband (1705). The heads of both heroines, like their Spanish predecessor's, have been turned by their reading of the old romances to the extent that neither can make the appropriate responses to her suitor. Like Don Quixote, Arabella creates her own make-believe world; she dresses like the heroines of seventeenth-century French romances, and conducts her relationship with her lovers according to the manners of the romanticized world. Her two lovers are distinguished by their responses to Arabella's imposition. Glanville, who is genuinely in love with her, tries to reason her out of her fantasy world, and at first he fails miserably. Bellamour, the familiar eighteenth-century fortune-hunter, panders to Arabella's delusion by concocting his own 'romantic' history, like one of Cervantes' interpolated tales, although one that is patently absurd to everyone but Arabella. Bellamour also hires an actress to play the part of a princess in distress in order to discredit the true
love of his rival. Charlotte Lennox contrasts Arabella's romantic vision of the world with the reality of the polite world of London, Bath, and the English countryside, a world in which Arabella sees suitors as potential ravishers, and a drunken whore as an abducted princess. Arabella is finally cured of her madness by a debate with a clergyman who proves that her romances are not true histories because of their authors' lack of true sources. The learned doctor censures romance for its inventiveness, which is a "species of falsehood," and he asks, "What Falsehood is more hateful than the Falsehood of History?" He goes on to condemn the tendency of these books "to inflame the passions of Revenge and Love," which it "is one of the severest labours of Reason and piety to suppress." In the world created by Charlotte Lennox's novel Reason is triumphant, and Arabella is cured of her romantic delusion. There is no place for romance in the "real" world of the novel.

The inspiration for Lennox's novel can be found in the first few chapters of Don Quixote in which the hero is characterized simply as a lunatic deranged by his reading of mediaeval romance, and deservedly suffering the results of his misinterpretations of everyday reality. Arabella is victim of a similar delusion, but whereas Quixote's fantasy causes him to set out on a noble mission, Arabella passively responds to the machinations of her suitors. Consequently The Female Quixote lacks all of the dimensions of irony which can be found in the original: the irony implicit in Quixote's altruism; the irony of Sancho's commonsense giving way to Quixote's romantic notions; and above all, the irony of the narration which builds a superstructure of fictional levels to protect the apparent historicity of the "real" Manchegan archives. Lacking the multiple perspectives which exist in Don Quixote in the techniques of narration as much as in the characterization and action,
The Female Quixote fails to develop the character of its heroine; Arabella remains the silly, bemused heiress until she is suddenly cured by the curate's reasoning. Although her money and her beauty are said to make her attractive to her suitors, there is nothing in the novel to arouse the reader's sympathy with her plight. Perhaps Don Quixote would have suffered the same fate if Cervantes had finished his work with the Don's return from his first sally, omitting the nobility, the pathos, the wisdom, and even the commonsense with which his figure eventually becomes endowed. Whereas, in Don Quixote, Cervantes explores the interpenetration of literature and life, in The Female Quixote Charlotte Lennox keeps the two firmly apart, the function of the heroine being to illustrate the fatuity of the manners and ideals of seventeenth-century romance when Arabella applies them to her own society. Except in Arabella's fantasies, the two worlds remain distinct, and the novel shows no signs of self-awareness—no hint that the narrator realizes she is creating a story which is itself romanticized, although to a lesser degree, as are the tales and romances which the novel sets out to satirize.

Something of the same ambiguity of attitude towards a set of ideals maintained by the mad anti-hero is apparent in Graves's The Spiritual Quixote. After a tiff with his village vicar, Geoffry Wildgoose becomes gloomy, indolent and melancholic, and in this mood comes across "an old forlorn quarto" in which he finds a "miscellaneous collection of godly discourses, upon predestination, election, and reprobation; justification by faith; grace and free-will." Wildgoose is captivated by this attack on the established Church, and goes on to read a whole library of Nonconformist works which eventually have the effect of producing "that sort of phrenzy, which we ascribe to enthusiasts in music, poetry, or painting; or in any
other art or science; whose imaginations are so entirely possessed by those ideas, as to 
make them talk and act like madmen in the sober eye of merely rational people" (p. 2). 
The parallel between Don Quixote, infected by his reading of chivalric romance, and 
Wildgoose enthused by Methodist religion is obvious. Moreover, just as Quixote's 
chivalric ideals sometimes seem preferable to those of the modern world which he 
inhabits, so, too, does Wildgoose's Christian message receive a great deal of support 
from other characters, and in particular from Doctor Greville, who is "a Clergyman, 
in whom the sacerdotal character appeared in its genuine dignity," and who is very 
sympathetic to the aspirations of Wesley and the Methodists to spread a true Christian 
piety. In another parallel with Cervantes, Graves, in his introductory materials, 
creates a fictional author named Christopher Collop, whose manuscript of "The Spiritual 
Quixote," the Editor saves, just as Cervantes' "Second Author" preserves Cide Hamete 
Benengeli's story of Don Quixote. In the Advertisement, the editor tells the story of 
his discovery of the identity of Christopher Collop in an encounter with a 
Gloucestershire Squire, who remarks of the "comical Cur, Christopher Collop!--commonly 
called--the comely Curate of Cotswold," that "although he did not approve of the 
Methodists rambling about the country, as many of them do; yet he was suspected to 
favour them in his heart; and continued so to do, to the day of his death" (p. 2). 

This ambivalence towards Wildgoose's mission--approval of his aim to be a 
good Christian, coupled with disapproval of his role as an evangelist--is reflected in 
Graves's adoption of the quixotic theme of sanity in madness. The original Quixote 
was pronounced mad by his fellows, a judgment borne out by many of his actions, yet 
amid his delusions there is often a core of noble idealism, and sometimes even a 
grain of commonsense. Similarly Wildgoose is mad, according to the comments of the
narrator and of the other characters. His madness causes him to leave his village and journey through the English town and country, seeking out the meeting-houses of non-conformist groups of worshippers. Perhaps the author's implicit sympathy with his character's Christian message mollifies the effect of the satire. Or perhaps Wildgoose's actions and observations, some of them imitated from John Wesley's Journals, no longer seem so eccentric to the modern reader, the itinerant preacher having since achieved a degree of respectability unknown in Graves's time. Nevertheless, the principal manifestation of Wildgoose's madness is his haranguing any group of people he might casually meet in his travels. Otherwise Wildgoose is very much the model of an eighteenth-century traveller, paying his way at the inns, doling out charity to the deserving poor, paying his respects to the ladies over a bowl of tea, becoming a guest at a country-house party, and admiring with appropriate awe the sublime sights of the Derbyshire peaks. His sole idiosyncrasy is his zealous urge to convert people to Christianity, an ambition which is scarcely as bizarre as Quixote's obsession with mediaeval chivalry in seventeenth-century Spain. Wildgoose's "enthusiasm," which is condemned on doctrinal grounds, seems therefore to be no more than a mild obsession, and his behaviour seems inconsistent with the label of madness, an inconsistency which is also seen in the novel's treatment of two historical evangelical figures: Whitfield is satirized with derisive scorn, whereas Wesley receives considerable sympathy, although both might be said to be enacting Wildgoose's "madness." The portrayal of his supposed insanity is also weakened by Wildgoose's attachment for Julia Townsend, a love-interest that has none of the fantasy of Quixote's Dulcinea, although Julia's fortunes direct the course of Wildgoose's travels. His summer jaunt with "enthusiasm" seems almost played out by the time he reaches Warwick races, where his cure is
quickly effected by a decanter of wine thrown at his head, a shock treatment which makes an adequate comment on his evangelical preaching, and which quickly resolves the slight complications of the novel's plot.

The hero of Smollett's *Sir Launcelot Greaves* may be seen as another study of the problem of sanity in madness. There are, of course, many obvious objections to the idea of having an eighteenth-century squire don a suit of ancient armour in order to become a knight errant. George Saintsbury refers to the idea as Smollett's "preposterous scheme," an error of conception that was "too gross and palpable" to be worth considering. Nevertheless, by stressing the incongruity of the Quixote figure in his modern world, Smollett is actually reverting to his Cervantic model. The original Don Quixote's chivalric trappings become the visible symbol of his madness, a condition that is made explicit in his delusive interpretations of seventeenth-century Spanish reality in the terms of mediaeval romance. So, too, does Sir Launcelot's armour arouse consternation and derision among the other characters. Yet Smollett maintains an air of ambiguity around the question of Launcelot's sanity, by allowing his characters to take the part of the sceptical critic, dramatizing within the novel the reader's lack of credulity in order to disarm his objections to a situation which stretches the boundaries of the world of probability. When Sir Launcelot arrives at the Yorkshire inn, it is the rascally Ferret who asks: "What precious mummery is this? What, are we to have the farce of Hamlet's ghost?" (p. 11). Later, after Sir Launcelot has had opportunity to explain the purpose of his knightly venture, Ferret makes a more extended attack on the idea: "'What!' said Ferret, 'you set up for a modern Don Quixote?' The scheme is rather too stale and extravagant. What was a humorous romance and well-timed satire in Spain near two hundred years ago, will make but a
sorry jest, and appear equally insipid and absurd when really acted from affectation, at this time of day, in a country like England" (p. 16).

Sir Launcelot’s reply to this criticism may be read as a manifesto for the plot of the novel, showing how Smollett has modified the conception of the quixotic character in order to fulfil the satiric purpose of his novel. In the original, Don Quixote imitates the literary model which is the first target of the novel’s satire. In the course of the novel, the standards which Quixote represents merge into the standards of the contemporary world, which is itself a fictional world created by the novel’s narrator, and Quixote becomes the beloved figure of comedy who delights the reader because of his romantic delusions rather than in spite of them. Smollett’s hero, however, rejects the model on which the novel is founded, defends his bizarre appearance within the terms of his contemporary world, and allows no compromise between the ideals of chivalry and the behaviour of the people he meets. Sir Launcelot scorns Ferret’s scepticism and defends his own sanity; when he replies:

"He that from affectation imitates the extravagancies recorded of Don Quixote, is an imposter equally wicked and contemptible. He that counterfeits madness, unless he dissembles, like the elder Brutus, for some virtuous purpose, not only debases his own soul, but acts as a traitor to Heaven, by denying the divinity that is within him. I am neither an affected imitator of Don Quixote, nor, as I trust in Heaven, visited by that spirit of lunacy so admirably displayed in the fictitious character exhibited by the inimitable Cervantes. I have not yet encountered a windmill for a giant, nor mistaken this public-house for a magnificent castle; neither do I believe this gentleman to be the constable; nor that worthy practitioner to be Master Elizabat, the surgeon recorded in Amadis de Gaul; nor you to be the enchanter Alquife, nor any other sage of history or romance; I see and distinguish objects as they are discerned and described by other men. I reason without prejudice, can endure contradiction, and, as the company perceives, even bear impertinent censure without passion or resentment. I quarrel with none but the foes of virtue and decorum, against whom I have declared perpetual war, and them I will everywhere attack as the natural enemies of mankind" (p. 16).
Such a speech would seem to establish the sanity of Smollett's hero and the dignity of his adopted role, yet the subsequent action of the novel questions both of these assumptions. Crabshaw, Launcelot's counterpart to Sancho Panza, believes his master to be mad, yet he enters into the spirit of his role as the knight's squire. He accepts the external evidence of Launcelot's eccentricity without perceiving his essential goodness, which Smollett makes clear in Clarke's history of Launcelot's bereavement and his exercise of benevolent authority. Crabshaw's superficial response is typical of the ordinary people who jeer at Launcelot's strange appearance, until they come to realize how Launcelot's interference preserves the ideals of justice. A more subtle questioning of Launcelot's sanity takes place within the narrative when Launcelot's sense of justice is affronted and his indignation, "flashed from the eyes of the speaker, intimidated every individual of the society, and reduced Ferret to a temporary privation of all his faculties" (p.17). Such a burst of passion is the external evidence of a deeper maladjustment in the hero—his melancholia which results from his disappointment in love. Having his hero suffer from the "English malady" enables Smollett to draw upon traditional associations which connect psychological disruptions with the splenetic enthusiasm of the fanatic, which is also a reminder that the spleen had traditionally been a convenient image to suggest the rage of the satirist who rails against the vices of society.

The theme of real and apparent madness crops up at different places throughout the novel. When Launcelot heroically rescues a coach from highwaymen, he first learns that the coach's occupant was a mad girl on her way to be locked in an asylum. Only later does he find out that the coach had contained his beloved Aurelia, and that rescue would have solved both his and her problems. With another touch of
Irony, Launcelot, after he drops his knightly masquerade, is seized by kidnappers and locked in the same asylum, where he meets real lunatics suffering from delusions that they are Frederick the Great, a Methodist preacher, the Pope, a fox-hunter, a poet-satirist, and other examples of misdirected enthusiasm. Similarly Captain Crowe's imitation of Launcelot is also shown to be a form of madness resulting from the injustices he has received from the law.

By introducing the sheer farce of Crowe's exploits in counterpoint to the dignity and value of Launcelot's, Smollett is creating two Don Quixotes—one comical and one serious. Smollett splits the two fundamental aspects of Cervantes' Don Quixote into two characters, in one of which he exploits the buffoonery, while in the other he combines a zeal to reform the world with a romantic love attachment. Consequently, neither of Smollett's pseudo-knights achieves the comic stature of Cervantes' original in which all these seemingly conflicting propensities are combined with such life-like force.

As long as Don Quixote was regarded primarily as a satire, the use of the insane hero or heroine as a device to satirize explicit forms of human delusion resulted in no more than minor works of English fiction during the eighteenth century. Nevertheless, the influence of Cervantes can also be seen in the greatest novels of the period, when the Cervantic hero becomes a model for the character of the amiable humorist. The change in taste from the cutting satire of wit and ridicule to the benevolent laughter of humour has been well documented by Stuart M. Tave. As early as 1744 Corbyn Morris published an anthology that "distinguished wit and ridicule from good-natured humour" in a work entitled An Essay toward Fixing the True Standards of Wit, Humour, Raillery, Satire, and Ridicule. To which is Added, an Analysis of
the Characters of an Humourist, Sir John Falstaff, Sir Roger de Coverly, and Don
Quixote. Falstaff, of course, had always been popular as a humour character or
"humorist;" Dryden, among others, remarked on Falstaff's singularity of character,
and many critics had found it necessary to explain why a character with so many bad
qualities should be so likeable. That a drunkard, cheat, thief, scoundrel, lecher,
coward, and braggart should attract the audience's sympathy seemed to contradict the
popular notion of poetic justice. For Corbyn Morris and many others in the eighteenth
century, Falstaff is the kind, honest, jolly, good-hearted, frolicsome, and above all,
lovable Jack Falstaff. As Stuart Tave points out, "this Falstaff is a Farquhar hero whose
good heart absolves every sin." He is a prime example of the amiable humorist, a
cheerful person whose sincerity, joviality, and delight in living excuse his oddities
and foibles. Similarly, in the prose fiction of the period we can see how the mad,
ridiculous, burlesqued Quixote, inherited from the seventeenth century, is transformed
to become the model for the figure of the generous eccentric who can be loved for his
idiosyncrasies.

Two years before Morris's essay, Fielding had published Joseph Andrews,
written, according to its title-page, "in Imitation of The Manner of Cervantes, Author
of Don Quixote," and contributing to Fielding's reputation as "The English Cervantes."
The modern reader, of course, easily equates Fielding's Parson Adams with Cervantes' Don Quixote, although Stuart Tave doubts whether Fielding's contemporaries would have made the same point of comparison. It can be argued that Fielding imitates Cervantes' manner simply in the general tenor of his work as a comic romance or comic epic in prose, or merely by including in his work mock-heroic passages that burlesque the true epic, just as Cervantes' work ridicules the world of fictional chivalry.
Nevertheless, there is no doubt that Parson Adams follows in the eighteenth-century tradition of the amiable humorist, of which Don Quixote is the archetype. With his blend of gentleness and strength, a paradoxical mixture of idealistic pacifism and militant force, Adams becomes a symbol of true Christianity. His naïvety and unworldliness are compensated by his physical strength, and although some of his actions may be ridiculous, the character is protected from ridicule by his altruism and goodness of heart. The reader must judge the character, not by his actions, but by his intentions. Although Parson Adams is ineffective in helping Joseph and Fanny, he is redeemed by his good sentiment. As a character he is absolved from blame by the sensibility of heart which endears him to the reader.

The recognition of Don Quixote as a figure of comedy deserving love and affectionate laughter, rather than the scorn and ridicule of satire, becomes increasingly common towards the middle of the eighteenth century. Dr. Johnson, in his Rambler No. 2 (1750), repeats a common view that everyone at one time or another shares some part of Quixote's delusive madness and notes: "When we pity him, we reflect on our own disappointments; and when we laugh, our hearts inform us that he is not more ridiculous than ourselves, except that he tells what we have only thought." The same spirit of sympathy is shown by Laurence Sterne in Tristram Shandy (1760-7), which, according to Wilbur Cross, reflects "the presence of Cervantes . . . in one place or another of every volume." Cervantes, in fact, may be regarded as the guiding spirit of Tristram Shandy, although it is characteristic of Tristram that he does not formally acknowledge this debt until he writes his Invocation towards the end of his final volume: "Gentle Spirit of sweetest humour, who erst didst sit upon the easy pen of my beloved CERVANTES; Thou who glided'st daily through his lattice, and
turned'st the twilight of his prison into noon-day brightness by thy presence—tinged'st
his little urn of water with heaven-sent Nectar, and all the time he wrote of Sancho
and his master, didst cast thy mystic mantle o'er his wither'd stump, and wide extended
it to all the evils of his life—Turn in hither, I beseech thee!" 57  Here Tristram
emphasizes not only the humour of the Knight's adventures, but also the sentiment of
good-heartedness—good humour in both its ancient and modern senses—with which
Cervantes overcomes the afflictions of his life.

The same spirit of gentle humour is also characteristic of Sterne's Yorick, who
domnates Volume I of Tristram Shandy, and whose goodness of heart evokes this
encomium from Tristram: "I have the highest idea of the spiritual and refined
sentiments of this reverend gentleman, from this single stroke in his character, which I
think comes up to any of the honest refinements of the peerless knight of La Mancha,
whom, by the bye, with all his follies, I love more, and would actually have gone
further to have paid a visit to, than the greatest hero of antiquity" (p. 22). The London
Magazine of February, 1760, also invoked the name of Cervantes in trying to define
the comic spirit of the novel: "O rare Tristram Shandy!—Thou very sensible and
humourous—pathetick—humane—unaccountable!—what shall we call thee?—Rabelais,
Cervantes, what?" 58  Most of Tristram's discourse throughout the book creates the tone
of gentle satire—satire which pokes fun at the oddities of its characters, ridiculing
their foibles with a sense of delight. This is the Cervantic spirit which pervades the
work, recognizing the sympathetic treatment which Don Quixote receives from his
creator. When Tristram ridicules Walter Shandy's metaphysical ruminations in his
discourse with Uncle Toby "upon Time and Eternity," the satire is blunted by Tristram's
tone of ironic praise and wonder, buried in his convoluted imagery of smoke and
darkness (p. 191). Tristram, too, couples the names of Rabelais and Cervantes, but if the former is his "dear Rabelais," the latter is his "dearer Cervantes" (p. 191).

At a deeper level of meaning, the influence of Don Quixote can be seen in the central themes of Sterne's novel. The accidents which mar Tristram's life derive ultimately from Walter and Toby Shandy's obsessions. In this sense, Tristram may be considered the victim of his father's and uncle's devotion to theoretical systems of thought. Like Quixote with his mania for the chivalry of mediaeval romance, Walter allows his life to be ruled by systems—"he was all uniformity;—he was systematical, and, like all systematrick reasoners, he would move both heaven and earth, and twist and torture every thing in nature to support his hypothesis" (p. 53). Tristram, of course, suffers for his father's belief; his nose is a part of nature that is twisted and tortured by Dr. Slop to prove his obstetrical theories. So, too, does Uncle Toby's ruling passion for playing miniature war games result in Tristram's other physical mishap when he is caught at a delicate moment by the window with missing sash-weights, and thus inherits his uncle's wound from the siege of Namur. Theories, whether of the influence of names, or the importance of noses, or the best method to deliver babies, or the best tactics to win battles, lead to unfortunate conclusions in the Shandy household. Throughout Tristram Shandy there is a constant tension between the words by which people conceptualize reality and the reality itself. The literary sources of Walter Shandy's verbal systems may be more abstruse or more erudite than Quixote's romances, but they give just as misleading a view of life when the characters allow their theories to guide their actions.

Also like Don Quixote, Sterne's characters ride hobby-horses, which to those readers acquainted with the medical theories of Dr. George Cheyne, suggests one of
Cheyne’s prescriptions against the disease of melancholy given in his book *The English Malady* (1733). To follow an *idée fixe* would give a person an aim in life, and distract him from the depression of melancholia. Sterne suggests that Tristram is writing his life and opinions as an amusement "in a constant endeavour to fence against the infirmities of ill health, and other evils of life, by mirth" (p. 3). Tristram inhabits a "scurvey and disastrous world" (p. 10) and he must laugh at his misfortunes so that he need not weep at them. Tristram, his Uncle Toby and his father, Walter Shandy, are all prone to melancholia, a tendency which allies them with their predecessor, the melancholy Knight of the Sad Countenance, and laughter is Tristram’s antidote to the disease. Just as Quixote’s romantic interpretation of the world shields him from the perception of the sordid reality of seventeenth-century Spain, so does Tristram’s Shandean writing allow him to create a Shandean world in which disaster and misfortune become the materials of mirth and amusement.

Both *Don Quixote* and *Tristram Shandy* achieve a comic vision of the worlds they create. Both satirize the literary views of life held by their characters. Both deal with events that are violent and destructive. Yet both works display a self-consciousness of their own literary being. *Tristram Shandy* is a "COCK and a BULL" story (p. 647), not merely because it playfully questions the virility of the Shandy males, but also because a cock-and-bull story, like a shaggy-dog story, like Sancho’s story of the goat-herd crossing the river (pp. 189-192), reaches no conclusion. Its significance lies in its telling. The attention of the reader or listener is focussed on its rhetoric, because the events which it relates achieve no finished pattern. *Don Quixote*, of course, ends with the death of its hero, while *Tristram Shandy* merely seems to pause at the end of the ninth volume. Nevertheless, the most fundamental point of
similarity between Cervantes' and Sterne's work is the rhetorical technique which emphasizes that the novel is the creation of a writer writing a story. Sterne creates his Tristram, and allows him to enact the writing of his autobiography; Cervantes creates his Arabian historian, Cide Hamete Benengeli, together with the Morisco of Toledo who translates his manuscripts, and the "Second Author" (pp. 105-109), who puts the book together for the reader. The terms "formalism" or "mannerism" may be used to define the art which displays and draws attention to its own form, or in the case of these novels the term "perspectivism" may better suggest the multiple perspectives of receding levels of reality. Both the "Second Author" and Tristram become the novelist's masks of reality. We realize that the stories they tell are fictitious, just as they themselves are fictional personalities created by their real authors for the purposes of telling the story. By interposing the fictional author between the real author and the events they narrate, both Cervantes and Sterne establish an aesthetic distance between the reader and the fictional world. Events which are potentially tragic become the subject of comedy, when Tristram, writing "free from the cares, as well as the terrors of the world" (p. 436), is able to achieve a comic vision of reality. In both works the illusory realities of Don Quixote's and Tristram's worlds are balanced against the actual reality of the verbal text in which the Kosmos is manifested. Cide Hamete's history and Tristram's memories become real when they become literature, and the reader is made conscious of the process by which imaginary action in an imaginary world becomes literary action in the written records of mental experience. The relationship is epitomized in Cervantes' closing words: "For me alone Don Quixote was born, and I for him. He knew how to act, and I knew how to write" (p. 1050).
The development of the English novel from Defoe to Sterne is reflected in the treatment of Don Quixote during this period. The novel begins with what Levin terms a "naïve realism," when the writing of fiction was regarded as the art of copying external nature, the verbal images of their stories being supposed to imitate objects and actions in the real world—objects as they actually are in common experience, and not as the fanciful, literary imagination of a Don Quixote might erroneously transform them. The early novels, as if emulating Locke's emphasis on the experience of the external world as the source of the mind's ideas, tend to exaggerate their truthfulness, even to the extent of completely denying or confusing their fictitious qualities. If truth lies in the everyday world of experience then the duty of the novelist was to record individual experience in coping with the familiar problems of the physical and social world. In the next chapter I shall explore the rhetorical stance adopted by Defoe in order to represent his narrative fictions as absolute fact.
NOTES


2 Richardson used this expression to describe Pamela in a letter to Aaron Hill, quoted by Joseph Bunn Heidler in The History, From 1700 to 1800, Of English Criticism of Prose Fiction, University of Illinois Studies in Language and Literature (Urbana, 1928), pp. 51-52. There is also the anonymous pamphlet An Essay on the New Species of Writing founded by Mr. Fielding (Augustan Reprint Society, No. 95, 1751; Los Angeles, 1962).


4 See Heidler, pp. 26, 42, 37, 39n, 38.


6 Quoted by Greiner, p. 6.

7 Ibid., p. 12.

8 Ibid., p. 15.


11 In The Rambler, No. 4, ed. W.J. Bate and Albrecht B. Strauss (New Haven, 1969), 1, 19. In the Dictionary (1755) Johnson reverts to the earlier usage when he defines novel as "a small tale, generally of love."


13 Author's Preface (1759) to Clarissa, ed. George Sherburn (Boston, 1962), p. xxi.

15. Greiner, p. 96.

16. Ibid., pp. 6-12.


18. Ibid., pp. 15-19.

19. Ibid., pp. 27-29.


24. Quoted by Greiner, p. 95.

25. This phenomenon is examined by Hume (see below, p. 43).

26. Percy Lubbock, *The Craft of Fiction* (1921; London, 1954). Joseph Warren Beach makes a similar remark in his *The Twentieth Century Novel* (New York, 1932), "In a bird's eye view of the English novel from Fielding to Ford, the one thing that will impress you more than any other is the disappearance of the author" (p. 14).


32 Essential Works, p. 443.


34 Edward B. Knowles notes that "over and over again it is glowingly declared that Don Quixote was immediately popular, was at once accepted as a great classic, and, by implication, at once had an important influence." In his essay "Cervantes and English Literature," in Cervantes Across the Centuries, eds. Angel Flores and M.J. Benardete (New York, 1947), pp. 267-293, Knowles refutes the popular myth.

35 Shakespeare and Cervantes both died on the same date, April 23, 1616, Shakespeare having survived the Spanish poet by the ten days allowed him by the difference between the English (Julian) and Spanish (Gregorian) calendars.

36 Knowles, "Allusions to Don Quixote before 1660," PQ, 20 (1943), 573.

37 Quoted by Knowles, Cervantes and English Literature," p. 270. It is significant of the change of attitude towards Don Quixote from the seventeenth to the eighteenth centuries that these epithets were expurgated from later editions of Edmund Gayton's work published as Festivous Notes on the History and Adventures of the Renowned Don Quixote, ed. John Potter (1768; London, 1771).

38 Ibid., p. 271, p. 274.

39 Ibid., p. 276.


42 References to Cervantes as a satirist can be found in Daniel Defoe's Memoirs of an English Officer (1728), Richard Steele's Tatler No. 219 (1710), Joseph Addison's Spectator No. 269 (1712), Tobias Smollett's Preface to Roderick Random (1748), and the Earl of Shaftesbury's Characteristics (1711).

43 Quoted by Burton, p. 5.


46 This is the term used by Clara Reeve. A modern reader might prefer to use "verisimilitude."

47 Burton also lists another Spiritual Quixote subtitled The Entertaining History of Don Ignatius Loyola (1755) by Rasiel de Selva. This work apparently satirizes a different brand of religious enthusiasm. Whereas Graves deals with the extremist "low church" persuasion, de Selva attacks the Jesuits of the Counter-Reformation. There may be some justification for such an attack. V.S. Pritchett notes that "the romances of chivalry were read during the Counter-Reformation and specifically moved two of the Spanish saints to action—St. Teresa and St. Ignatius de Loyola," in his *The Working Novelist* (London, 1965), p. 166.


50 Introduction to Sir Launcelot Greaves (London, 1895), pp. ix-xv. Subsequent references to this edition will appear in my text.

51 *The Amiable Humorist* (Chicago, 1960).

52 *Augustan Reprint Society, No. 10 (1744; Los Angeles, 1947), p. 7."

53 Tave, p. 125.

54 See also the concluding song in Fielding's *Don Quixote in England* (1729), "All mankind is mad, 'tis plain," as well as Motteux's Preface to his translation (1700), and Richard Steele in *The Tatler*, No. 178 (1710).

55 *Rambler No. 2 (1750), I, 11."


58 Quoted by Wilbur Cross, p. 205.
For a fuller discussion of this topic see Sigurd Burckhardt's "Tristram Shandy's Law of Gravity," ELH, 28 (1961), 70-88.

See Tave, p. 189.

Wayne C. Booth argues that the major themes of Tristram Shandy are actually brought to a conclusion in "Did Sterne Complete Tristram Shandy?" MP, 48 (1951), 172-183.

"Perspectivism," in relation to the works of Fielding, is the subject of my Chapter V; "mannerism" is considered more thoroughly in my Chapter VII.

H. Levin, "What is Realism?" Comparative Literature, 3 (1951), 194. According to Levin, the "classic gesture" of naïve realism "occurred when Dr. Johnson kicked the stone."
CHAPTER III

THE NOVEL AS CHRONICLE

The first lesson that the eighteenth century learned from Don Quixote was that sanity lay in the individual's correct perception and interpretation of the real, objective world. John Locke had taught that man derived his ideas from his "sensation" of the external world of experience, while Don Quixote showed the tragicomedy of a man who tried to impose the delusions of imaginative romance onto the reality of the everyday, contemporary world. Fiction was realistic if it dealt with characters and actions that seemed to take place in the normal world of common experience, without stretching belief beyond the bounds of probability with the fantastic creatures and miraculous happenings of romance. The moral superiority of truth over falsehood, of fact over fiction, in accord with the Augustan world of empirical reason, provides a sound argument for preferring the clear records of experience over the nightmarish creations of the imagination. The inventions of an ingenious writer might provide escapist amusement, especially for the young and immature, but Dr. Johnson, in his *Idler*, No. 84 of November 24, 1759, clearly indicates that the serious reader will not long be satisfied by such artifice:

In romances, when the wide field of possibility lies open to invention, the incidents may easily be made more numerous, the vicissitudes more sudden, and the events more wonderful; but from the time of life when fancy begins to be overruled by reason and corrected by experience, the most artful tale raises little curiosity when it is known to be false; tho' it may, perhaps, be sometimes read as a model of a neat or elegant stile, not for the sake of knowing what it contains, but how it is written; or those that are weary of themselves, may have recourse to it as a pleasing dream, of which, when they awake, they voluntarily dismiss the images from their minds.
While Dr. Johnson's confidence in the facts of real experience is characteristic of his age, "realistic" fiction is not an eighteenth-century invention. Fiction has always asserted its devotion to facts and truth, sometimes explicitly, but always implicitly in its use of the language of history. As long as fiction is equated with lying, there is considerable moral pressure on the writer of fiction to dress his work in the clothes of fact. He may produce a story which seems like a factual record of personal experience, or else support the figments of his imagination with characters, incidents, and locations borrowed from the "real" world of history and geography. To avoid the accusation of fabrication, the story may be disguised as an historical document fortuitously discovered by the "editor," or as the translation of an account written in a foreign language, whose exotic origins are assumed to guarantee its authenticity. The close correspondence of fiction and history, when fact and invention become inextricably entangled in the forms of prose narrative can be demonstrated in all ages. Even the authors of the most extravagant fictions made a polite bow to history: Rabelais mentions the Great Pantagrueline Chronicle, and Cervantes has the Manchegan Archives to corroborate the truth of their fictional worlds. The Elizabethan story-tellers began their stories with statements which seem to give some geographical or historical foundation to a creation that was often blatantly fictional. Nashe's The Unfortunate Traveller (1594) is given a clear historical setting in the campaigns of Henry the Eighth against Therouanne and Tournai, while Deloney's Jack of Newbury (1597) introduces the same King as a character in its action.

A more sustained effort to make fiction appear like factual truth can be found in the thirteen stories written by Mrs. Aphra Behn in the 1680's. Her work
remained popular in the eighteenth century, inspiring several dramatized versions of her stories, which appeared in no less than nine collected editions between 1696 and 1751. The many variations of the hazards and pitfalls that interrupt the course of true love in Mrs. Behn's stories foreshadow, and in most cases surpass, the works of the other female authors whose narratives of love-intrigue and scandal provided one of the dominant strains of popular fiction in the half-century that followed Mrs. Behn's death. During this period, the inter-mingling of fact and fiction becomes most prevalent. There was a burgeoning of fiction in many forms and disguises, but W.H. McBurney, in his *A Check List of English Prose Fiction, 1700-1739*, notes that of his 337 main entries only one, Mrs. Jane Barker's *Exilius* (1715), is explicitly admitted to be a fiction; the rest pretend to be fact, and are given such labels as "history, memoirs, life, voyage—(trip, travels, discovery), adventures, tale, letters, and account—(journal, relation)." Moreover there is a great deal more fiction published in magazines, chap-books, jest-books, and dialogues which are too discontinuous to be considered as forms of developed prose fiction. Such a vast and obvious masquerade shows the popular bias against fiction, whether because of the moral opprobrium accorded to any form of lying, or whether because such idle fantasy was regarded as mere entertainment for women and children, lacking the esteem and purpose of serious literature. McBurney points out the difficulty and sometimes impossibility which remains to this day of trying to distinguish between works that are completely factual and those that are fictitious although based on fact, as it is impracticable to draw any line of demarcation between them. There are, however, some fashionable trends to be discerned, and McBurney notes that in the titles of fictional narratives "memoirs was favoured in the first decade of the century, life,
adventures and novel in the 1720's; and history or secret history in the decade immediately preceding Pamela." 7 The situation was not much clearer even after 1739, however, as Jerry C. Beasley, in his A Check List of Prose Fiction Published in England, 1740-9, suggests that the reading public of this decade "still shared moral or literary biases against fictitious narration that were hardly less intent than in the time of Addison or Defoe." 8 In this survey Beasley avoids the problem of separating fact and fiction by classifying as fiction "any 'history,' 'life,' 'voyage,' or collection of letters that pursues a narrative line," because, while factual versions of these categories maintained their popularity, the writers of fiction made identical claims for the truth of their works, both on their title-page and in the body of their text.

Few writers of fiction are as consistently assertive of the truth of their narratives as Mrs. Aphra Behn. Throughout the corpus of her stories the words "truth," "fact," "reality," "history," "witnessed," "records," "knowledge" provide a bass-note of factual historicity to Mrs. Behn's variations and modulations of romantic adventures, with their love-stricken heroes and heroines, the threats of forced marriages, the flights from nunneries and restrictive parents, the shipwrecks, duels, and extraordinary coincidences—the plot conventions of heroic romance compressed into anecdotal reportage. The Unfortunate Happy Lady is subtitled A True History, while The Nun: or, Perjur'd Beauty is labelled "A True Novel" (pp. 35, 327). The note is amplified in such prefatory material as the dedication of The Fair Jilt in which she claims that her story "has but this Merit to recommend it, That it is Truth: Truth, which you so much admire." She continues: "For however it may be imagin'd that Poetry (my Talent) has so greatly the Ascendant over me, that all I write must pass
for Fiction, I now desire to have it understood that this is Reality, and Matter of Fact, and acted in this our latter Age . . ." (p. 70). Similarly in the dedication to The History of the Nun; or, The Fair Vow-Breaker she claims that "the Story is true, as it is on the Records of the Town, where it was transacted . . ." (p. 262), while she is more modest about The Lucky Mistake: A New Novel which "has more of reality [sic] than fiction,"--and if this story was found to be lacking in intrigue, it was because she "had a mind to keep close to the Truth" (p. 351). Her claim to truth was somewhat modified by S. Briscoe, who published her stories posthumously with the admission that "if they are not true, they are so like it, that they do the business every jot as well" (p. 401).

The assertion of truth is carried over into her stories. The Unfortunate Happy Lady begins with the statement: "I cannot omit giving the World an account, of the uncommon Villany of a Gentleman of a good Family in England practis'd upon his Sister, which was attested to me by one who liv'd in the Family, and from whom I had the whole Truth of the Story" (p. 37). Aphra Behn's "I-narrator" becomes the principal narrative device to authenticate the truth of her stories, whether as a person acquainted with the protagonists of the story, as in The Wandering Beauty, or as an eye-witness of the events as in The Dumb Virgin. In The Fair Jilt the Narrator makes the usual declaration of the truth of her story: "I do not pretend here to entertain you with a feign'd Story, or any Thing piec'd together with romantick Accidents; but every Circumstance, to a Tittle, is Truth. To a great Part of the Main I myself was an eye-witness; and what I did not see, I was confirm'd of by Actors in the Intrigue, Holy Men, of the Order of St. Francis" (p. 74). Her authoritative sources seem here to guarantee the truth of her story, and further evidence is
provided by her "Journal-Observations" (p. 110), a document in which all the
details had been previously recorded.

Mrs. Behn's works are typical in many ways of the "female fiction" which
was so prevalent in the early part of the eighteenth century. Most of the rhetorical
flourishes which are characteristic of her stories reappear in the "novels" (or
novellas) of Mrs. Haywood and her contemporaries. The raptures, transports, and
languishing of heroic love, with its tears, sighs, darting glances, and elaborate
periphrases of sexual confrontation in the melting embraces, panting, trembling and
eccasies of bliss, are all bound up in a rigid code of honour, which balances
virginity against ruination. These works are what John Richetti calls "entertainment
machines and fantasy inducers," because their conventionalized language and
situations "delivered certain predictable satisfactions to their audiences." The
romantic fantasies, many of which were translated or copied from the French and
Spanish originals, are bound in a rhetorical framework to make them appear as the
record of actual experience, witnessed or collected by the narrator. By themselves,
such statements have little effect when they are contradicted by the fantastic
situations and coincidences that belong to the world of heroic romance, but when
Mrs. Behn's asseverations of truthfulness seem to be borne out by apparently
authentic corroborative detail, her work belongs to the mainstream of the novel.

Mrs. Behn's Oroonoko (1688) is celebrated for its glorification of the "noble
savage," and may be considered as a piece of anti-slavery polemic, a predecessor
of Uncle Tom's Cabin. In many respects Mrs. Behn's story belongs to the world
of the Restoration heroic theatre, and could be dismissed as another romantic
extravaganza were it not for the increased stature of the "I-narrator." Not only
is she an eye-witness to much of the action which takes place in the English colony of Surinam, but she also participates in the dramatic events, and provides a wealth of circumstantial detail about the slave trade and life in the colony. Mrs. Behn's success in making her story appear like a piece of genuine reportage led to the acceptance of her comments in the story as autobiographical facts, although modern research has produced the literary sources of some of her information, and has questioned whether Mrs. Behn actually did visit Surinam. Nevertheless, the Narrator's description of local life displays a knowledge of local customs, and includes the names of people corroborated by historical records. According to Rowland Hill, Mrs. Behn, by the use of realistic locales, was able "to bridge the gap between romantic action and everyday life, and to make the reader feel that what she portrayed was life-like."

Whether the Narrator of Oroonoko is actually Mrs. Behn or a mask created for the telling of the story is still in doubt. In either case, within the limits of the story, the Narrator functions as the authoritative voice of the journalist guaranteeing the truth of her chronicle. If the modern reader remains unconvinced, it is because the Narrator does not provide enough information about herself—we lack the circumstantial details, perhaps inconsequential to the main story-line, which would create either the sense of Mrs. Behn's own personality, or the feeling that the Narrator is a fictional creation, deliberately masking the real author's identity.

Mrs. Behn is celebrated as one of the first successful professional writers, and certainly the first woman to support herself from her publications. In her writings for the stage she could advertise her power of invention and her ability to structure a plot. But in her prose fictions, she consistently attempts to hide her own contribution
by suggesting that she is merely repeating a well-known story, or is reporting a story with which she has had peripheral connections. Both of these variations of the historical mode of narration are used by Defoe in his prose narratives, which range from his journalistic accounts of Jack Sheppard and Jonathan Wild, to his eye-witness accounts of history in *A Journal of the Plague Year* and *The Memoirs of Major Alexander Ramkins*, and the more fully developed fictional biographies of Robinson Crusoe and Moll Flanders. In the development of these fictitious narrators Defoe separates himself from the imaginary world of his fiction to a far greater extent than Mrs. Behn. In *Oroonoko* the Narrator who mentions her later comedies and her connection with the London theatre can still be identified with the real Mrs. Behn; her human interest in the characters of her story is also the professional interest of the accomplished writer gathering material for her story. Defoe's narrators, however, are never a part of the literary world. They are invariably drawn from other professions—"H.F." is a London saddler, Moll Flanders a thief and prostitute, Robinson Crusoe a sailor and planter, while Ramkins, Carleton, Campbell, and the Cavalier are professional soldiers. As writers they are no more than amateurs with a story to tell, and perhaps in need of a ghost writer. By the use of these masks, Defoe, the fictitious editor, is dissociated from the obloquies of his invented characters, and also protected from the accusation of telling lies himself.

As an avowed dissenter, Defoe appears to have been even more sensitive than Mrs. Behn about the fictiveness of his writing. In *A New Family Instructor* (1727) both the brother and his sister agree that there was "no possible Pleasure in reading a Story which we know to be false, but related as if it were a Truth . . . ." The sister takes the even more extreme position that it was sinful to read fiction at all "as
the making and writing them was criminal in itself, being, as she explained it, what
the Scripture meant by making a Lye . . . ." The Brother, however, justifies fiction
by its moral value. He agrees that "a Fiction, or what they call'd a Romance, told
only with Design to deceive the Reader, bring him to believe, that the Fact related
was true, and so to please and delight him with a Falsehood instead of a History,
must be what she had call'd it, criminal and wicked, and making a Lye," but he
argues! that such "Fables, feigned Histories, invented Tales, and even such as we call
Romances" can also achieve good effects by "enforcing sound Truths, making just and
solid Impressions of the Mind; recommending great and good Actions, raising
Sentiments of Virtue in the Soul, and filling the Mind with Just Resentments against
wicked Actions . . . ."

Such an exact sense of discrimination between truth and lies reappears at many
points in the Defoe canon. As a journalist reporting current events, he seeks to
appear ever meticulous in verifying his sources to be sure that he is giving only the
ture facts. Where there is room for doubt, he injects a note of scepticism to make
reservation about the authenticity of his story. In his preface to The Storm (1704)
Defoe exalts the power and responsibility of the journalist in an extended comparison
between a news story and a sermon. Against the limited audience of the sermon and
the transience of the spoken word, Defoe sets the potential universality and
permanence of the printed page, with its concomitantly greater power for good or
evil: "If a book printed obtrudes a falsehood, if a man tells a lie in print, he abuses
mankind, and imposes upon the whole world, he causes our children to tell lies after
us, and their children after them, to the end of the world."15 The tone of pious
dedication in this preface not only dignifies the role of the journalist who collects
and publishes facts, but also reflects the general theme of the whole work which expresses a reverential awe for the manifestations of Providence in the fury of a tempest. In one sense The Storm is a sermon in print, in which the reports submitted by Defoe's correspondents serve as exempla to the text of his title-page: "The Lord hath his way in the Whirlwind, and in the Storm, and the Clouds are the dust of his Feet—Nah. 1.3." To counteract any scepticism on the part of the reader faced with stories that might appear incredible, Defoe reiterates his sense of "the proper duty of an historian" to keep to the truth, especially, as in drawing religious inferences from these examples, he can be seen to "act the divine." The preface then expresses the journalist's pledge to truth:

And while I pretend to a thing so solemn, I cannot but premise I should stand convicted of a double imposture, to forge a story, and then preach repentance to the reader from a crime greater than that I would have him repent of: endeavouring by a lie to correct the reader's vices, and sin against truth to bring the reader off from sinning against sense.

Upon this score, though the undertaking be very difficult amongst such an infinite variety of circumstances, to keep exactly within the bounds of truth; yet I have this positive assurance with me, that in all the subsequent relation, if the least mistake happen, it shall not be mine. (p. 252)

As a compilation of reports from many different sources, The Storm is quite different in its outer form from Defoe's historical and fictional narratives, but this preface explains his historical method—his devotion to finding historical and religious truths in the delineation of recorded, verified facts, which for him distinguish history from fiction. In a brief consideration of the myths of ancient history, he deprecates those fables in which "the fondness of telling a strange story, has dwindled a great many valuable pieces of ancient history into mere romance"
Defoe's apparent preoccupation with recording historical truth can be seen in many of his minor pieces. In his preface to *The Life of John Sheppard* (1724) Defoe asserts, in the strident tones of modern advertising, that the true facts do not need the embellishment of fiction: "His history will astonish, and is not composed of fiction, fable, or stories placed at York, Rome, or Jamaica, but facts done at your doors, facts unheard of, altogether new, incredible, and yet uncontestable." When Defoe came to publish *The Life and Actions of Jonathan Wild* (1725) he found it necessary first to disclaim the "several absurd and ridiculous accounts" which had already appeared, in which astonishing, romantic adventures had "been evidently invented and framed out of the heads of the scribbling authors merely to get a penny, without regard to truth or fact, or even to probability, or without making any conscience of their imposing on the credulous world." In contrast, Defoe gives the reader an "exact account" in a method "agreeable to the fact," and warns those who would rather "have a falsehood to laugh at than a true account of things to inform them," that they should "best buy the fiction, and leave the history to those who know how to distinguish good from evil." The more improbable the truth, the more the historian has to assert his own reliability, and the reliability of his sources; but such trust could lead Defoe into making extravagant statements, as in *The Destruction of the Isle of St. Vincent* (1718) (XV, 241-250), although in his report of *A Floating Island* four months earlier he tempers the "truth of this story," which had been received from Gibraltar with his own scepticism. Given the overtones of moral, religious and historical calumny accorded the writer of fiction in these writings, it would seem that Defoe, now recognized as one of the early masters of fictional techniques, either was a great hypocrite, or else had
experienced a great change of heart en route to the Damascus of Selkirk's island. Rudolf Stamm, who examines Defoe as an artist in the Puritan tradition, also shows that it is extremely surprising that Defoe wrote fiction at all. An alternative explanation is offered by Maximillian Novak who suggests that Defoe was accustomed to trimming his arguments according to the beliefs of his audience. In his works in the tradition of Puritan family literature such as The Family Instructor (1715, 1718) and Religious Courtship (1722) Defoe is the most extreme defender of the literal truth of the printed word, probably, Novak suggests, in reaction to the attacks on the literal truth of the Bible that were being made at that time by such scholars as Anthony Collins and Thomas Burnet. Otho Williams suggests in his introduction to Defoe's A Vindication of the Press (1718) that in his defense of the freedom of the writer, Defoe merely repeated "the critical commonplaces of the time" attesting to "the catholicity of the author's taste."

Perhaps it is a mistake to take all of Defoe's prefatory statements at their literal face value as records of Defoe's own opinion, remembering how adept Defoe was, even in his earlier writings, such as A Poor Man's Plea (1698), at writing in the guise of an assumed persona. As the indignant "Old Friend, G." purporting to write to Mist's Weekly Journal on April 12, 1719 (thirteen days before the publication of Robinson Crusoe), Defoe could wax furiously against the authors of indecent books, and his attack spreads out to include other forms of fiction:

On the other hand, Mist, are there not some other Practices of Authors, as injurious and as scandalous as this? What think you of all the feigned Stories, the Romances, the Secret Histories, and the Accounts given of King's Courts and Persons, in which we have been made to take the Characters and Histories of Persons of the best Quality from the Inventions of Men, nay, and sometimes of Women too, who have by that means vented all manner of Forgery, Slander, and Falsehood? . . . Are
not these as much a Reproach to public Justice, as a Bawdy Book, supposing them to be of the worst Kind you can name?22

Within two weeks of this "letter" the first volume of Robinson Crusoe became an immediate success with the reading public, on its way to eventual recognition as one of the great landmarks of English fiction, as well as becoming the libretto of an Offenbach opera and the vehicle for innumerable Christmas pantomimes. Yet it is not necessary to consider Defoe as a hypocritical Puritan, denouncing the sin of writing lies, while secretly revelling in the delight of creating fictional stories. Nor is Defoe a schizophrenic torn between his creative impulses and his Puritan heritage which represses this energy, in a sort of battle between Freudian id and super-ego. Instead, it is possible to see Defoe's fiction as part of a continuum spanning all of his writings in which he speaks with the voice of an assumed or created persona, and nowhere is this more evident than in the Serious Reflection during the Life and Surprising Adventures of Robinson Crusoe with his Vision of the Angelic World (1720).

Defoe's authorship of the first two volumes of Robinson Crusoe was already public knowledge in 1719 when Charles Gildon attacked him for its supposed inconsistencies and incoherence.23 Perhaps, therefore, Defoe is showing a certain spirit of bravado, if not effrontery, in allowing his fictional character to write a discourse "Of Talking Falsely" from the extreme moralistic position which other characters of Defoe had adopted in his religious dialogues. In this essay Robinson Crusoe, the putative author, makes a distinction between lying in general, "one of the most scandalous sins between man and man", and the lies which people tell "in the liberty of telling stories" (III, 97). Even in the twentieth century "telling stories" has remained in children's language a euphemism for lying, and Robinson
Crusoe accepts this concept as the foundation of the fictional process. He considers the "dishonour done to truth" in the embellishment of a true story, until the original facts become themselves improbable or indistinguishable in the secretion of falsehood. Although Crusoe recognizes that such a practice is so common that it can scarcely be regarded as a crime, he nevertheless castigates the story-teller whose only purpose is to delight an audience: "to lie for sport, for fun, as the boys express it, is to play at shuttlecock with your soul, and load your conscience for the mere sake of being a fool, and the making a mere buffoonery of a story, the pleasure of what is below even madness itself" (III, 99). Even worse are those story-tellers who, not merely content to invent a story, develop a rhetorical style to give it a false authenticity. These are the story-tellers who begin "'I knew the man' or, 'I knew the woman,' and these ordinarily vouch their story with more assurance than others, and vouch also that they knew the persons who were concerned in it" (III, 101). Another mode of narration to which Robinson Crusoe objects is the development of real stories which have "a real existence in fact" by a "barbarous way of relating" until they become "as romantic and false as if they had no original" (III, 101). Such forms of fiction have a two-fold effect. First, their authors may lose any "reverence for truth" and may even "make a jest of their crime," until their lying becomes an entrenched habit and a danger to their immortal souls (III, 102). Secondly, an author is spreading evil in telling a false story as true" because "the chimney-corner romance" may continue "a brooding forgery to the end of time" (III, 103).

Robinson Crusoe's essay may be Defoe's most extensive discussion of the fictional process, but to accept it as a statement of Defoe's own theory of fiction would be to forget that Defoe was a master of disguise who could deceive the
Highflyers of the established church into accepting his outrageous 'final solution' to the problem of dissenters. In "Of Talking Falsely" it appears that Robinson Crusoe is condemning the fictional techniques of his own creator, but Crusoe allows Defoe two ways of escaping his moral obloquy. By his definition, a lie is only a lie if it deceives; thus if a liar is known to be a liar, then he is no longer a liar because no-one is deceived by his lies. Crusoe advises the inveterate story-teller "to lie on" until his character becomes "a bill upon his forehead, by which everybody knows, 'Here dwells a lying tongue'" (III, 100), and so disarms the lies of fiction by the consciousness of its being a fiction. Alternatively, even a system of lies can be justified as a parable or "an allusive allegoric history" which "is designed and effectually turned for instructive and upright ends, and has its moral justly applied" (III, 101). Crusoe gives three examples of such works: the Holy Scriptures, The Pilgrim's Progress, and his own adventures!

Whereas in the prefatory comments to the first two volumes of Robinson Crusoe Defoe had used the mask of "The Editor" to maintain that his story was "a just history of fact" without "any appearance of fiction in it" (I, lxvii), in the third volume he is supplanted by "Robinson Crusoe's Preface" and he makes only a brief appearance in the guise of "The Publisher" to corroborate Robinson Crusoe's prefatory self-justification. If there is something ironically contradictory about a fictional character asserting his own reality in a direct address to the reader, it is, as W.S. Gilbert sang, "A most ingenious paradox." Cervantes, of course, had already played with this paradox in Don Quixote, while Gildon's satire included a dialogue between Daniel, Crusoe, and Friday. I think we can agree with Gilbert's couplet: "How quaint the ways of paradox;/At commonsense she gaily mocks." The paradox
explains the curious ambivalence in Robinson Crusoe's Preface. At first he seems to acknowledge that his story is a fable designed to teach a certain moral, but he immediately denies the accusations made against his first two volumes that "the story is feigned, that the names are borrowed, and that it is all a romance" (III, ix). Robinson Crusoe then makes a solemn oath that "the story, though allegorical, is also historical" (III, ix).

Crusoe continues this process of mystification in a curious paragraph in which he deals with the comparison of his adventures with those of Don Quixote. He turns the intended slur on the truthfulness of his work into a compliment by suggesting that Don Quixote was really "an emblematic history" and a "just satire" of the Duke de Medina Sidonia (III, x). In this passage Crusoe hints that the events of his story are symbols of events in a life lived at a different level of reality—"the real story which the island-life is just allusion to;" (III, xii)—and the biographer Thomas Wright took the suggestion as the basis for developing a whole system of correspondences between Crusoe's and Defoe's lives. 24

Throughout this preface, despite Crusoe's innuendoes about the allegorical nature of his story, implying its fictional nature, Defoe simultaneously injects a series of assertions of its truth to historical fact. Crusoe's confession of untruth is sprinkled with words and phrases attesting to the literal truth of the story. He refers to the "real facts in my history," and mentions some incidents as "all histories and real stories," and again it is "all historical and true in fact;" he continues that "it is most real" that he had a parrot and a man Friday; it is "literally true," and "many alive can testify" about his "real solitudes and disasters," while other events are "likewise matters of real history," and all his adventures are "real life" in a "real
Thus his "real history" is a representation of what "really exists," just as his story of his fright in bed is "word for word a history of what happened." The word "real" is repeated ten times in the course of three paragraphs, creating an ambiguity about the nature of his story, when there is already an ambiguity about Crusoe's explanation of his adventures as allegory, whether he means the story is allegorical of Crusoe's life or of Defoe's. Rather than being a clarification, this Preface deliberately confuses the issue, so that Defoe is able to have the best of both worlds: without the risk of being called an outright liar, he manages to suggest that his story is truthful on two levels—the factual level of history, and the imaginative level of moral value. As "The Editor" of Colonel Jack (1722) Defoe also recommended the moral advantages of reading the story, but adds another sort of disclaimer to avoid responsibility for its factual truth:

> If discouraging everything that is evil, and encouraging everything that is virtuous and good—I say, if these appear to be the whole scope and design of the publishing this story, no objection can lie against it; neither is it of the least moment to inquire whether the Colonel hath told his own story true or not; if he has made it a History or a Parable, it will be equally useful, and capable of doing good; and in that it recommends itself without any introduction (X.xvi)

Defoe's mask of the editor or publisher of another person's manuscript provides an almost complete separation between the real author and his novel. The mask enables him to delve into the realms of imaginative fiction without the moral stigma of telling lies, to write in the simple, direct style typical of his unlettered personae without being called to account for his lack of literary elegance, and to follow the fortunes of criminal, heartless self-seekers without being seen to approve of their actions. Of the five novels generally accepted as the core of Defoe's fictional works—Robinson Crusoe (1719-20), Captain Singleton (1720), Moll Flanders
(1722), Colonel Jack (1722), Roxana (1724)—only the first, and incidentally the most popular, can we examine with any certainty that we are dealing with a work of fiction, and not some species of ghost writing. Robinson Crusoe, we know, is not the story of Alexander Selkirk. Neither does the central fact of the story, Crusoe's twenty-eight years of solitary life, remain within the bounds of psychological possibility. The verisimilitude of this novel is an illusion created by Defoe's techniques of narration, combined with his use of authentic details culled from the travel literature of Woodes Rogers, Knox, Dampier, Misson, Le Comte, and Ides. We can be sure that Robinson Crusoe, whatever ideas Defoe might have gleaned from printed sources, is an imaginative creation. Some of these same sources reappear in Captain Singleton, the second part of which obviously owes much to the spate of pirate literature of the times, including Defoe's own The King of Pirates (1719; dated 1720). In this work, also a fiction, Defoe tells the story of Captain Avery in two letters purporting to be written by Avery himself. Singleton's story bears many resemblances to Avery's, but Avery also appears as a character in the Singleton story, and later, writing under the pseudonym of Captain Charles Johnson, Defoe included Avery in his General History of the Pyrates (1724), which also included a completely fictional pirate called Misson.

With such an intermingling of fiction, history, biography, and pseudo-autobiography, it would be folly to assert that Moll Flanders or Roxana were purely fictional characters, when there is a possibility that in the "Author's Preface" of these works Defoe might have been telling the absolute truth, and that he had collected these stories from their historical originals. In all of Defoe's narratives the demarcation between fact and fiction, between real and imaginary, between
invention and historical sources, is blurred with uncertainty. In *The Shortest Way with the Dissenters* Defoe had demonstrated the power of the ironist to lead his opponents into the trap of believing in the reality of his Highflyer persona. Defoe suffered three exposures in the pillory when the irony of his masquerade was finally appreciated. In his narratives Defoe explored areas which were less politically sensitive, and it has been left to modern historical research to attempt to discern the limits of Defoe's inventiveness.

Perhaps Defoe's *Memoirs of an English Officer* (1728) provides the classic example of his technique of creating history through fiction, and constructing a fiction from history. The pendulum-like swing of this book's reputation has been fully documented by A.W. Secord, showing how it was first accepted as a genuine history by Dr. Johnson and Sir Walter Scott, before in the nineteenth century it was attributed to Defoe by Walter Wilson, Tegg, Hazlitt, Lowndes, and Craik. At the same time, historians were discovering references to an authentic George Carleton which were in accord with the *Memoirs*. On this basis Lord Stanhope accepted the work as a genuine source for his *History of the War of Succession in Spain* (1832), and with a growing belief in his historical reality, the name of George Carleton appeared in Leslie Stephen's *Dictionary of National Biography* (1887). Later Arthur Parnell, author of another history of the War of the Spanish Succession, discovered that the *Memoirs* contained passages borrowed from other sources, and because he detected a satiric tone in the work, he attributed it to Swift. Thus the controversy over both the authenticity and the authorship of the *Memoirs* continued to be debated into the twentieth century.

While modern opinion accepts the historical reality of a Captain George
Carleton, Secord shows that most of the Memoirs is based on sources already published before 1728, and that the discrepancies between the Memoirs and the known facts about Carleton strongly suggest that "the real author was in many respects either ignorant of, or indifferent to, the career of his hero; the narrative of Carleton's conduct in those campaigns may, wherever we are able to test them, be shown to be fictitious . . . ." 28 Moreover, Defoe's authorship of the work can be seen in certain stylistic quirks, allusions and images, as well as opinions, items of knowledge and even some factual errors which occur in other writings of Defoe. Secord finds traces "of Defoe's pen throughout" the Memoirs, and concludes that "the book from beginning to end is a fabrication . . . ." 29

Now generally recognized as a fiction, Memoirs of an English Officer illustrates Defoe's use of the tradition of travel and historical narratives to construct a fictional life related by the fictional persona of his hero. Captain George Carleton, like Captain Avery, is actually known to have existed, whereas the origins of Moll Flanders and Roxana are lost in obscurity, but the fictional techniques by which Defoe created an air of authenticity in these works is the same for both the real and the possibly invented characters. Defoe's use of circumstantial detail is easily recognized. The geographical exactitude of the list of streets and alleys by which Moll Flanders makes her escape after robbing a child of her necklace (VII, 203), is matched by the military details of Carleton's description of the siege of Barcelona (pp. 79-94). Similarly, the bills for the expenses of Moll's confinement (VII, 170-1) have the same effect as Carleton's list of Officers killed at the battle of St. Dennis (p. 48), and the lists of mortality bills printed by the London saddler in A Journal of the Plague Year (IX, 3, 4, 53-4, 113, 130, 176-7, 206, 215-8), or even Colonel Jack's copy of a
ship's cargo list (XI, 9). In each case the inclusion of real documents provides the fiction with a base of concrete fact, but where this is impossible, Defoe can invent the document himself, as he does with Captain Avery's letters, and Robinson Crusoe's "Journal." Throughout all of these works the repeated lists of goods stolen or traded, the huge sums of money in gold and silver, Crusoe's lists of tools and weapons, and Singleton's catalogues of his pirated riches, create the illusion that the fiction is recording real things which had a prior existence in the historical world.

More important are the anecdotal flourishes by which characters record the almost inconsequential details of their stories. In an essay on "Homer and the Homeridae" De Quincey wonders how Defoe was able to falsify historical records so plausibly as to deceive even Dr. Johnson:

How did he accomplish so difficult an end? Simply by inventing such little circumstantiations of any character or incident as seem, by their apparent inertness of effect, to verify themselves; for, where the reader is told that such a person was the posthumous son of a tanner, that his mother married afterwards a Presbyterian schoolmaster, who gave him a smattering of Latin, but the schoolmaster dying of the plague, that he was compelled at sixteen to enlist for bread—in all this, as there is nothing at all amusing, we conclude that the author could have no reason to detain us with such particulars but simply because they were true. To invent, when nothing at all is gained by inventing, there seems no imaginable temptation. It never occurs to us that this very construction of the case, this very inference from such neutral details, was precisely the object which De Foe had in view—was the very thing which he counted on, and by which he meant to profit. He thus gains the opportunity of impressing upon his tales a double character: he makes them so amusing that girls read them for novels; and he gives them such an air of verisimilitude that men read them for histories.30

The circumstantial details which help to create the air of authenticity in the narrative, the devices of "formal realism," are important because of their seeming lack of importance. Defoe may have written the Memoirs of an English Officer to celebrate Lord Peterborough's powers of leadership and justify his tactics during the
Spanish campaign, but the anecdotes which are extraneous to the central argument make the narrative seem to be the true recollection of George Carleton. When Carleton writes about the grief of the father whose son literally lost his head from a cannonball at the siege of Barcelona, he adds his own emotional response: "'Twas a sad Spectacle, and truly affects me now whilst I am writing!" (p. 94). In his description of the battle of Solebay, Carleton testifies to the bravery of the Duke of York who "remain'd all the time upon the Quarter Deck, and as the Bullets plentifully whizz'd around him, would often rub his Hands, and cry, Sprage, Sprage they follow us still" (p. 30). This vignette of sea warfare is "a Matter of Fact," of which Carleton's "own eyes were witnesses," although, as Secord points out, most of Carleton's description is very generalized. Many of his "facts" are concerned with the actions of the Blue Squadron despite his serving in the Red Squadron, and a careful reading shows that nowhere does Carleton mention his own responsibilities or actions during the battle. Throughout the Memoirs Defoe maintains the rhetoric of personal recollection with such phrases as "I must not omit," "I shall further add," "I must acknowledge myself one of that number," "I observ'd in the East," "I remember," "This made me fix my eyes," "I well remember." Whether he is describing a siege, or the effects of a gunpowder explosion (p. 118-9), a drunken soldier (p. 96), or Spanish penitents (p. 131), a swarm of locusts (p. 158), or a bull-fight (pp. 174-179), Defoe's rhetoric creates the illusion that he is giving an eye-witness account, as it is remembered by his soldier-persona. Sometimes he remembers his reactions at the time of the event, as when he blushed at the embarrassment of seeing his drunken fellow-countryman (p. 96), or he remembers his surprise when the fleeing Highlanders disappear into a fog, and recalls that "to me, at that Instant of Time, they seem'd rather to be People
receiv'd up into Clouds, than flying from an Enemy" (p. 52). Defoe thus maintains a consciousness of the elapse of time between the events described and the present memory of them. In criticizing the marching orders given his regiment for their lack of apparent reason, he modestly refrains from making a judgment with the advantage of hindsight: "I shall not venture to offer my Sentiments at so great a Distance" (p. 46). While he gives the real names of many of the prominent participants, Carleton, in recounting the massacre of a small detachment in a guerilla action, is unable to give the name of the English Captain, "whose Name," he says, "has slip'd my Memory, tho' I well knew the Man" (p. 124).

Such a wealth of detail, and even the lapses of memory, belongs to the professional soldier rather than the historian, and the credibility of Defoe's persona appears to authenticate his eye-witness account of the historical events. In his inclusion of the trivial and inconsequential facts, Defoe suggests the carelessness of the amateur writer, rather than the meticulous selection and arrangement of ideas of the consciously literary artist. The very incompetence of Defoe's storytellers, in their inability to remember some details or in their insistence on including irrelevancies, becomes the certificate of their humanity. In their efforts to relate all of the petty circumstances, Defoe's narrators seem like the very ordinary story-tellers of everyday life, when as John Sutherland notes, "the insignificant becomes significant, and the irrelevant takes on relevance because it is helping to authenticate the fictitious and make it pass for truth."

In the Memoirs of an English Officer the figure of Defoe is nowhere to be seen. The title-page ascribes the memoirs to "Captain George Carleton" and in the description of the contents of the book refers to the "Author's Residence in many Cities,
Towns, and Countries" with a touch of ambiguity, as the phrase seems to relate to Carleton as the author, although the language is vague enough to mean that there is another author besides Carleton who had resided, like Defoe did, in Spain. In the dedication there is no suggestion of any other author besides Carleton, who claims that his Memoirs "are not set forth by any fictitious Stories, nor imbelished with rhetorical Flourishes" (p. 25). The publisher's note to the reader also refers to the hero of the military adventures as "the Author" and "our Author" (p. 27). Defoe's presence behind the mask of Captain George Carleton can be surmised only from the similarities between this work and other writings known to be Defoe's, in which the same sentence patterns, images, and diction recur. There is also evidence of Defoe's authorship in the general themes of travel, war, imprisonment, religion, and local customs, which are typical of Defoe's preoccupations, and even such an episode as the gunpowder explosion can be shown as part of a pattern of Defoe's interest in explosions manifested in many of his other works. But to the extent that Defoe succeeds in convincing his readers that George Carleton was really the author of the work, the Memoirs may be regarded as a piece of ghost writing, and hence a delusion. Only the historical detective work of A.W. Secord enables the reader to discern Defoe's use of published sources, and to appreciate the appearance of reality which Defoe has created from his vicarious experience. Similar studies of the origins of The Apparition of Mrs. Veal (1705), Memoirs of a Cavalier (1720), Madagascar; Robert Drury's Journal (1729), and A General History of the . . . Pyrates (1728) have been necessary to show how Defoe's techniques of fiction have served the purpose of history and journalism.

Whether as a narrator-persona, historian, or journalist in these and other narratives, Defoe's masks maintain his anonymity within the context of each of these
texts. One of the handicaps to a discussion of his narrative techniques in these works has been the lack of an adequate name for this narrative form. Defoe used the word "memoir" to suggest a personal view of historical events, but such a name is unacceptable when we know that the narrator is himself a creation of fiction. I have used the word "chronicle" because it suggests the delineation of events within a specific period of time, but without the implication that the narrator is necessarily a participant in these events. "Chronicle" also connotes the idea of history on a small scale—the day to day events sifted from the accounts of journalists and from the memories of people involved in the events or witnesses to them. Defoe's The Storm is a good example of an extended piece of journalism, sufficiently comprehensive in its reporting of the events of November 24-29th, 1703, to be called a chronicle. So, too, A Journal of the Plague Year, notwithstanding its fictional aspects, may be considered as a chronicle of historical events. A chronicle can refer to both public and private experience in that it bridges the gap between biography and history, when an individual's record of events, perhaps in the fragmentary form of a diary or journal, becomes a continuous narrative of a specific period. "Chronicle" can refer to Defoe's journalistic account of Mrs. Veal, or to the events that led to the capture of John Gow (XVI, 287-344), or to Madagascar, the supposition being that these accounts all have some basis in verifiable happenings. Of course, it is inevitable that any name for a narrative of historical records is prone to be borrowed by the writer of fiction. No word can guarantee the authenticity of its contents, just as "voyage" can refer equally to the actual journeys of Woodes Rogers or Dampier, as well as the fictional journeys of Defoe's A New Voyage Round the World (1725) or Gulliver's Travels.

In his chronicles, Defoe uses his mask to preserve his anonymity and create
the delusion that the work is a true account of the events he describes. In Captain Singleton (1720) he extends the technique to present the work as a complete autobiography from Singleton's early memories of his childhood to his retirement from piracy. In these works there is no hint of the professional writer standing behind his personae. A New Voyage is also told in the first person, and bears some similarity to Captain Singleton, being the chronicle of a voyage of trade, mutiny, and piracy in the South Seas. Captain Singleton's journey across Africa is paralleled by a crossing of South America; Singleton's gathering of gold in Guinea is enlarged in the accounts of prodigious amounts of nuggets and gold dust found in the Andes; and Singleton's voyage around the unknown Australia is reversed in the easterly direction of A New Voyage. These travellers, like Robert Drury, also encounter the pirates of Madagascar, including Defoe's favourite Captain Avery, and like so many travellers of those times they call at the island of Juan Fernandez, where they stop to refit and provision their ships, and the author pauses to analyse the significance of their journey before beginning Part II (XIV, 169-183). The name of the narrator is not revealed, but there are hints of a ghost writer at work. In the opening discussion of voyage literature, the writer admits that "a very good sailor may make but a very indifferent author" (XIV, 1), and promises that his account will be "perfectly new in its form," because he "would take such exact notice of everything that passed within reach" in order to give an account of the voyage different from other narratives both "in the nature of the observations, as well as in the manner of relating them" (XIV, 3). Because of his unusual preparations for the journey the author decides to conceal his name and the name of the ship, but then in the same paragraph mentions that the captain "in whose name I write this, gives me leave to make use of his name, and
conceal my own" (XIV, 5). Yet the author reveals no names, and while much of the navigation is told as if by the sea captain, nevertheless the whole voyage is riddled with an interest in trade, exploration, industrial and agricultural potential, and the possibilities of colonization, which are familiar themes in the Defoe canon. If the ghost writer peeps through the mask of the anonymous captain of A New Voyage, in Captain Singleton he remains hidden by the closely knit fabric of its text in which all events are seen through the single consciousness of the autobiographical hero.

So, too, could the stories of Moll Flanders, Roxana, and Colonel Jack be read as genuine autobiographies, especially as each of these names, like Singleton's, is an admitted pseudonym presumably hiding the identity of a real person, were it not that the authorship of these works, because of historical records and internal evidence, is attributed to Defoe. In a letter to Mist's Journal of April 12, 1719, Defoe's "your Old Friend, G." rails against the publishers of bawdy books who slough their responsibility by being "Title-Page-Men" taking no more account of the content of their books than what appears on the title-page. Defoe, of course, might well be called a "Title-page Novelist" because of his attempts to divorce himself from the text of his novels. In The Life and Strange Surprizing Adventures of Robinson Crusoe, of York, Mariner: . . . Written by Himself, to quote from the original title-page, Defoe appears only as the Editor, who in a preface recommends the work because of its religious message, and testifies to its authenticity: "The Editor believes the thing to be a just history of fact; neither is there any appearance of fiction in it" (I, lxxvii). Similarly in the Preface to Colonel Jack, The Editor points out the delights of reading of the hero's variety of adventures, and the lessons to be learned from them: the advantages of a good education and the possibility of the sinner's repentance. But
he withholds his judgment on the authenticity of the work, adding to the sense of separation between the real and pretended authors of the work.

In the prefaces to the stories of his two female personae, Defoe still maintains their historical truth. **Roxana** is said to differ from other stories of that kind because it "is laid in truth of fact; and so the work is not a story, but a history" (XII, xii). So, too, is **Moll Flanders** a "private history to be taken for genuine" and not to be confused with the "novels and romances" of popular fiction (VII, xix). Yet in both cases the Author admits to a larger share of the work than in Defoe's other fictions. In **Roxana**, "the relator" may be accused of "dressing up the story in worse clothes than the lady whose words he speaks," and he justifies the necessity of changing the names of the characters in order to protect those people who are still living. Moreover, "the writer" guarantees the truth of at least the first part of Roxana's story, from his acquaintance with her first husband (XII, xiv). The preface implies the presence of a Writer who had known Roxana in the past, and who has heard her tell the story of her subsequent adventures. He accepts responsibility for the truth of his narrative, and preserves its decorum by censoring Roxana's "indecencies and immodest expressions" (XII, xv). If the prospective reader is tantalized by the Writer's promises in the title-page and preface to relate the rewards of vice and crime, the Writer is careful to point out that he only depicts such scenes because of the moral lessons they contain, and he emphasizes the disquietude of Roxana's conscience in her repentance of her wickedness.

The same "Writer" is the author of the preface to **Moll Flanders**, in which he admits that "the original of this story is put into new words," although Moll "is here supposed to be writing her own history" (VII, xix). The Writer, in fact, sees his
role as an early Mrs. Grundy, who must polish Moll's style and diction, retelling her story in a "language fit to be read" (VII, xix). In contrast to the title-page which advertises Moll's story as the life of a whore and thief, hinting salaciously of her many marriages and her incestuous relationship with her brother, the Writer adopts a high moral tone in admitting to having expurgated some parts of her story. He takes care that "no lewd ideas, no immodest turns in the dressing up this story" (VII, xx) should offend his idea of propriety. As with Roxana, the Writer justifies his depiction of vice by the moral effects of his fable, "as the whole relation is carefully garbled of all the levity and looseness that was in it, so it is applied, and with the utmost care, to virtuous and religious uses" (VII, xxi). The Writer's source for Moll's story is "the copy which came first to hand," (VII, xix), the familiar novelist's technique of the discovered document. Although Moll at the end of the book has become a reformed, penitent and respectable lady of property, the "copy" is written in a language more typical of Newgate than of "one grown penitent and humble, as she afterwards pretends to be" (VII, xix). It is possible that in the ambiguity of the word "pretends" the Writer is casting doubt on the reality of Moll's repentance, and in appearing to doubt Moll's veracity, he opens the way for a reading of Moll's story as, in Dorothy Van Ghent's words, "a complex system of ironies," by which Defoe allows Moll to expose unwittingly the "morality of her impoverished soul" through his depiction of her cash-register mind. 36

Defoe's success in dissociating himself from the writing of his fiction, to become a "Title-Page Editor" who merely polishes the language of his personae, depends on his ability to write convincingly in the "voice" of his fictional character, so that, in Ian Watt's view, "the text represents the authentic lucubrations of an
historical person." Watt criticizes Moll Flanders for Defoe's failure to maintain a proper relationship between Moll's older, reformed character, the presumed author of the original copy, and the younger, criminal self she describes. Watt suggests that through this lack of a consistent moral awareness, Defoe failed to give any "coherent ulterior significance" to his illusory life. Nevertheless, whether Defoe intended to or not, it is clear that Moll does betray her own lack of human feeling in describing a life in which all her personal relationships are subverted to economic survival. James Sutherland points out that Defoe's task was "to be a sailor on a desert island, to be a London citizen in a plague-stricken city, to be a female adventurer and thief; to see and feel things as each of those characters would have experienced them, and to throw their story into a plausible autobiographical form." It is true that Defoe's characters frequently parrot the moral platitudes of Defoe's prefaces and other writings, but as in the real world, so in the fictional world created by the novelist's language, it is true that actions speak louder than words. However Crusoe might express his belief in the Divine Providence which protects him, his whole story is the record of his efforts to look after himself without waiting for Divine intervention. So, too, is the depth of Moll's repentance better indicated by her actions after her transportation, when she continues the double-dealing and money-grubbing of her earlier self, than by her voluble protestations of a change of heart.

The Writer's claim to have rewritten Roxana's and Moll's stories would appear to negate any interpretation of these characters through the language of the novel, rather than the events which it describes. Robert Alter, for example, discusses the significance of the euphemisms and circumlocutions in Moll's language, while Robert Donovan propounds the necessity "to examine closely the verbal texture"
as "a reliable index of what is uppermost in her mind." Yet the import of the prefaces makes it possible, if not probable, that the language of the novel may be as much a function of the Writer's view of life as of his character's. Where language, character and action fit into a unified pattern of convincing verisimilitude, or as McKillop suggests, "Moll's colloquial style, weak compunctions, and ruthless purposes are fused into imaginative unity," such passages can testify to the identity of the Writer with Moll's point of view, without the necessity of attributing Moll's values to the Defoe who hides behind the mask of the Writer, or the Title-Page Editor. The extent to which the Writer is responsible for Moll's and Roxana's descriptions of their actions is indicated by the many similarities in their language. Arthur Sherbo has shown how similar situations occur in both novels with the same phrases and imagery. In spite of their differences in social class, Moll and Roxana write, or speak, the same dialect, using many similar or identical images. They share the same propensity to use qualifying phrases as parenthetical afterthoughts to their statements, and both use the same excuses to avoid describing certain delicate situations. Sherbo also shows how to a somewhat lesser extent the same idiosyncracies of narrative technique are shared by Crusoe, Colonel Jack, and Captain Singleton, concluding that Defoe was "a much less versatile novelist than he has been thought by many critics."

By emphasizing the similarities of style in these narratives Sherbo's approach tends to delineate the fundamental "voice" of Defoe as he speaks behind the masks of his fictional characters. In a more comprehensive study of Defoe's prose style and literary methods, E. Anthony James also notes the characteristics common to all of Defoe's fictional narrators. He shows how they habitually "qualify their remarks
in the interest of scrupulous accuracy," a device by which Defoe inveigles the reader into trusting in the truthfulness of the narrator who confesses that he cannot remember exact dates or details of an occurrence, or is meticulous in differentiating information obtained from first-hand experience from that of hearsay evidence. James shows how the sentence structure in the fictional works is much looser than in those writings in which Defoe speaks directly to his audience. The multiple clauses and parenthetical statements are necessary to accommodate the wealth of corroborative details, as well as the many circumlocutions with which the narrators qualify their statements in order to guarantee their truthfulness. While the haphazard sentence construction is effective in conveying the narrators' lack of literary elegance, so too may the lack of organization of the narratives themselves be considered as symptomatic of the narrators' reminiscing rather than carelessness on the part of Defoe. The repetitions, digressions, recapitulations, and unfulfilled forecasts in the action of Defoe's narratives may be, as Virginia Harlan suggests, an aspect of Defoe's conscious artistry rather than indicative of his incompetence as a writer.

In his study of the particular styles of three of Defoe's fictitious narrators—Robinson Crusoe, Moll Flanders, and Roxana—Anthony James shows how the "narrative and stylistic effects . . . reflect conscious craftsmanship on Defoe's part." According to James the language which Defoe creates for Crusoe adequately mirrors the spiritual or psychological development experienced by the fictitious narrator:

Crusoe's early semantic hair-splitting, the habitual inflation in his choice of descriptive epithets, his changing uses of the terms "Providence" and "Deliverance," are related devices which complement one another and seem clearly pointed at specific narrative goals. Such qualities of style lend realism and psychological depth to the work by
illuminating indirectly the effects of isolation on the mind of Crusoe. They provide insight into his character and personality, revealing his sincere but flexible ethical values, his pragmatic temperament. And they reflect his growth and development along logical lines and through recognizable stages—from uncertainty to decisiveness, from humility to pride, from the role of prisoner to that of king.46

Similarly, James distinguishes between the narrative styles of Moll Flanders and Roxana; showing how Moll's world of traps and snares is echoed in her language, while Roxana's outlook is characterized by her references to wealth and status, and her cynicism towards love and sex. James contrasts Moll's tone of disarming candour, her "comic peaks of bluntness," and her false modesty, with the sarcastic worldliness of Roxana with her leering, tantalizing innuendoes, concluding that these works show "unmistakable evidence of seemingly premeditated design and conscious stylistic control on the part of Defoe," and demonstrate his "fictional artistry."47

In his narratives Defoe provides the prime example of the novelist who, by the creation of a narrating persona, hides behind the mask of the editor of the title-page. Only in Moll Flanders and Roxana are there more explicit hints that the Editor is also a ghost-writer who accepts some responsibility for the story he is publishing—its style and decorum, at least, if not its events and characters. During the first part of the eighteenth century, because the literary and social status of fiction was generally held in such low esteem, the novelist disguised his work as history, travel writing, memoirs, and journalism, combining factual information and imaginative reconstruction in his historical fiction as in his fictional histories, to the point that the two are indistinguishable, justifying Sidney Black's contention that the "pseudo-history" can be considered as the typical fictional mode of the period.48

Within the context of any one of Defoe's narratives, it is extremely difficult to prove
whether the basis of the story belongs to history or fiction. In such a work as

_The Memoirs of Major Alexander Ramkins; A Highland Officer_ (1718; dated 1719)

only the strong polemical bias of Ramkins’ perception and actions may lead the
reader to suspect that the narrative has been composed as a piece of political
propaganda. Yet the obvious sermonizing in _Robinson Crusoe_ and _Moll Flanders_
are fused into the imaginative structure as an integral part of the fictional narrator’s
perception of life, and the reader may well perceive an ironic distance between his
own and the character’s interpretation of events. Clearly the most popular of Defoe’s
works, _Robinson Crusoe_ is also the narrative most easily recognized as fiction.

From historical, geographical, anthropological, and psychological viewpoints
_Robinson Crusoe_ is probably the least probable of Defoe’s narratives, yet in the central
episode of Crusoe’s twenty-eight years on his island, Defoe develops his use of
circumstantial detail to create the sense of a man living and recording his day-to-
day existence. The credibility of _Robinson Crusoe_ is inherent in its narrative form,
while belief in the reality of Carleton and Ramkins depends to a greater extent on a
prior knowledge of the history of the times to corroborate the facts within the
narrative. The corroborative “facts” of _Robinson Crusoe_ are a part of every reader’s
experience, because in our recognition of the hero’s struggle for food and shelter
Defoe creates an intrinsic illusion of authentic life.

Yet _Robinson Crusoe_ is also a fantasy—a dream of man in his solitary state
constructing his good life out of the barren wilderness in the tradition of utopian
literature. _Lemuel Gulliver’s Travels Into Several Remote Nations of the World_
(1726) draws upon the same tradition, but Defoe’s dream of colonial empire becomes
Swift’s nightmare in the defeat of Gulliver’s facile optimism and pride in the human
condition. Both Crusoe and Gulliver tell their stories in the mode of the eighteenth-century sea-farer whose voyages of exploration, trade, and piracy were popular reading. In addition, Gulliver's restlessness, his compulsion to set out on new journeys in spite of the dangers and mishaps he suffers, is something like Crusoe's wanderlust. Perhaps he also shares some of the venturesome spirit of his "Cousin Dampier" whom he mentions in his prefatory letter to his publisher, Cousin Sympson. William Dampier was already famous for the buccaneering exploits of his *A New Voyage Round the World* (4 vols., 1697, 1699, 1703, 1709), as well as being concerned in the two expeditions which marooned and rescued one of Crusoe's precursors, Alexander Selkirk, from the island of Juan Fernandez. Gulliver also resembles Crusoe in his simple, direct, unliterary style; his publisher-cousin, Richard Sympson notes: "The Style is very plain and simple, and the only Fault I find is, that the Author, after the Manner of Travellers, is a little too circumstantial. There is an Air of Truth apparent through the whole...".

There is no doubt that the introductory matter to *Gulliver's Travels*, the circumstantial details of Gulliver's upbringing and first voyages, and the nautical language of the shipwreck belong to the authentic chronicle of sea travel. Not only is this mode of introduction repeated for each of Gulliver's journeys, but he also maintains the same voice of factual reporting through all of the fanciful adventures of Swift's work. One of the fundamental ironies of the work is the gap between the reader's and Gulliver's perception of events. What are apparent to the reader as the fantasies of Swift's imagination are reported by Gulliver with the dispassionate objectivity of the chronicler, and although Gulliver sustains his role of observer throughout the four voyages, he is finally betrayed by his own experience. His
rejection of the Yahoos and his commitment to the values of the Houyhnhnms serve only to exclude him from human society, and the generosity of Don Pedro and the forbearance of his own family are necessary before he can begin his rehabilitation. So, too, is Gulliver's authenticity betrayed by the extravagance of his adventures; Gulliver's naivety and acceptance of phenomena which belong in the realm of imagination let the reader understand that Gulliver is also a figure of this imaginative fabrication. Within the text Swift is not identified even as a Title-page Author, yet even without historical and biographical evidence—even if the real authorship of the work were completely unknown—the reader would still be forced to admit the presence throughout the work of a creative intelligence which uses Gulliver and his Cousin Sympson as masks of his authorship. Whereas Defoe in the majority of his works had used the masks of his personae in order to delude his audience into believing in the authenticity of his narratives, the ironic ambiguities of Crusoe's *Serious Reflections* proclaim him the creature of Defoe's imagination, a mask by which Defoe could objectify, and create a sense of reality—in the resourcefulness, ingenuity, sovereignty, and God-given superiority of Western civilized man.

It is significant how Crusoe's island adventures have become embedded in the public consciousness, and how little remembered are his preliminary and subsequent adventures. If we knew nothing of Defoe's authorship, nothing of his propensity for preaching and polemicizing in print, we might still suspect that Crusoe's occupation and colonization of his island constituted an exemplum in a sermon of the beneficence of Providence. It is no accident that *Robinson Crusoe* should have attracted the attention of both Jean-Jacques Rousseau and Karl Marx. Both are concerned solely with Crusoe's solitude on his island, because for both Crusoe provides a paradigm of
Ian Watt goes further in his examination of Robinson Crusoe as one of "the great myths of our civilization;" in which he finds Crusoe as the embodiment of modern economic man, "stranded in the utopia of the Protestant Ethic." Similarly, we can see Crusoe as a symbol of capitalist imperialism in the establishment of his little kingdom on the island, and the development or exploitation of its economic resources at the expense of its indigenous people. In the island episode we can see the clash of cultures, when European man invades the Americas, and Friday's conversion, domestication, and servitude become a symbol of the fate of the Amerindian. All of these mythic themes—the Providence of God, the necessity and dignity of human labour, the creation of empire, the subjection of natives, man's existential loneliness, or the delights of primitivism—are so bound up in the consciousness of Crusoe—are so integrated into his description of his adventures—that we can easily accept the reality of the mask. The presence of the author behind the mask of Crusoe becomes irrelevant, because Crusoe's narrative successfully creates and evaluates his world-view—a Kosmos complete and entire in itself. We can accept the reality of Crusoe's world, even though we disagree with his interpretation of it, because it is fully integrated with the personality that Defoe created as his mask of reality. It may well be that there is a complete identity of world-view between Defoe and his mask—that Defoe is Crusoe; the illusion of reality in Robinson Crusoe is so pervasive and unified that the work carries no sense of a greater intelligence behind the mask. Defoe is either completely absorbed into the personality of Crusoe, or completely excluded from it. As far as the novel is concerned, the result is the same—the mask of Crusoe appears to be its ultimate reality.
In contrast, Defoe's *Moll Flanders* has no unified, controlling, ethical viewpoint, which would provide a base of expectation or a moral framework for the story of Moll's criminal, marital, and sexual adventures. While one would normally expect Defoe's editorial mask to provide such a standpoint, in this work the Editor's protestations of moral purpose are so vociferous as to sound questionable. After the Title-page has announced that Moll was "Twelve Year a Whore, five times a Wife (whereof once to her own Brother), Twelve Year a Thief, Eight Year a Transported Felon in Virginia," the Editor tries to show how the story will be morally beneficial to the reader, admitting that he "must be hard put to it to wrap it up so clean as not to give room, especially for vicious readers, to turn it to his disadvantage." (VII, xx). In this Preface the Editor seems very much aware of the salacious appeal to the prurient reader of a story of "a woman debauched from her youth," with an "account of all her vicious practices," in which "the wicked part should be made as wicked as the real history of it will bear," including "her lewd life with the young gentleman of Colchester" (VII, xix, xx, xxi). No phrases could be better chosen to appeal to his "vicious reader," although the Editor claims that "this work is chiefly recommended to those who know how to read it, and how to make good the uses of it which the story all along recommends to them; so it is to be hop'd that such readers will be much more pleas'd with the moral than the fable" (VII, xxii). The Editor justifies his claim by pointing out how the villains will end either unhappy or penitent, and then gives a catalogue of Moll's robberies (including one—picking the gold-watch from the young lady in the park—to which she does not admit), because Moll's exploits "stand as so many warnings to honest people to beware of them" (VII, xxii).

Something of the same ambivalence can be discerned in Moll's account of her
life, which is supposedly told from the viewpoint of the seventy-year old penitent, particularly in her judgments on the actions of her younger self. Five years of marriage and the birth of two children might seem to constitute an important part of a woman's life, but the old Moll can dismiss this interlude very lightly because "it concerns the story in hand very little" (VII, 56). We realize that "the story in hand" is not concerned with Moll's life as a human being—husbands, lovers, children, friends and relations play only a subservient role in this story of material and economic success. The young Moll is said to experience a violent revulsion on discovering her incestuous relationship with her Virginia husband, who turns out to be her brother, but Moll the narrator merely notes that she "liv'd with the greatest pressure imaginable for three years more" (VII, 88).

If the old Moll can slide blandly through a catalogue of husbands and children in which whole decades slip by without notice, in contrast, the moments of the young Moll's crimes are vividly remembered with an accuracy that defies the photographic memory. On these occasions time seems to stand still as the old Moll can recall every detail at the scene of a robbery. From her account of her life it is often difficult to remember at any point just how many children she has had; it seems probable that the old Moll does not know—or care. But she can tell to a penny how much it costs her for the lying-in to deliver Jemy's child (her tenth), and she prints three versions of the bill, while she recalls lavish details of the mid-wife's hospitality. Neither Moll, nor her Editor, notice the incongruity, when she refrains from giving "some account of the nature of the wicked practices of this woman;" lest she give too much "encouragement to the vice" (VII, 174). The whole interlude occupies ten pages, whereas the five years and two children of her second marriage need only one
Moll's story is essentially a story of how a woman survives in an economic jungle by a life of petty crime. Her moments of triumph are the times when good fortune or deception allow her to "win" a few guineas, or a watch, or a roll of cloth. As a testament to the resilience of Moll's spirit of indomitable self-sufficiency, or as a polemic against the society which makes such a life necessary, the novel is a success. As a moral lesson on the evils of stealing and prostitution, the novel fails miserably, because the values of Moll's world make such actions necessary and good; her crimes are preferable to the misery, starvation and degradation of the fate that lay in store for a Moll who was not successful. We can excuse the penitent Moll, now in a state of secure, wealthy, respectability when she moralizes over the wicked actions of her past. We cannot blame her if she does not see what her story has allowed us to see—that her penitence is the reward of her criminality. We can excuse her if in her recounting the details of her crimes, she takes an almost erotic delight in building the suspense of each episode up to the moment when she gets away with her spoils and registers her winnings in her cash-register mind. The problem of the novel is that there is no clear separation between Moll and the moralistic world supposedly represented by the Editor. He knows that his readers are going to share Moll's fascination in re-living her moments of criminal triumph. The Editor shares, but does not admit to sharing, Moll's ambivalent attitude towards the crimes of her past.

The lack of discrimination between the moral attitudes of Defoe's Editor, and Moll, herself, suggests that Moll and her Editor share the same moral viewpoint. If we notice that Moll's story is full of unconscious irony, we have also to suspect that the Editor is also unconscious of the irony, because he, after all, does take
responsibility for cleaning up Moll's language, and he is presumably trying to present her as a reformed person. This failure of Defoe's mask is the reason for the critical debate on the artistry of this novel. For Dorothy Van Ghent, *Moll Flanders* is a "great novel, coherent in structure, unified and given its shape and significance by a complex system of ironies." ⁵⁵ Although it is the story of bourgeois morality, Moll's "moralizing thoughts are the harmonies of the cash-register world in which she lives." The Editor, by subscribing to Moll's morality, would necessarily share her "impoverished soul," but as Dorothy Van Ghent argues that a great novel could not be written by "an impoverished soul," she thus concludes that Defoe also would view both his Editor and Moll with detachment. In her view the ironies recognized by the twentieth-century reader are indicative of Defoe's attitude to the world of Moll Flanders which he has created.

The alternative view of the unity of *Moll Flanders* is expressed by Ian Watt who stresses Defoe's casual attitude to his writing, his prolific output, and lack of fastidiousness, suggesting that he did not plan his novel "as a coherent whole." ⁵⁶ What Dorothy Van Ghent sees as evidence of Defoe's deliberate artistry in the expression of his ironic vision of the world is, in Ian Watt's view, a modern imposition. Rather than "seeing Defoe as a critic of Moll's "cash-register world," Ian Watt refers to Defoe's compelling interest in trade and commerce, and his fascination with the pirates and privateers whose exploits in foreign waters were little more than an extension of almost respectable trading ventures.

Rather than try to evaluate by guessing at Defoe's intentions, I prefer to resolve the question as more simply a technical weakness in the basic structure of the novel—the failure of Defoe to provide Moll's story with a distinct system of values
which would heighten the incongruities of her own misconceptions and lack of perception. It is possible that Defoe was too concerned with preserving the formal realism of Moll's story to consider deeply the moral attitudes which he expresses in her perception of the world. The weakness of Moll Flanders is something akin to the initial failure of Defoe's audience to recognize the irony in his imitation of the "High Flyer" churchman as putative author of The Shortest Way with Dissenters. This work, like Moll Flanders, lacks the internal clues of exaggerated and ironic language to re-direct the reader's sympathies, making him aware that he is supposed to be questioning the persona's viewpoint, not accepting it.

By the use of his masks, Defoe was able to achieve a high degree of imitative realism. In his works fact becomes fiction, and fiction becomes fact; the two perceptions of reality are almost inextricably fused. In Robinson Crusoe the blend achieves a cohesive expression in the mask-persona of Robinson Crusoe, and the resultant illusion of reality provides a vehicle for the universal truths expressed in his words and actions. In Moll Flanders, the moral viewpoint of the Editor is not large enough to encompass and evaluate the corrupt world that produces the corrupt Moll. We may recognize Moll's hypocrisy and lack of human feeling, and even excuse them on account of her admirable resilience and quick-wittedness, but these qualities are not a function of the moral position advocated in the editorial framework, because the work lacks the intrinsic guide of a controlling intelligence to guide the reader's flow of sympathy in accord with the actions of Moll's life. Defoe is to be praised for his mastery of verbal realism, but we can still wish that the editorial viewpoint had the incisive perception of a Jonathan Swift. 57

Defoe's narratives, whether biographical or pseudo-biographical, illustrate
the belief that the external world of individual experience can be objectified in continuous prose, written in the naïve, plain style of everyday language. The art of fiction was to imitate life—to capture the reality of the ordinary world as it was perceived in the consciousness of his chosen personae. A story was "true," and most likely to achieve its moral or polemical effect, to the extent that it contained a verbal representation of the perceived world, imitating its objects and people in its dimensions of time and space. Every story, nevertheless, embodies the attitudes and values of the teller, and Robinson Crusoe is Defoe's most successful work because the sense of Crusoe's personality is so integral a part of his vision of the world he describes. Locke's model of human understanding proposes the twin principles of "sensation" and "reflection" in the formation of ideas. Generally, the focus of Defoe's stories is directed outwardly from the story-teller, recording his "sensation" of the external world. While this mode of narration is typical of the mode of reportage or the art of the chronicle, it relies for its effect on the reader's belief in the truth of the events it records, and less on the sense of a trustworthy, authoritative intelligence, reflecting on the ideas it generates from perception. As a novelist, Defoe succeeds best with his more strongly delineated story-tellers—Crusoe and Moll—and less with the shadowy figures of Singleton and Colonel Jack. In Defoe's works, the narrative devices of "formal realism" are highly developed in his story-tellers' accounts of contemporary life. The development of the novel during the next half-century will show the increasing consciousness of the narrators as fictional creations of the novelists' masks of reality, diverting the reader's attention from the external world of sense perception to the interior world of reflection. This pattern of developing self-consciousness within the novel will be traced in the succeeding chapters in which I
shall examine principally the works of Richardson, Fielding, and Sterne.
NOTES

1 The Idler & The Adventurer, ed. W. J. Bate (New Haven, 1963), pp. 261-262.

2 Robert Scholes, in his Elements of Fiction (New York, 1968), pp. 2-4, reminds us of the ambiguity inherent in the word "history," which can refer both to the actual events which happened in the past, and to the story of those events as told by a historian. The events themselves, because they happened in the past, have no real existence. Only in the memories of people and in documentary records and archives do they exist, and when such abstractions from the reality of the past are selected and shaped by the historian, they become part of a created form, paralleling the creation of a fictional story.


4 The Works of Aphra Behn, ed. Montague Summers, 6 vols. (1915; New York, 1967). All of Mrs. Behn's prose fictions are included in Vol. V. Subsequent references to this volume will appear in my text.

5 Montague Summers' Introduction to The History of the Nun, p. 259. See also W. H. McBurney's A Check List of English Prose Fiction, 1700-1739 (Cambridge, 1960), and Jerry C. Beasley's A Check List of Prose Fiction Published in England 1740-1749, (Charlottesville, Va., 1972).

6 McBurney, pp. vii, viii.

7 Ibid., p. viii.

8 Beasley, p. xi.


11 These "facts" were repeated and amplified in the first collected edition of her Histories and Novels (London, 1696). This "biography" is not only a fiction itself, but has also a fictional authoress, being almost certainly the work of the editor, Charles Gildon. In his "Mrs. Behn's Biography a Fiction," PMLA, 28 (1913),
432-453, Ernest Bernbaum points out the discrepancies in the chronology of Oroonoko, and shows that many of her details are from George Warren's Impartial Description of Surinam (London, 1667). In "Astrea and Celadon: An Untouched Portrait of Aphra Behn," PMLA, 49 (1934), 544-559, Harrison Gray Platt, Jr. provides tantalizing evidence to support Mrs. Behn's presence in Surinam, while in New Light on Aphra Behn (Auckland, 1961), W. J. Cameron concludes that Mrs. Behn had visited the colony. The paucity of biographical facts about Mrs. Behn is remarkable; not even her maiden name and place of birth are known. Victoria Sackville-West's Aphra Behn: The Incomparable Astrea (London, 1927), George Woodcock's The Incomparable Aphra (London, 1948) and Frederick M. Link's Aphra Behn (New York, 1968) all draw upon Oroonoko as a biographical source. Emily Hahn's Aphra Behn (London, 1951), also published as Purple Passage: A Novel about a Lady both Famous and Fantastic (Garden City, 1950), is a highly fictionalized life, drawing heavily upon Platt's suggestions.


14 The passage from which these remarks are taken is quoted in full in Alan Dugald McKillop's The Early Masters of English Fiction (Lawrence, 1967), pp. 5-6.

15 The Storm: or a Collection of the most Remarkable Casualties and Disasters Which happen'd in the Late Dreadful Tempest Both by Sea and Land, in The Novels and Miscellaneous Works of Daniel De Foe, 7 vols. (London: 1856-75), V, 251-2. Subsequent references to this edition of The Storm will appear in my text.


17 In this work, as in his John Sheppard, Defoe maintains the serious, righteous tone of the moralist-historian, eschewing any "style of mockery and ridicule." Later, of course, he reworks the story as The Life of Jonathan Wild by H.D., late Clerk to Justice R., in which the serious tone becomes mockingly ironic by exalting Wild's greatness, providing a model for Fielding's Jonathan Wild (1743). See Wilson Follett's introduction to his edition of Fielding's The History of the Life of the Late Mr. Jonathan Wild the Great (New York: 1926), p. xi.

19 "Daniel Defoe: An Artist in the Puritan Tradition," PQ, 15 (1936), 225-246. Stamm describes the Puritan antipathy to literature to sustain his view of "a desperate battle between Defoe's creative impulse and his Puritan views concerning art." (p. 225). See also Michael Shinagel's Daniel Defoe and Middle-Class Gentility (Cambridge, 1968), pp. 195-197. Shinagel writes: "Defoe was astute enough as a Puritan and as an artist to realize that his fictions were leading him to excesses of the imagination . . . ." (p. 196).


22 Lee, II, 35-36.


24 Thomas Wright, The Life of Daniel Defoe (London; 1894), pp. 25-29. George Aitken, the nineteenth-century editor of the standard edition of Defoe's novels, is more sceptical. In his Introduction to Robinson Crusoe he rejects many of Wright's interpretations, and rightly questions whether Crusoe's words can be accepted as Defoe's autobiographical statements (I. Iv-lix, VII, xvii-xviii).

25 Defoe's "sources" for the composition of Robinson Crusoe are thoroughly examined by A.W. Secord in his Studies in the Narrative Method of Defoe (1924; New York, 1963), pp. 22-111. Secord provides a table (p. 107) listing certain, probable, and possible sources for each of the main episodes of both Parts I and II of Robinson Crusoe.

26 This work is also known as The Military Memoirs of Captain George Carleton, the title under which it was re-issued ten days after the original publication date. Boswell in his Life of Johnson recorded that Lord Eliot referred to it as Captain Carleton's Memoirs when recommending the book to Dr. Johnson. My references are to the Gollancz Classics Edition, ed. James T. Boulton, (London: Victor Gollancz, 1970).

27 The Narrative Method of Defoe, pp. 165-173.

28 Ibid., p. 174.

29 Ibid., p. 228.

30 The Collected Writings of Thomas De Quincey, ed. David Masson, 14 vols. (Edinburgh, 1889-1890), VI, 85.
The Narrative Method of Defoe, pp. 189-192. Although the historical Carleton is most likely to have been present at this battle, Secord shows that Defoe's details do not depend on personal experience, but could be gleaned from the dispatches in the London Gazette and from Boyer's William III.


John Sutherland examines Defoe's use of imaginative detail in The Apparition of Mrs. Veal, comparing Defoe's account with other published versions of the apparition, in "The Relations of Defoe's Fiction to his Non-Fictional Writings," pp. 37-50. In his Robert Drury's Journal and Other Studies (Urbana, 1961), A.W. Secord traces Defoe's sources for Madagascar (pp. 1-71), and Memoirs of a Cavalier (pp. 72-133). In his edition of Of Captain Misson (Los Angeles, 1961), Maximillian E. Novak discusses Defoe's use of the mask of the supposed author, "Captain Charles Johnson," suggesting that this story is "one of Defoe's most remarkable and neglected works of fiction" (p.i.).

Lee, II, 35.


The Rise of the Novel, p. 117.

Introduction to his Riverside edition of Moll Flanders (Boston, 1959), p. ix.


The Early Masters of English Fiction, p. 31.


Ibid., p. 157.


"Defoe's Narrative Style," JEGP, 30 (1931), 59.
James, p. 195. McKillop also suggests that the "apparently random sequence of A Journal of the Plague Year heightens the immediacy and vividness of the record." He regards such a "cunningly devised effect" as evidence of Defoe's deliberate artistry. See The Early Masters of English Fiction, p. 18.

Ibid., p. 253.

Sidney J. Black, "'Histories' as a Fictional Mode," Boston University Studies in English, 1 (1955), 38-44.


See Secord's The Narrative Method of Defoe, pp. 49-63.

Gulliver's Travels, p. 9.

In Emile, trans. Barbara Foxley (London, 1957 ), pp. 147-8, Rousseau rhapsodizes over the educational value of Defoe's work:

Since we must have books, there is one book which, to my thinking, supplies the best treatise on an education according to nature. This is the first book Emile will read; for a long time it will form his whole library, and it will always retain an honoured place. It will be the text to which all our talks about natural science are but the commentary. It will serve to test our progress towards a right judgment, and it will always be read with delight, so long as our taste is unspoilt. What is this wonderful book? Is it Aristotle? Pliny? Buffon? No; it is Robinson Crusoe.

Robinson Crusoe on his island, deprived of the help of his fellow-men, without the means of carrying on the various arts, yet finding food, preserving his life, and procuring a certain amount of comfort; this is the thing to interest people of all ages, and it can be made attractive to children in all sorts of ways. We shall thus make a reality of that desert island which formerly served as an illustration.

This novel, stripped of irrelevant matter, begins with Robinson's shipwreck on his island, and ends with the coming of the ship which bears him from it, and it will furnish Emile with material, both for work and play, during the whole period we are considering. His head should be full of it, he should always be busy with his castle, his goats, his plantations. Let him learn in detail, not from books but from things, all that is necessary in such a case. Let him think he is Robinson himself; let him see himself clad in skins, wearing a tall cap, a great cutlass, all the grotesque get-up of Robinson Crusoe, even to the umbrella which he will scarcely need. He should anxiously consider what steps to take;
will this or that be wanting. He should examine his hero's conduct; has he omitted nothing; is there nothing he could have done better? He should carefully note his mistakes, so as not to fall into them himself in similar circumstances, for you may be sure he will plan out just such a settlement for himself. This is the genuine castle in the air of this happy age, when the child knows no other happiness but food and freedom.

In Das Kapital, Karl Marx uses Crusoe as an example showing that wealth is the product of labour. See the translation by Samuel Moore and Edward Aveling in Twentieth Century Interpretations of Robinson Crusoe, ed. Frank H. Ellis (Englewood Cliffs, 1969), pp. 90-92.


55 The English Novel, p. 42.


57 How could Defoe have provided a framework for Moll Flanders? It is difficult to resist the temptation to restructure the novel. Suppose Defoe had cut out the happy ending, the return to the Virginian idyll, the coincidental meeting with Jemy, and even the last-minute reprieve from the gallows. Moll's story could then have been an extended piece of gallows literature in the tradition of confessions and execution speeches, some real, some false, that were often published in broadsheets after the execution of a notable criminal. The knowledge that she was to be hanged might have done wonders to concentrate Moll's mind, perhaps have justified a little more bravado and pride in her crimes, and certainly have made her condemned-cell repentance a more pathetic scene. By bringing Moll-the-narrator closer in time and scene to Moll-the-criminal, Defoe might have avoided some of the difficulties of Moll's contrite judgments of her younger self. There are many stances the Editor could adopt towards such a narrative. He could, for example, take a gleefully righteous attitude, by rejoicing that Moll was about to suffer the consequences of her petty crimes, perhaps even hypocritically exaggerating some of Moll's peccadilloes with pseudo-sociological statistics in footnotes. The possibilities are endless.

58 Wellek and Warren's comment on fiction that imitates facts could well apply to Defoe's works:

There is an opposite danger, however, of taking the novel seriously in the wrong way, that is, as a document or case history, as—what for its own purposes of illusion it sometimes professes to be—a confession, a true story, a history of a life and its times. Literature must always be interesting; it must always have a structure and an aesthetic purpose, a total coherence
and effect. It must, of course, stand in recognizable relation to life, but the relations are very various: the life can be heightened or burlesqued or antithesized; it is in any case a selection, of a specifically purposive sort, from life. We have to have a knowledge independent of literature in order to know what the relation of a specific work to "life" may be. Theory of Literature, pp. 201–202.
Defoe's achievement in the art of written narrative results in the pseudo-autobiography, in which fact and fiction are almost inextricably confused. The apparent artlessness of his narrators—their plain style and lack of sequence and emphasis in their stories—creates the illusion of their reality in so convincing a fashion that his narratives run the risk of being read as actual case-histories rather than as fictional creations. Moreover, Defoe's particularity of detail, sometimes petty and inconsequential, with which his characters record the physical objects of their material worlds, suggests the reality of a Lockean mind perceiving the external world of experience through the perception of its primary and secondary qualities. Defoe's rhetoric creates a world in which his protagonist struggles against the forces of nature and society to accumulate material wealth—a world in which the presence of the real teller of the tale is seldom to be noticed, so well concealed is he by his mask of reality.

With the publication of the first edition of Pamela in November, 1740, Richardson is apparently following the example of Defoe and other novelists of the period who disguised their authorship with the mask of the editor, presenting fictional stories as true accounts and histories. All of Richardson's eight editions of Pamela begin with a "Preface by the Editor" in which the writer admits that "his own Passions... have been uncommonly moved in perusing these engaging Scenes" (I, viii), as if he had no hand in their composition beyond bringing them into publication. In a letter to Aaron Hill of February, 1741, Richardson claims that he has "struck a bold stroke in the preface you see, having the umbrage of the editor's character to screen
myself behind."2  Richardson hides behind this "umbrage" to some extent through all
his three novels, maintaining the pretense that he is merely editing a collection of
original letters. The original title-page of Pamela shows no mention of Richardson's
name, while Clarissa and Sir Charles Grandison are ostensibly "published by the
Editor of Pamela," being simply "Printed for S. Richardson."  In his Prefaces, and in
the Concluding Note to Sir Charles Grandison Richardson carefully avoids the use of
the word "author," clearly intending that his readers should approach his fiction with
a predisposition to believe in them as if they were actually "collections" and not mere
"modern fictitious pieces" (Grandison, VII, 295).  In his letter to William Warburton
(19 April, 1748), Richardson discussed "that Kind of Historical Faith which Fiction is
generally read with," emphasizing the need to preserve the "Air of Genuineness."3
The critical discussion that accompanied the writing of Richardson's novels is recorded
in his correspondence, showing Richardson's awareness of the nature of fiction, and
becomes manifest in his Postscript to Clarissa.

Although in the title-pages and prefaxes Richardson might seem to be very
close to the spirit of Defoe's attempts to make fiction seem like history, the letter to
Warburton indicates Richardson's awareness of the technique of the editorial mask as
no more than a superficial screen inviting the reader to penetrate his world of fiction.
There are hints of this awareness in the Preface to Pamela in which the Editor discusses
the purpose of the work in terms which strongly suggest that it is a fiction in which
he has to "draw Characters with Justness," "to paint Vice in its proper Colours," "to
set Virtue in its own amiable Light," in a story "embellished with a great Variety of
entertaining Incidents." (I, iv, v). Perhaps the difference between Defoe's and
Richardson's attitudes towards their fiction is best illustrated by the twenty-four pages
Richardson, of course, was censured for his immodesty in printing such adulatory letters praising "the wonderful AUTHOR of Pamela," yet this commentary has an important effect in conditioning the reader's response to the fiction which follows, by resolving the ambiguity of the Preface. If there were any doubt that the story of Pamela had "its Foundation in Truth" (I, v), and not its actuality, the "Introduction to this Second Edition" is clearly a critical appreciation of a work of fiction, culminating in Aaron Hill's somewhat ingenuous paean to an unknown author, two months after Richardson had confessed his authorship. Besides establishing Pamela as a work of fiction, this critical apparatus provides a discussion of the moral effects of the story, and in judging Pamela by the criteria more properly belonging to a sermon, these critics unconsciously link Richardson with the exemplary fictions of Defoe. In their comments on the appropriateness of Pamela's writing style and diction, the letter-writers show their appreciation of Richardson's verisimilitude in "an Ease, a natural Air, a dignify'd Simplicity, and measured Fullness, in it, that, resembling Life, outglows it." There is also recognition of Richardson's achievement in the use of the epistolary technique in the construction of his narrative, and when, in the Preface and Postscript to Clarissa, Richardson develops these themes, the result is that the fictional structure of the story told in familiar letters becomes embedded in a framework of literary criticism. The Editor is revealed as the author of a work of
fiction, responsible not just for the collection of the letters, but also for their composition. In Shamela Fielding parodies Richardson's critical introduction, implying that Richardson had composed the acclamatory letters for his own self-advertisement. Yet there is a certain irony in the fact that in a collection of fictitious letters presented ostensibly as real, the only anonymous letters should prove to be genuine, and should serve to establish the fictional qualities of the others. In this sense Richardson's rhetorical stance as the editor of the work may be regarded as a retreat from Defoe's position that the stories told by his narrating personae were a direct transcript of life experience. Richardson's art is not the pretended mimicry of life, but rather the imitation of the epistolary forms by which people ordinarily attempted to record, interpret, and evaluate their life's experiences. The familiar story of how Richardson came to write Pamela (Part I, 1740; Part II, 1741) while preparing a book of model letters is indicative that Richardson's Kosmos begins with the format of the familiar letter in which he finds the means of letting his characters tell their own story, interpreting and commenting on each other's actions, and exposing their own feelings.

The advantages and disadvantages of the epistolary novel have been amply discussed by many able critics. In his Postscript to Clarissa Richardson defends himself from the charge of prolixity in his novel by declaring that there was "a necessity to be very circumstantial and minute, in order to preserve and maintain that air of probability, which is necessary to be maintained in a Story designed to represent real Life" (VIII, 361). In his view the familiar letter allowed the novelist to achieve a sense of the present, because the letters are written while the characters are embroiled in the emotions of the action. The letters gain from "being written
under the immediate Impression of every Circumstance which occasioned them" (Preface to Pamela, I, iii), and so the narrative will thus be "much more lively and affecting" because they are written by those "in the height of a present distress" while "the hearts of the writers must be supposed to be wholly engaged in their subjects" (Preface to Clarissa, I, xli). By this means Richardson is able to avoid the obvious fallacy of the pseudo-autobiography which presents the supposedly omniscient persona recalling minute details and dialogue of long past events, and re-creating the emotions attached to them. Moreover, when the point of view of the narrator is placed at a series of points within the fictional time-structure, Richardson avoids the difficulty of the narrator who must conceal the advantages of his hindsight in order to maintain the suspense of the story. Perhaps the main advantage of the epistolary format is that it allows the novelist the opportunity to recount an event from different points of view, revealing the different attitudes, and hence the characters, of the correspondents. Because the letters are private communications in the tradition of the eighteenth-century familiar letter, they can reveal the characters' innermost level of conscious thought, providing a moral dimension to the actions which they describe.

The result is the novel which is concerned primarily with the emotional responses of the characters—the fore-runner or archetype of what is commonly termed the "psychological novel," depicting an interior world of thought and feeling, rather than an exterior world of natural phenomena, objects, and physical interaction. As Dr. Johnson is said to have remarked: "'Why, Sir, if you were to read Richardson for the story, your impatience would be so much fretted that you would hang yourself. But you must read him for the sentiment, and consider the story as only giving occasion to the sentiment.'" The epistolary format means that the story of the novel is
related in a series of highly detailed, and sometimes repetitive, flashbacks. However
much closer to the scene of the action the narration of it may seem, nevertheless the
"now" of the novel is always the present action when the correspondent is writing the
letter. Richardson used various devices, such as the postscript, and notes supposedly
written or secured on the cover, to suggest the immediacy of the action, when the
events of the action almost coincide with the recording of them, and within the texts
of the letters he builds a sense of premonition, forecasting the events in the letter-
writer's future. But the dominant image throughout the whole work, the basis for
all its other images of characters and actions, is created by the illusion that we are
reading a familiar letter. All of the scenes of action and dialogue are set against a
backdrop of the private closet, when we sense the presence of the solitary figure of
the correspondent engaged with paper, quill, and ink in the communication of the
individual's perception of experience. Letter-writing in Richardson's novels is more
than simply the adoption of a series of narrator-personae; letter-writing provides the
basic structure for the creation of its illusion of reality. In this chapter, I intend to
show how Richardson bridges the gap between his imaginary world of the letter-writer
at work and the actual text of the novel, by making letter-writing become, not
merely the medium of the novel, but also the subject of its action.

As Alan Dugald McKillop points out: "The writing of the letters is only the
beginning; they are copied, sent, received, shown about, discussed, answered, even
perhaps hidden, intercepted, stolen, altered, or forged." The letters which we
read in the course of reading the novel—which do exist in the text of the novel--
seem also to exist as stage-properties in the fictional actions which they transcribe.
Not only the letters, but also the act of writing is part of the dramatic action; in
the fictional world we see the documents being prepared from which the novel eventually is constructed. Johnson might complain about the lack of story, but in Richardson's Kosmos his characters are so fully occupied in recording their story that they do not have time to create more of it. His characters have to be allowed the time and the privacy to carry on the voluminous correspondence which becomes the novel.

Some of the techniques by which Richardson bridges the gap between the letter as it seems to exist in the fictional world and the letter as it exists in the text of the novel can be seen in the opening pages of Pamela. In her first paragraph Pamela unburdens her heart to her parents of the troubles arising from the death of her mistress. In her reconstruction of the death scene Pamela notes her own "sobbing and crying" at the time, and the memory of the emotion in the act of writing again brings tears to her eyes as she exclaims: "Oh how my eyes run—" (I, 1). Pamela's tears unite the two scenes of Pamela at the death-bed and Pamela writing in her lady's dressing room, and even seem to impinge physically onto the text of the letter as she adds, "Don't wonder to see the paper so blotted" (I, 1). The physical existence of the letter is also corroborated by Pamela's explanation of how John the footman will deliver it to her parents. Similarly, the money mentioned in her story is to accompany the letter in "one of the little pill-boxes, which my lady had, wrapt close in paper, that they mayn't clink" (I, 2), and the parents are warned against opening the package in the presence of John. Richardson here is preparing for the irony of the situation which develops in the story when it is revealed that John secretly shows all of Pamela's correspondence with her parents to Mr. B., and Pamela's naïve "He does not know what he carries" will show the victim's lack of awareness of Mr. B.'s
machinations.

The advent of the central theme of the novel is signalled by an abrupt break in the letter, a sudden shift in tone from the dutiful phrases of her would-be closing statement to her frantic description of Mr. B.'s interruption. Pamela's addition to her letter brings the action up to the almost immediate present, as she recounts a happening that is supposed to have taken place between the writing of the two parts of the letter. Mr. B.'s actions in this scene—the snatching of Pamela's letter from her bosom, his avid reading of its contents (i.e. the opening page of the novel), and his compliments to Pamela on her ability as a writer—are motifs that will be repeated throughout the whole work. His interest in Pamela's writing complements his sexual passion, which, with her confused reactions to his attentions hinted at this scene, is developed as the central problem of the novel.

The opening letter establishes the fundamental convention of Richardson's rhetorical technique that his letter-writing persona is not merely to summarize events in the way people normally communicate items of news to a correspondent. Pamela's letter-writing shows rather the whole process of the fiction-writer who recreates experience in the medium of words in order that the process of writing will clarify the meaning of the experience. Pamela, it seems, is unable to understand the events in which she is involved until she is able to distance herself from the event and perceive its significance through the medium of her verbal art.

Pamela's role in the novel has two functions. At one level she is the character pursued by Mr. B., but as the narrator of this action she is carefully characterized by Richardson as a person with an obsession for making a public record of her story. At one point she mentions her love of writing long letters (I, 8), and
reports Mr. B.'s complaint that she "is always scribbling" (I, 13), and his comment that she is "a mighty letter writer" (I, 30). When Mr. B. first agrees to send Pamela home, Pamela's report to her parents is tinged with the regret that her "writing-time will soon be over" (I, 32). She introduces another letter with the innocent disclaimer, "I shall write on, as long as I stay, though I should have nothing but silliness to write" (I, 51), although in this letter she recounts another of Mr. B.'s stolen kisses, and ends on a melodramatic note with her copy of Jonathan's warning, which contains the ominous injunction "Burn this instantly" (I, 56), just as she is "called to go to bed" (I, 56). During her captivity on the Lincolnshire estate, writing becomes her principal activity, as she explains, "I have so much time upon my hands, that I must write on, to employ myself" (I, 159). Even on her wedding-day, while her new husband is entertaining his unexpected and unwelcome guests, Pamela at "near three o'clock" is already recording the events of the morning, having, as she says, taken "refuge in my closet, and had recourse to pen and ink, for my amusement, and to divert my anxiety of mind" (II, 107). At eight o'clock she is apparently finding comfort in re-reading her three o'clock note. At ten o'clock she is again writing in her closet, this time at the suggestion of her husband, because, although she "wished for this," she "durst not say so much, lest he should be angry" (II, 112). In the solitude of her closet she finds comfort and solace in the act of writing, as she notes: "the pen and paper being before me, I amused myself with writing thus far" (II, 113). A final note written at eleven o'clock supports Pamela almost to the edge of the marriage-bed where she is to lose the virginity she has been guarding so zealously through the novel.

Pamela's progress through the first part of the novel not only takes her from
servant to lady of the house, but also shows her develop from a dutiful letter-writer
to become a compulsive archivist. With her departure into Lincolnshire her letter
(No. XXXII) turns first into a journal with day-to-day entries, and then becomes
a complete case-file as Pamela copies, records, and preserves the documents of her
story. After the Editor's interpolation to relate the story of her abduction, Mr.
Andrews' visit, and Mr. B.'s false account of her disappearance, Pamela is left in
complete charge to assemble the materials of her story. She transcribes Mr. B.'s
letters to her and to Farmer Norton, and even makes copies of her own letters to the
Rev. Williams, besides recording his replies, while a mistaken address on the cover
enables her to inspect and preserve Mr. B.'s letter to Mrs. Jewkes. A great deal of
the bargaining between Mr. B. and Pamela is carried on in notes, all of which are
recorded, as are also the articles of his proposal to make Pamela his mistress, complete
with her detailed replies. All of these documents become a part of Pamela's archives.

As the victim of attempts to seduce and rape her, Pamela is singularly a passive
resister; her principal defense is her ability to faint at opportune moments. Yet her
inactivity in the sexual confrontations is balanced by her efforts to preserve the history
of her trials. At first she must procure pens, paper, ink, wafers, and sealing wax
from Mr. Longman (I, 46; I, 102-3), and Mrs. Jewkes (I, 117, 160), which she
artfully hides among the books in her closet. She shows the same ingenuity in finding
a hiding-place for her correspondence with Rev. Williams. When the accumulation
of papers makes her Journal too bulky, she begins to be afraid that they will be
discovered, and stitches them to her "undercoat" (I, 138-139). When she escapes
from the Lincolnshire house at night, one of her first actions is to bury her Journal
under a rose-bush (I, 184). Later, when she retrieves her bundle of papers, Mrs.
Jewkes surprises her with them and turns them over to Mr. B. Pamela's first response within the hour is to record the confiscation and then to make a catalogue of the contents which are now to be exposed to Mr. B.

Pamela's Journal, besides providing the material for the novel, also becomes the key instrument in the resolution of its plot. Mr. B.'s fascination for reading about his exploits is shown in the opening letter, and in his stealing of Pamela's letter from her lady's dressing room (I, 18). Later Mr. B. hints that he had been reading Pamela's correspondence with her parents (I, 84-85), and the Editor's interpolation explains how all of John's helpfulness in carrying these letters to and fro was really a part of Mr. B.'s plot, which Pamela learns in a secret note from John, warning her of the master's intricate machinations (I, 125-126). The discovery of her Journal whets Mr. B.'s appetite for reading more of his exploits, as a sort of perverse voyeurism that accompanies the rape scenes in both Pamela and Clarissa. The subject of Pamela's papers becomes the bargaining point of the subsequent discussion, diverting Mr. B.'s aims to the extent that when he threatens to strip off her clothes, it is merely to obtain her Journal rather than her virginity. Pamela, of course, who "could not bear the thoughts of giving up" her papers (I, 257), puts him off for a day while she makes another catalogue of their contents. The ensuing scene is the turning point in the story as Mr. B. leads Pamela through the garden identifying the original scenes while he reads the account of Pamela's attempted escape; the result is the first hint that he will consider marrying her (I, 264). When finally Mr. B. recalls Pamela from her homeward journey, he confesses twice that the reading of her Journal is the cause of his change of heart (I, 271, 274), and his pleas for her to return to him are linked both in his letters and in his instructions to Colbrand with
the request that Pamela procure the rest of her papers from her parents. So great an emphasis on Mr. B.'s burning desire to read Pamela's story creates an impression that Mr. B. perceives Pamela as a person only through her writings; until this turningpoint Pamela for him had existed simply as a body to be tricked or forced into submission.

Mr. B. is not the only appreciative reader of Pamela's story. Her parents, of course, are the ostensible audience, not only for the letters addressed to them, but for all of Pamela's case-file of letters and documents. Pamela's tone in the early letter from the Bedfordshire house is simply informative--she is keeping her parents up-to-date with the news from her household. By Letter XX Pamela's role as a compulsive scribbler has been well established, and in this letter she shows an awareness that her letters do not merely convey news, but also have an entertainment value. She acknowledges that her father keeps all letters to read over and over again in the evenings (I, 39, 51), and John tells her of her parents' weeping as they read her story (I, 70). But Pamela continues writing even when she expects to be returning home, or, after her removal to Lincolnshire, when she has no hope of being able to send her Letter XXXII, which eventually extends into her Journal. Nevertheless, she still writes with the consciousness of her parents as audience. Among all her vicissitudes, the one item which she thinks will make her parents' "hair stand on end" (I, 126), is her revelation of John's tampering with their correspondence. In Pamela's world the sanctity of correspondence is matched only by her preoccupation with virginity.

A great deal of the action in the novel is concerned with Pamela's efforts to preserve her papers. The Rev. Williams' main function is to smuggle her writing out of the house at the cost of being beaten and robbed. Pamela is concerned at the
news, not for the Rev. Williams so much as the thieves' missing her packet of letters. Her father's reply (I, 171-172) illustrates the two levels on which the novel may be read. Faced with the length of Pamela's story, the parents first turn to the end to ascertain that her virtue is still intact, and their anxiety is relieved with the prospect of Pamela's deliverance through Rev. Williams' marriage proposal. The letters, they say, will now become "the delight of our spare hours: we shall read them over and over, as long as we live, with thankfulness to God, who has given us so virtuous and discreet a daughter" (I, 171-172).

The constant emphasis on Pamela's letters and Journal as writings to be read by fictional readers in the fictional world dramatizes the whole process of fiction, from the writer who interprets experience in the written word to the reader who responds with empathy to the characters' plights. Above all, Richardson depicts Pamela as conscious of the effect that her story will have in the outside world. Even if she does not survive Mr. B.'s attempts, she can die or be deflowered secure in the awareness that her martyrdom will become public knowledge. On several occasions she refers to her "sad story," and frequently she writes of herself in the third person as "your daughter." She anticipates that she may derive "some little pleasure" (I, 39) from reading the letters she has sent to her parents, and in Letter XXXI she suggests that she is continuing writing, although she expects to bring the letter home with her, because she will like to read it to see what dangers she has been able to escape (I, 87). Even after her trials are over she continues her Journal because it enables her better to perceive her experiences: "I am glad," she writes, "of the method I have taken of making a Journal of all that passes in these first stages of my happiness, for it will sink the impression still deeper; and I shall have recourse to them for my better
regulation, as often as I shall mistrust my memory" (II, 222).

Pamela's awareness of herself as a writer also implies that to some extent she is aware of herself as a character in a narrative action. In her Letter XV she records Mr. B.'s words, "we shall make out between us, before we have done, a pretty story in romance" (I, 25), and in her Journal Mr. B. claims his right to see the fruit of her pen: "Besides, said he, there is such a pretty air of romance, as you relate them, in your plots, and my plots, that I shall be better directed in what manner to wind up the catastrophe of the pretty novel" (I, 253). Even when other characters make explicit Pamela's role in the action of the novel, their words are still filtered through Pamela's Journal. Pamela's long conversation with Lady Davers is an effective recapitulation of most of the previous action, and the process by which Pamela's Journal becomes the seal of the bond of friendship is repeated. Lady Davers is intrigued to read her story:

But I understand, child, says she, that you keep a journal of all matters that pass, and he has several times found means to get at it: Should you care I should see it? It could not be to your disadvantage, for I find it had no small weight with him in your favour, and I should take great pleasure to read all his stratagems, attempts, contrivances, menaces, and offers to you on one hand, and all your pretty counter-plottings, which he much praises, your resolute resistance, and the noble stand you have made to preserve your virtue, and the steps by which his pride was subdued, and his mind induced to honourable love, till you were made what you now are: for it must be a rare and uncommon story; and will not only give me great pleasure in reading, but will entirely reconcile me to the step he has taken: and that, let me tell you, is what I never thought to be.... But when I can find, by your writings, that your virtue is but suitably rewarded, it will be not only a good excuse for me, but for him, and make me love you. (II, 229)

The publicization of Pamela's story through the circulation and discussion of her papers begins with Lady Davers, and becomes one of the dominant themes of Richardson's continuation in Pamela II. In one scene Lady Davers produces the
papers and challenges her brother to read out Pamela's account of the attempted rape
(III, 106), resulting in Mr. B.'s retelling of the story from his own point of view
(III, 108-130). Although there is little new action in this second part, Pamela's
Journal continues to be written and circulated. Even such a tedious episode as
Pamela's winning over of Sir Jacob Swynford needs to be recounted at length for Miss
Darnforth's amusement, with Pamela's characteristic note that she return the papers so
that they can be sent on to her parents in Kent (III, 230). Pamela II, lacking any
central dramatic action, may be considered as little more than a lengthy justification
of Pamela I, exhibiting the married Pamela as a model wife and mother in the face of
the urban vices of London. Mr. B.'s affair with the countess is resolved by Pamela's
staging of the elaborate "trial scene" (IV, 125-137) which results in her reconciliation
with Mr. B., recorded in their exchange of notes. The story, with its accompanying
documents, is relayed to Lady Davers with the typical request for its return, because
of Mr. B.'s demands to read Pamela's account of the episode. For Mr. B. it
seems that experience is not complete until he has seen it told in her narrative writing.

The action of Pamela exists on two distinct levels: in one sense it is the story
of how a servant-girl's steadfastness, or "virtue" in Richardson's terms, is rewarded by
a successful marriage; but it is also the story of how this action is manifested and
preserved in the act of writing. Pamela, in fact, as well as her parents, Mr. B.,
Lady Davers and Lady Betty, re-lives her experiences in her letters and journals.
The novel dramatizes the interpenetration of life and the written word—which is the
process of fiction.

Pamela's self-consciousness in her role of letter-writer, diarist, and archivist,
Defoe and Richardson. The assumption behind Defoe's narrators is their ability to recall the experiences of their lives, helped in some instances by actual documents, or in Crusoe's case, by his Journal. These narrators tell their stories in straightforward, unliterary prose, as if the written form were simply the imitation of the spoken word, and as if the reader were experiencing the direct communication of the fictional character. In Pamela, however, Richardson creates the illusion that we are reading the actual letters and journals written by his characters. The reader appears to experience the characters not directly, but through their writings to each other; he experiences Pamela as a letter-writer first, and only secondarily, through her written words, as a maiden in distress. Hence, Richardson's reader is at one remove from the imaginary world of his Kosmos, in which the characters have their being. All of their actions and dialogue are filtered, not just through the consciousness of a narrator, but through his interpretation of the events in the formal mode of the personal letter or journal. In Defoe's novels the recording of events is completely separate from the dramatic action, whereas Richardson makes the characters' letter-writing become a major aspect of their social life. The compilation, collection, and preservation of the written records complement, and at times almost supplant the social and sexual conflicts worked out in the story.

The effect of a person's consciousness of himself as a writer and as a character in a narrative is liable to be one of self-dramatization. Pamela has often been accused of a certain archness or knowingness in her assessment of Mr. B.'s intentions, which belies her ostensible naïveté. We may wonder whether Richardson is being mistaken, or whether Pamela is concealing a hidden motive, in describing how a country-girl's fear of a farm animal should block her escape from a fate worse than death. There are also hints of Pamela's reluctance to be completely rid of Mr. B.'s
attentions, and we may wonder why Pamela, having preserved her writings so
meticulously, should allow them to fall into the enemy's hands at the opportune
moment. Above all, the peculiar focus of the letters—the unremitting glare of the
spotlight on Pamela's courtship, with little suggestion of interest in any of the other
problems of living—gives the figure of Pamela an aura of importance, which is the
result of the selectivity, magnification, and emphasis implicit in her art of fiction.

In his discussion of Clarissa David Goldknopf terms this phenomenon, when the
fictional character projects himself into the imaginary world of the novelist's creation,
the "dramatization of the 1-Narrator," and suggests that the ambiguity that we can
perceive in Pamela's perception of herself in relation to the world may be one aspect
of the condition which we know as "romantic":

The romantic condition entails a particular kind of self-regard: the
tendency to cast oneself as the central character in a dramatic
confrontation with reality. The romantic does not simply interact,
moodily or gloweringly or desperately or dashingly, with his
objective situation. He rises above the interaction to regard his
drama in a literary light. He is both the chief actor and exquisitely
appreciative spectator of his personal drama. This dual focus,
participation and appreciation, gives the romantic's vision a
peculiar squint, for one is never sure—the romantic is never sure--
in what sense he is "acting": the ambiguity of that word serves
the present meaning admirably. The romantic is always concerned
with his image, but it is his image in his own eyes.13

Richardson's art of self-dramatization is better illustrated by his Clarissa,
which has long been noted for the dramatic intensity in its illusion of life. There is
considerable evidence that Richardson thought of Clarissa as a tragedy comparable to
a piece of theatre. 14 In the Postscript Richardson calls the work a "Dramatic
Narrative" (VIII, 345) while in Letter LXVII Belford considers Clarissa's story as a
tragic action: "What a fine subject for tragedy, would the injuries of this lady, and
her behaviour under them, both with regard to her implacable friends, and to her persecutor, make!" (VII, 181). In the construction of the story Richardson seems to be observing the unities of neo-classical dramatic theory in concentrating on a single action, limited to the time period of one year, and confined in its setting mainly to the interiors of five houses. There are also parallels to be drawn between Richardson's treatment of his theme and the sentimental drama of his contemporary theatre.

The anonymous writer of the "Prefatical Hints" suggests that Richardson had developed a new method of presenting fiction by showing the "Sentiments of the Persons concerned," in order "to give a plain and natural Account of an Affair," in contrast to previous story-tellers who relied on holding their audiences with a string of strange and exciting episodes. The slow pace of Richardson's work becomes a virtue, because "he has aimed solely at following Nature," whereas the "Writers of Novels and Romances" neglected the portrayal of feelings and morality in their rush to "hurry the Reader on from one striking Event to another." Richardson's Preface to Clarissa also implies that his epistolary technique shows his characters "in the height of a present distress" (I, xli), unlike the "'dry, narrative, unanimated style of a person relating difficulties and dangers surmounted'" (I, xlii).

Richardson's achievement in his "dramatic narrative" is to create an effect of immediacy analogous to that of the theatre at three distinct levels of language. In the most general sense every letter to some extent reveals the personality of the writer in its organization, sentence patterns, and diction. Richardson creates an individual style for each of the main characters, and in some cases uses broken, or disjointed phrasing and incoherent sentences to suggest disturbed mental states. At a more
conscious level, Richardson's characters sometimes break out of the communicative patterns of their letters, and in becoming oblivious of their audience, they deliver what is in effect a written soliloquy. Lovelace, especially, is prone to be carried away by a train of thought, losing himself in a fit of self-regard. In his letter to Belford of May 23 he apostrophizes himself as he postures in his role as the agent of evil:

Then again, remember thy recent discoveries, Lovelace! Remember her indifference, attended with all the appearance of contempt and hatred. View her, even now, wrapped in reserve and mystery, meditating plots, as far as thou knowest, against the sovereignty you hast, by right of conquest, obtained over her. Remember, in short, all thou has threatened to remember against this insolent beauty, who is a rebel to the power she has listed under.

But yet, how dost thou propose to subdue thy sweet enemy!—Abhorred be force, be the necessity of force, if that can be avoided! There is no triumph in force—no conquest over the will—no prevailing by gentle degrees over the gentle passions!—force is the devil! (IV, 209)

Lovelace here is writing to himself rather than Belford. His apparent lack of control of his runaway pen is indicative of his impetuosity of character. The style suggests the stage villain, driven by his evil passion, uncurbed by the strictures of virtue. His complete immersion in the written word is apparent in his letter of June 7, when his writing to Belford shows the sudden shifts in his thoughts, from Clarissa, to the answering of Belford's letter, to the consideration of his own feelings:

Soft, O virgin saint, and safe as soft, be thy slumbers!
I will now once more turn to my friend Belford's letter. Thou shalt have fair play, my charmer. I will reperuse what thy advocate has to say for thee. Weak arguments will do, in the frame I am in!—

But what, what's the matter!—What a double--but the uproar abates!—What a double coward am I!—Or is it that I am taken in a cowardly minute? for heroes have their fits of fear, cowards their brave moments; and virtuous women, all but my Clarissa, their moments critical—
But thus coolly enjoying the reflection in a hurricane!—Again the confusion is renewed—

What! Where!—How came it!
Is my beloved safe?
Oh, wake not too roughly, my beloved! (V, 12)

The "uproar" and "confusion" mentioned here refer to the scene of the fire, which supposedly interrupts Lovelace's thoughts as he composes his letter to Belford. Yet typically, Lovelace is not only answering Belford's letter, he is also thinking (or writing) about answering Belford's letter. The noise of the fire not only impinges on his consciousness, but is also made manifest in his writing, as if there were a one-to-one relationship between his conscious perceptions and his writing. This letter shows that his consciousness includes not only his thoughts about the sleeping Clarissa and his hearing of the noises of the household, but also his awareness of himself in the act of perceiving these thoughts through the process of writing.

The convention that written language imitates both the conscious and unconscious thoughts of the writer creates the illusion of being in direct contact with a character—which is the fundamental condition of theatre. At a more explicit level the characters themselves, especially Clarissa and Lovelace, who are the most involved in the action, narrate events with a meticulous attention to the details of dialogue, postures, and actions that give the scene a visual and aural impact as if it were taking place in the theatre of the reader's mind. In her first letter Clarissa promises to "recite facts only" (I, 5), and interrupts her description of her sister's enraptured praise of Lovelace by drawing attention to her narrative technique:

Excuse me, my dear, I never was thus particular before; no, not to you. Nor would I now have written thus freely of a sister, but that she makes a merit to my brother of disowning that she ever liked him; as I shall mention hereafter: and then you will always have me give you minute
descriptions, nor suffer me to pass by the air and manner in which things are spoken that are to be taken notice of; rightly observing that air and manner often express more than the accompanying words. (I, 6-7).

Clarissa's ability to create a dramatic scene is demonstrated in her first series of letters to Miss Howe. In her fifth letter she presents the scene of her first full confrontation with her family, when her brother and her father forbid her to see Lovelace. Here the dialogue is set out to show the dramatic interaction between the participants in the scene, conveying not only the import of the action, but also the intensity of emotion indicated by facial expression, tone of voice, significant glances, stressed words, gestures, and even moments of meaningful silence:

Clary, said my mother, as soon as I entered the great parlour, your request to go to Miss Howe's for a few days has been taken into consideration, and granted—

Much against my liking, I assure you, said my brother, rudely interrupting her.

Son James! said my father, and knit his brows.

He was not daunted. His arm is in a sling. He often has the mean art to look upon that, when anything is hinted that may be supposed to lead towards the least favour to or reconciliation with Mr. Lovelace. Let the girl then (I am often the girl with him) be prohibited seeing that vile libertine.

Nobody spoke.

Do you hear, sister Clary? taking their silence for approbation of what he had dictated, you are not to receive visits from Lord M.'s nephew.

Every one still remained silent.

Do you understand the license you have, Miss? interrogated he.

I would be glad, Sir, said I, to understand that you are my brother;—and that you would understand that you are only my brother.
Oh the fond, fond heart! with a sneer of insult, lifting up his hands.

Sir, said I to my father, to your justice I appeal: if I have deserved reflection, let me not be spared. But if I am to be answerable for the rashness—

No more! —No more of either side, said my father. You are not to receive the visits of that Lovelace, though. (I, 31-32).

The scene depicted here epitomizes the basic conflicts that structure the first two volumes of Clarissa (one is tempted to write "the first act" of Clarissa) up to the point where the domineering pressure of Clarissa's family force her to break her father's first commandment by fleeing with Lovelace. A director would need to add little in order to produce this scene on stage. Clarissa's words already constitute the form of a drama script; simply by offsetting the speakers' names and italicizing their movements as stage directions, her letter would take on the external appearance of a play-book. In the second volume Clarissa's narrative becomes even more like the format of a play-book when she separates her comments and her sister's actions from the dialogue by the use of parentheses (II, 3-5), while Anne Howe repeats eight pages of dialogue between her and her mother, each speech signalled by the intitial "M" or "D" to indicate whether the speaker is mother or daughter, complete with "stage directions" in parentheses to create a dramatic scene (IV, 154-161).

Richardson's narrative technique of "writing to the moment" emphasizes the actions of the individual character at the expense of creating much sense of the environment in which the characters move. The great majority of his scenes are interior, but with little suggestion of the geography of the room or the house. Chairs and tables are mentioned when people sit or take a dish of tea, but there is no attempt to evoke a visual sensation of the setting; Richardson's characters have their
being on a very bare stage, on which the "set" includes only those props necessary for the action. Most of the action consists of highly emotionally-charged talk; consequently most of the descriptive details are concerned with the facial expressions, gestures, postures, tears, and kisses to create the emotional overtones of the words they accompany. In these dramatic representations the characters stand out in sharp relief against a vague background.

Sometimes, however, Richardson uses scenic details to achieve a particular effect. In his letter of July 17 Belford recounts his visit to Rowland's house where Clarissa was being kept in custody. He is led up to Clarissa's first-floor room, but before he sees Clarissa his eye selects (and his pen records) the sordid details of dilapidation, poverty and despair for some two pages of suspense, before his writing shouts out in italics: "And this, thou horrid Lovelace, was the bed-chamber of the divine Clarissa!!" (VI, 258-9). Clarissa in her white damask stands out in the visual imagination, a white, holy figure, with Bible and writing materials, in sharp contrast to her dismal surroundings—"illuminating that horrid corner; her linen beyond imagination white" (VI, 260). Such set pieces of description invariably feature Clarissa in the static, carefully composed tableau, suggestive more of the ikon rather than the dynamic action of the theatre. Clarissa viewed by Lovelace through the keyhole (V, 321), or posed with a pen-knife at her breast (VI, 66), or barely clad in an under petticoat when she is roused by the cry of fire (V, 14-15), provides the set-pieces that captured the visual imagination of the early illustrators of Richardson's works.

The outstanding set-piece of visualized description is the tableau of Clarissa's death-bed. More than any other episode, Clarissa's death shows what David
Goldknopf calls the "self-dramatizing tendency" when the character seems to arrange events to achieve a particular effect through "the processing of life into art, or pseudoart . . . ." With all her elaborate preparations extending to more than a month of the novel's calendar time, Clarissa may be perceived to be stage-managing her own death-scene. On August 4 she writes to Belford, requesting that he become her executor--"the protector of my memory"--because he will be able to assemble all the materials of her "tragical story" which she hints will arrive at the "catastrophe" within a month (VII, 133-5). With the inevitability of Clarissa's death established almost as if she had decided the date herself, the principal theme of the last two volumes is the question of Clarissa's reconciliation with her family. On August 10 she writes to her uncle begging forgiveness, explaining that she "could not look forward to [her] last scene with comfort, without seeking at least to obtain the blessing" (VII, 162). A week later she depicts herself as a "poor creature who, by ill-health of body as well as of mind, was before tottering on the brink of the grave" (VII, 171).

Few deaths are as adequately prepared, or stage-managed, as Clarissa's, and with such ecstasy on the part of the leading performer. Amidst the bitter recriminations of her family, and the frantic expostulations of Lovelace, Clarissa's letters exude a sense of calm detachment from the hurly-burly of life. Her friends record her delight in receiving her coffin, which she uses as a writing table in her bedroom, and to Belford she admits that she indulges and enjoys "the thoughts of death" (VII, 347). She complains about the disturbance caused her by Lovelace's visit to her lodging: "He will not let me die decently . . . . He will not let me enter into my Maker's presence with the composure that is required in entering into the drawing room of an
earthly prince!" (VIII, 57). Clarissa's last letter to Mrs. Norton again emphasizes her serenity and happiness in the knowledge that "all will be as decent as it should be!" (VIII, 50). In her final piece of writing Clarissa compares herself to a bride. She describes her coffin shroud as her wedding garments—"the happiest suit, that ever bridal maiden wore," and she looks forward to "the happy moment" when she will be "decked out in this all-quieting garb!" (VIII, 51). Clarissa's meticulous preparations for her death create an impression that it is an event—a "happening" in the modern sense of the word which suggests a staged, dramatic event involving the spectators in the real experience of the occasion. Belford, the recorder of the "happening," depicts the scene with scrupulous accuracy, while Mrs. Lovick, Mrs. Smith and Colonel Morden play supporting roles to Clarissa's star billing.

That the whole scene should suggest theatricality rather than reality may be the effect of a death that is too carefully planned and executed, suggesting the perfected, or rehearsed, composition of art, rather than the improvised, impromptu performances of life. The feeling that Clarissa creates her role is not confined to the death scene. Rather it is the effect of Richardson's "dramatic narrative" in which the characters depict themselves as figures in dramatic situations. Goldknopf suggests that both Clarissa and Lovelace create their roles of heroine and villain by acting their lives as though their fates were destined in a drama written to show chastity raised to angelic proportions in conflict with the rakish philanderer who depicts himself as a devil incarnate. The result is the reader's "feeling of being spectator to a melodrama invented by the chief participants, to transfigure the banality of dogmatic virginity in one case and compulsive lechery in the other." 21

Like Pamela, Clarissa is a very conscious archivist, determined to preserve
the letters, notes, and documents that will tell the story of her martyrdom. As in
Pamela, so in Clarissa, letters are preserved, collected, copied, and circulated to
become themselves a part of the action. Clarissa's allegorical letter to Lovelace,
which he misinterprets, sends him on a wild-goose chase into Berkshire. Clarissa's
words are relayed in his letter to Belford. When Belford visits Clarissa he has the
copy of her letter with him in his letter-case, and reads it back to her for her to
explain its allegorical significance, and the whole letter, complete with Clarissa's
commentary is re-cycled back to Lovelace in Belford's reply. Letters are so frequently
copied and passed from character to character that it is misleading to regard them as
private communications. A great deal of Clarissa's death-bed preparation is concerned
with her papers, Belford being appointed not only to carry out the terms of her will,
but also to act as her literary executor. Clarissa also shows a certain selectivity in
the"publication" of her story. Her letter to Anne Howe of August 11 (VII, 163-4)
is wholly concerned with transmitting "a large packet" of her documents for Anne's
perusal, and subsequent return. But Clarissa withholds the letters from her family
because they are too harsh for even her closest friend to read. Clarissa also warns
Anne to keep the other letters confidential in order to protect the reputation of the
writers. In a postscript Clarissa adds a list of the nine documents enclosed, noting
that so much correspondence leaves her "little opportunity or leisure for writing
her own story" (VII, 164). 22

Lovelace, too, is concerned with his image as it is created in his letters.
He delights in sudden shifts of his role from suitor to seducer, from tempter to
tormenter, from rescuer to rapist. As far as Clarissa is concerned, Lovelace's
posturing may be considered as simply the tactics of the accomplished rake. His
letters to Belford, however, are presumed to be written in a spirit of a soul-baring honesty between bosom friends. Yet these letters also show the same art of self-dramatization. Lovelace, like Clarissa, writes himself into dramatic situations, and is even more inclined to use playbook format in creating his scenes. More explicitly, Lovelace is characterized by his quotations from the stage, and in his letter of May 9 he jokingly suggests writing a comedy to be called The Quarrelsome Lovers as a dramatization of his relationship with Clarissa (IV, 51). In the same letter he narrates the scene in which he tries to make off with one of Clarissa's letters and is caught ignominiously in the act. This little episode is one of the lighter moments of Clarissa's imprisonment—a minor victory for her, and a foolish embarrassment for him. Lovelace's dramatization of the scene gives it the pretty air of a farce. The theatre is also involved in this next attempt to steal Clarissa's correspondence when he persuades her to attend a benefit performance of Venice Preserved, giving Dorcas the opportunity to rifle her writing-desk and chest. At first Lovelace suggests that Clarissa might be influenced by the tragic fate of Belvidera in the play, and confesses that men of his cast of mind usually prefer comedies: "They love not any tragedies but those in which they themselves act the parts of tyrants and executioners; and afraid to trust themselves with serious and solemn reflections, run to comedies, in order to laugh away compunction on the distresses they have occasioned, and to find examples of men as immoral as themselves" (IV, 137). Lovelace here sees himself in the tradition of the rake of Restoration and early eighteenth-century comedy, like Congreve's Mirabell reformed by his love for Millament in a match of wit. But Clarissa's world is not confined to the polite drawing-room of the stage; in the world of the novel all words and acts
reverberate across an infinite scale where they are judged against standards of perfect
goodness and absolute evil. While the conflict between him and Clarissa is played
out as a battle of wits and stratagems, Lovelace can treat his attempts on Clarissa's
virtue like theatrical games, when he stages the fire scene, hires M'Donald to play
the part of Captain Tomlinson, or adopts a disguise himself. But Clarissa survives all
the devices of the comedy stage, until he is driven to use physical force, which by the
rules of the rake's game, is an admission of defeat. When he announces after the rape
that Clarissa lives, Lovelace submits to Clarissa's world of Christian tragedy; his
drawing-room world of sexual game-playing is swallowed by the infinite world of
good and evil portrayed in his dream of heaven and hell. After Clarissa's escape,
Lovelace complains to Belford that his "whole soul is a blank" (VI, 189), and without
Clarissa he has no subject on which to write. In the remaining two volumes,
Lovelace's dramatizations of his comic scenes of deceit and subterfuge give way to
Belford's extended descriptions of Clarissa's ecstatic happiness in the midst of her
unhappy surroundings. Lovelace now sees himself as the disappointed lover of heroic
tragedy, and his flights of self-pitying rant and bravado are as melodramatic as his
previous scenes were comic.

If Lovelace were giving an account of the story in retrospect, such a display
of feelings would constitute a breach of decorum, a lack of public modesty. The
verbalization of an inner passion is permissible on the stage where the playwright and
actor combine to communicate the character's inner being, and his emotions flow into
the eternal present of the performance. An extended narrative, however,
necessarily provides a distance between the time of the experience and the time of
the narration, and only a distortion of the convention would allow the emotions of the
Richardson's epistolary technique creates a framework in which the character's "writing to the moment" can be accepted quite logically as a reflection of the character's mood at the time of writing. In practice, however, what we experience in the novel is still a series of literary devices which create the illusion of dramatic experience. And because the authors of these playlets are also the main characters, we can sense the intensity of their feeling—their "sentiments," in the language of eighteenth-century criticism— which gives importance to the action by creating a world of moral significance around an incident which might otherwise seem banal or trivial.

It is finally the act of writing which is celebrated in Richardson's novels. They find their origin in his Letters To and For Particular Friends on the most Important Occasions, Directing not only the Requisite Style and Forms to be Observed in Writing Familiar Letters; But How to Think and Act Justly and Prudently in the Common Concerns of Human Life (1741). But find their meaning in the exaltation of the medium which allows the publication of the private experience, enabling the rewards of Pamela's virtue and Clarissa's martyrdom to be broadcast to the world, when the art of the printer combines with the art of the letter-writer, and the contents of the letter-case become public property.

Richardson's correspondents demonstrate the art of writing fiction, with their confidence in the power of their pens to capture and record the reality perceived by the individual. Unlike Defoe's unlettered narrators who survey the span of their lives in the expansive world of travel and action, Richardson's personae sit in their closets, focussing their attention on themselves as actors in the social scene, not only documenting the action of the drawing-room, but also creating the action in
the interchange of notes and letters. The epistolary Kosmos differs from Defoe's world of material objects. Richardson creates a world of mental activity as his letter-writers record their perception of the events of the story, and also note their own moral and emotional responses to these events. If Defoe's works seem to exemplify the power of the Lockean mind to perceive external reality through the faculty of "sensation," Richardson's characters exploit the mind's power of "reflection" as it observes itself responding morally and emotionally to its ideas. In his Prefaces Richardson hints at the power of the novelist to manipulate characters and determine events to create his moral patterns, while in his Postscript to Clarissa he answers the objections of his correspondents. The critical debate on the fortunes of Clarissa was partly the result of the publication of the novel in instalments, but it shows that Richardson's editorial mask was publicly recognized as the ploy of the novelist. In the next chapter I shall show how Fielding integrates this consciousness of the novelist at work—his manipulation of characters and events—into the rhetorical structure of the novel.
NOTES


2 The Correspondence of Samuel Richardson, ed. Anna Laetitia Barbauld, 6 vols. (London, 1804), I, lxxvi.


4 In his first edition of Pamela, Richardson had included two anonymous letters, one probably written by de Freval, the other, by William Webster, which had first appeared as an advertisement for Pamela in his The Weekly Miscellany, October 11, 1740. In his "Introduction to the Second Edition" Richardson added twenty-four pages of extracts from letters (attributed mainly to Aaron Hill) together with his replies to their critical comments on the novel. Richardson eliminated most of this material from his sixth edition (on which Phelps' edition is based). My quotations are from the facsimile reprint in "Samuel Richardson's Introduction to Pamela," ed. Sheridan W. Baker, Jr., Augustan Reprint Society, No. 48 (Los Angeles, 1954).

5 Richardson's debt to the tradition of Puritan family literature, as exemplified by Defoe's The Family Instructor (1715, 1718), Religious Courtship (1722), and A New Family Instructor (1727), is discussed by McKillop, pp. 13-16. William M. Sale, in his Samuel Richardson: Master Printer (Ithaca, N.Y., 1950), pp. 162-3, and Charlotte Morgan, in her The Rise of the Novel of Manners, pp. 134-135, also consider this relationship between the works of Defoe and Richardson.


8 In Chapter V I shall consider how Smollett exploits the power of the epistolary novel to present multiple, individualized perceptions of the reality of the travellers' world of Humphry Clinker.

9 Life of Johnson, p. 480.

10 "Epistolary Technique in Richardson's Novels," p. 139.

11 In the Postscript to Clarissa, Richardson admitted that his epistolary method depended on creating characters who "have an uncommon taste for his kind of writing" (VIII, 359). During the composition of Clarissa he expressed his concern in a letter to Aaron Hill that he was making his characters do too much writing in the fictional time allowed them. (see Selected Letters, p. 63).

12 Pamela II suggests an interesting possibility that Richardson could have exploited. Because of its treatment of Pamela's story, Pamela II might well have included the publication of Pamela's papers as one of its themes, giving Richardson the opportunity to appear in his guise of the "Editor" who writes to the Andrews family, soliciting the right to publish Pamela I. Such a letter of application could provide an interesting debate (say, between Pamela and Lady Davers) on the propriety of letting Richardson see the papers. They would then consider the moral value of the story to the general public, and whether any salacious incidents would have to be censored to avoid appealing to the prurient reader. They might also wonder whether the story would (or should) be printed and accepted as fact or fiction.


14 In his Samuel Richardson & the Dramatic Novel (Lexington, 1968), pp. 74-81, Ira Konigsberg shows how frequently Richardson in his correspondence referred to Clarissa as a tragedy, and defended his arrangement of its events in accordance with Augustan, neo-classic principles of dramatic theory.

15 Belford adds the comment that in Clarissa's tragedy "virtue is punished! Except indeed we look foreward to the rewards of HEREAFTER" (VII, 181-182), to which the Editor adds a footnote:

Mr. Belford's objection, That virtue ought not to suffer in a tragedy is not well considered: Monimia in the Orphan, Belvidera in Venice Preserved, Athenais in Theodosius, Cordelia in Shakespeare's King Lear, Desdemona in Othello, Hamlet (to name no more), are instances that a tragedy could hardly be justly called a tragedy, if virtue did not
temporarily suffer, and vice for a while triumph. But he recovers himself in the same paragraph; and leads us to look up to the FUTURE for the reward of virtue, and for the punishment of guilt; and observes not amiss, when he says, He knows not but that the virtue of such a woman as Clarissa is rewarded in missing such a man as Lovelace (VII, 181-182n).


The most obvious examples are Clarissa's fragmented writings, salvaged by Dorcas, and copied by Lovelace in his letter to Belford. These "papers" (V, 296-306) suggest Clarissa's disturbed state of mental balance four days after the rape. Her next letter of June 28 is still incoherent with the first news of her escape from Mrs. Sinclair's house.


The Life of the Novel, p. 74.

Clarissa's need to document her experience is best illustrated by her correspondence with Miss Howe on March 26-27. In the first letter, written in the morning of the 26th, she describes two letters received from Lovelace, and gives the substance of her reply. After receiving Miss Howe's letter in the afternoon, Clarissa adds a pencil note to the cover of the first letter, and encloses a note explaining her motives in writing an anonymous letter to Lady Drayton. In this second cover she encloses the copy of a note just received from Solmes, and the rough draft of her answer to him, as he waits below with the rest of the Harlowe family. Next comes a copy of her aunt Hervey's reply. Clarissa then writes two more letters, one to her mother which is returned unopened, and one to her father which is returned torn into two pieces. Clarissa's letter, after recording this epistolary episode, now includes a copy of her next letter, written to her uncle John Harlowe, in which she encloses the unread letters previously sent to her mother and father. The next morning Clarissa continues her letter to Miss Howe, enclosing her uncle's reply and her next reply to him; she mentions another letter received from Lovelace not yet opened, transcribes Betty's verbal message from her family, and encloses the note from her brother, a copy of her follow-up letter to John Harlowe, and an abstract of Lovelace's letter (which she has since opened and read). Hence Clarissa's report to Anne Howe of two days of her solitary confinement actually encompasses fifteen letters, involving nine other characters as correspondents.
From the facsimile title-page reproduced in his *Familiar Letters on Important Occasions* (London: Routledge, 1928), p. iv. Letters LXII, CXXXVIII, and CXXXIX (pp. 72-6, 164-5), which deal with the attempted recruitment of a girl into a London brothel, and a father's advice to his daughter whose virtue has been attempted by the master of the household in which she is a servant, provide some suggestion of the situations of both Clarissa and Pamela.
CHAPTER V
PERSPECTIVISM IN THE NOVEL

The concept of the author's mask of reality enables us to define the role or roles adopted by the novelist in the telling of his story. Defoe and Richardson both used the mask to separate themselves from the fictional worlds created in the words of their personae. Defoe's works exemplify the assumption that the records of individual experience give a true representation of the real world, while Richardson's multiple viewpoints show an awareness of the process of documentation as a literary activity. Reality becomes more susceptible to individual interpretation, and the presence of the controlling intelligence behind the various masks is necessary to direct the reader's flow of sympathy. In Richardson's novels the controlling viewpoint is made explicit in the critical remarks which frame his narratives, and the reader is made aware of the fictional nature of his personae. The development of the novel in Fielding's works shows the role of the narrator becoming increasingly explicit, and because of the many links between Fielding's and Cervantes' fiction, I have borrowed the term "perspectivism" from Cervantine criticism to describe the complex modes of narration in Fielding's major novels.

While perspectivism is indicative of relativistic attitudes to reality incorporated in the fictional Kosmos, the word also suggests the language of visual representation. When Conrad, in his preface to The Nigger of the Narcissus, writes that the task of the novelist is to make the reader see, he is treating the reading and understanding of the novel as a visual experience, a metaphorical change of mode that is frequent in many discussions of the novel. Critics and commentators quite commonly write of
"seeing" the characters in action, of the effects of their "appearance," of the scenes "pictured" in the novel, consciously or unconsciously using the metaphor of visual imagery to discuss events that are actually created by the novelist's words. Such critical language may be considered as evidence of the power of the novel to create an illusion of reality sufficiently vivid as to be pictured in the reader's mind. The novelist's Kosmos may become so convincingly real as to assume a visual image, while the novelist stands in relation to his Kosmos like some Blakean god-figure circumscribing the world he has created.

With a slight shift of the visual metaphor, the reader may also "see" the relationships and patterns unfolding in the novel. At the same time critics generally recognize that the significance of the work is not always immediately apparent. It is quite normal to write of the surface meaning of the novel in discussing the actions of the characters, before the reader has to dig beneath this surface to reach deeper levels of symbolic or archetypal meaning. Now the metaphor has become one of the mining activities as the reader extracts from the depths of the work its deep significance, and the more complex or abstruse the literary work, the more thorough and painstaking the mining process becomes in order to "uncover" the hidden meanings of the novel.

Another shift of metaphor in the language of critical analysis changes the vertical dimension of surface and deep meanings to the horizontal scope of the stage and its scenery, when the narrator takes on the role of a literary master of ceremonies directing the reader's attention to the scenes unfolding to the public view. What is perceived in the scene depends on the viewpoint of the reader/visualizer, the assumption being that he will have a different perception of the characters and actions depicted in the scene according to his viewing position. Changing the viewer's
perspective changes his perception of the reality created by the writer. Just as a play on a stage may appear differently as a person changes his seat in the theatre from the gods to the stalls, or creeps around to watch the action from the wings or through a hole in the back-drop, so may the reader's understanding of an action be conditioned by the point of view adopted by the narrator.

The majority of novels, according to this metaphor of vision, are one-dimensional. Their mode of narration maintains a consistent viewpoint, and in such novels the novelist wears a single mask, usually in an effort to be as unobtrusive as possible. His technique of narration creates a medium that is almost completely transparent, attempting to maintain the illusion that the reader is experiencing a direct perception of his created world. These novels prohibit the reader from changing his seat in their illusory theatre; the reader is not supposed to visit back-stage where he could become aware of the machinery, make-up, and props which help to create the illusion of reality.

Other novels are more complex in their narrative technique. The novelist may adopt a variety of narrative masks which direct the reader to view his illusion of reality from a variety of viewing positions—from various angles and at varying distances. For such works, the term "perspectivism" is particularly useful in suggesting the multiple perspectives by which the Kosmos can be viewed. Or rather, as in the art of the novel its reality is simultaneously created, viewed and judged in both the acts of writing and reading, "perspectivism" accommodates the deliberate ambiguity or "relativism" which the novelist incorporates in his work by changing his mask, or altering his narrative "voice." Perspectivism also relates the art of the novel to the art of the landscape painter whose techniques enable him to create
the illusion of depth in the receding distance in a picture. The use of perspective enables him to suggest that some objects are more distant than others. So, too, in discussions of the novel, perspectivism suggests the variability of the distance between the reader and the action. Some actions appear to take place in the immediate present, as if the reader were watching a play on stage. Other actions are reported to have happened by a supposed witness who is a character in the novel. Or in a more remote perspective, the report of the action may be translated from one character to another so that the original "source" is lost in a hazy past. Perspectivism, therefore, is defined as the technique of using multiple points of view, by which the novelist determines that the reality created by his novel—his Kosmos—is susceptible to multiple relativistic interpretations.

Several critics have used the concept of perspectivism in their discussions of *Don Quixote*, because, as E.C. Riley points out, "The *Quixote* is a novel of multiple perspectives." ² Riley, in discussing the interaction of literature and life as the fundamental theme of this novel, also employs the metaphor of vision, as he continues: "Cervantes observes the world he creates from the viewpoints of characters and reader as well as author. It is as though he were playing a game with mirrors, or prisms. By a kind of process of refraction he adds—or creates the illusion of adding—an extra dimension to the novel. He foreshadows the technique of modern novelists whereby the action is seen through the eyes of one or more of the personages involved, although Cervantes does not identify himself with his own characters in the usual sense." In a later article Riley examines the problem of personal identity, suggesting that "here and in other forms of perspectivism in *Don Quixote* is a source of some of the most sophisticated developments" in modern
Leo Spitzer, in his article "On the Significance of Don Quijote," also writes about "Cervantes' perspectivism" and notes the failure of his modern imitators—Gide, Proust, Conrad, Joyce, Virginia Woolf, Pirandello—to maintain "the sense of unity behind perspectivism" which in Cervantes' work is held together by the personality of the author. He points out that "by multiplying his masks (the friend of the prologue, the Arabian historian, sometimes the characters who serve as his mouthpiece) Cervantes seems only the more to strengthen his grip on that whole artistic cosmos which his novel represents." The multiplicity of these points of view constitutes Cervantes' perspectivism, yet, according to Spitzer, the measure of Cervantes' achievement is the fact that "high above the world-wide cosmos of his making, in which hundreds of characters, situations, vistas, themes, plots and subplots are merged, Cervantes' artistic self is enthroned, an all-embracing creative self, a visibly omnipresent artistic Creator who graciously takes the reader into his confidence, showing him the work of art in the making, and the laws to which it is necessarily subjected. This artist is in a way God-like, but not deified . . . ." Erich Auerbach also recognizes Cervantes' detachment from the world of the novel, like an Olympian god who understands but neither condemns nor judges his characters, excepting only the crazy Knight who confuses the realities of life and literature, so that "the theme of the mad country gentleman who undertakes to revive knight-errantry gave Cervantes an opportunity to present the world as play in that spirit of multiple, perspective, non-judging, and even non-questioning neutrality which is a brave form of wisdom." Cervantes' perspectivism is not only apparent in the manipulation of the point of view of the narration, but may also be traced within the
action of the novel in such episodes as Master Pedro's Puppet Show (pp. 712-720), or Don Quixote's descent into the cave of Montesinos (pp. 678-695). Leo Spitzer, in his essay on "Linguistic Perspectivism in Don Quijote" also relates "a plethora of names, words, languages, from polynomasia, polyetymologia and polyglottis" to the "general spirit of relativism which has been recognized by most critics as characteristic of our novel."  

The concept of perspectivism offers an important point of comparison between Cervantes' and Fielding's novels. Fielding's imitation of the manner of Cervantes in his type of action and characters, and in his purple passages of mock-heroics, has long been recognized. Less obvious an imitation is the mask of reality created by Fielding in his narrative technique. Fielding's Narrator is the persona or "voice" of the author within the novel. Of course, every novel necessarily has an author's voice, but whereas in many the teller of the tale deliberately tries to conceal his presence by writing in as unobtrusive and depersonalized style of prose as possible, Fielding's Narrator in Tom Jones draws attention to himself in his opening words. First he declares the duty of an author to warn his readers of what they should expect, like the keeper of "a public ordinary" who provides his customers with a "bill of fare." Then, by adopting a royal or editorial "we," he characterizes himself as one of these authors, and by the fourth paragraph he is addressing the reader in the first person. Nor are his intrusions confined to his introductory books and paragraphs. The "I" of the Narrator is allowed to break into the narrative itself, as when discussing Bridget's prudence he interjects his own interpretation, commenting: "Indeed, I have observed (though it may seem unaccountable to the reader) that this guard of prudence, like the trained bands, is always the readiest to go on duty where
there is the least danger" (I, ii, 30). Throughout the novel Fielding's rhetoric is responsible for creating the persona of the Narrator, and this device of a mask results in a perspectivism, which, though perhaps not as complex as Cervantes', nevertheless is responsible for creating the novel's illusion of multiple levels of reality.

In 1751 the anonymous writer of An Essay on the New Species of Writing Founded by Mr. Fielding praised Fielding's "new kind of biography" for its humour, the probability of its plot, and its choice of characters which were "exactly copied from nature." Such criteria, of course, had rapidly become the critical commonplaces of the day, when popular fiction was seen to deal with contemporary life, in contrast with the fantasy world of grandeur and enchantment in the heroic romances that had been so widely read by the previous generation. In this Essay, Fielding is given the credit for having "endeavour'd to show the World, that pure Nature could furnish out as agreeable Entertainment, as those airy non-entical Forms they had long adored, and persuaded the Ladies to leave this Extravagance to their Abigails with their cast cloaths." Perhaps this view of Fielding as a reformer of the public taste in fiction would be sufficient to justify the writer's calling Fielding "our English Cervantes," supposing that Fielding had achieved for English fiction what Cervantes was popularly supposed to have brought about in seventeenth-century Spain, or that by giving his works a "greater Air of Truth" Fielding had ridiculed the plebeian taste for the fantasy of romance. Certainly such a view is in accord with the common eighteenth-century view of Cervantes' achievement as exemplified by Smollett, who wrote that "Cervantes, by an inimitable piece of ridicule, reformed the taste of mankind, representing chivalry in the right point of view, and converting romance to
purposes far more useful and entertaining. Nevertheless, what is notable in this essay, is that the writer goes beyond judging Fielding's novels by the type of life they depict. Besides praising the appropriateness of Fielding's easy and familiar style, and the humour of his mock-heroics, the writer of the Essay also commends Fielding for dividing his novel into chapters and books, and then enlivening his work with chapter headings that keep the reader in suspense. Such a critical opinion might seem overly finicky beside generalizations that *Tom Jones* is the "most lively Book ever published," or that *Joseph Andrews* is a "lively Representative of real life," yet almost half of this Essay is concerned with the standards of criticism, and the main point of its praise is that Fielding not only invented a "new species of writing," but also incorporated into his works the rules of criticism by which the works could be judged.

Here then, is a contemporary, if rudimentary, recognition that the success of *Tom Jones* as a novel depends on Fielding's development of his intrusive narrator not only in the prefatory chapters of each book of the novel, but also as a commentator on the action. While Fielding's story of Tom Jones has always maintained its popularity, the presence of the narrator within the novel has not always received such approval. Byron commended Fielding's work because "you see the man of education, the gentleman, and the scholar, sporting with his subject—its master, not its slave." Henry James felt that the shallowness of Fielding's hero was compensated by the author who "has such an amplitude of reflection for him and round him that we see him through the mellow air of Fielding's fine old moralism, fine old humour and fine old style, which somehow really enlarge, make every one and every thing important."

Nevertheless, George Sherburn suggests that "practically
everything except the introductory essays to the eighteen books is organic" in the structure of the novel. Perhaps this emphasis on the story rather than the totality of the novel is best exemplified by Somerset Maugham who produced an edition of *Tom Jones* in which the introductory chapters are omitted. Ian Watt also objects that these prefatory chapters "derogate from the reality of the narrative"; he complains of "Fielding's garrulity about his characters," and repeats Ford Madox Ford's criticism of English "nuvvelists" who do not care "whether you quite believe in their characters or not." Comparing Fielding with Richardson, Ian Watt finds him lacking in psychological insight because his authorial interventions "interfere with any sense of narrative illusion." Even R.S. Crane, who in his essay, "The Plot of *Tom Jones*," re-examines the novel in the light of the Aristotelian concept of plot to show how all the elements--action, characters and thought--are synthesized to create its "working power," has doubts whether the totality of meaning of *Tom Jones* is rendered in terms of plot or merely superimposed on it by the Narrator. This tendency to separate the Narrator from the totality of the novel is also seen in Watt's assessment of Fielding's technique: "... if we analyse our impression from the novels alone it surely is evident that our residual impression of dignity and generosity comes mainly from the passages where Fielding is speaking in his own person. And this, surely, is the result of a technique which was deficient at least in the sense that it was unable to convey this larger moral significance through character and action alone, and could only supply it by means of a somewhat intrusive patterning of the plot and by direct editorial commentary."

Fielding's Narrator, of course, is a prime target in the critical controversy of "showing" against "telling." The use of the term "authorial intrusion" to define the
Narrator's participation in the novel suggests that he is a gate-crasher who is not really expected to join in the games played by the real author's characters. Even if the Narrator merely stands and comments on the action, like some sort of archetypal spectator, he is presumed to be blocking the reader's view of the action, interfering with the reader's direct experience of the humanity depicted within the world created by the fiction. The extreme view, as expressed in Percy Lubbock's *The Craft of Fiction*, completely denies any place for the author to appear in his narrative. Any evidence of authorial intrusion, any editorializing, any sense of style which draws attention to itself and away from the story which it is depicting may be seen as detracting from the value of the novel. Such views place prime importance upon the events of the story, and assume that the verbal structures of the novel are to provide a completely transparent medium by which the reader experiences, seemingly at first hand, the life which the novelist has chosen to represent. The reader therefore must remain unconscious of the form, (unaware of the author's play of words) and become a victim of the novel's illusion of life; for him the novel will be a document which translates through a convenient medium the author's arrangement of human events.

Considered in its totality, Fielding's *Tom Jones* (but not Somerset Maugham's) may be seen to represent two conflicting views of what the novel tries to achieve. On the one hand is the world inhabited by Tom Jones, a complete, "hermetic" world created by the narrative, in which the characters, within a limited range of functions, are reported to behave somewhat as we might imagine similar types of people might have behaved in mid-eighteenth-century England. To the extent that the novel maintains its "imperviousness," the reader may well lose his sense of disbelief and respond to the characters with human emotions—a response that in its extreme form is
manifested in the boos and hisses that greet the villain of stage or screen. At a human level the reader may respond positively to the good-heartedness of Tom Jones or negatively to the villainy and deception of Blifil. Or he may feel uneasy at Tom's sexual adventures with Molly, Mrs. Waters, or Lady Bellaston, and he may experience some misgivings about an ending which releases Tom from what might be thought to be the just consequences of his behaviour. If the art of the novel were simply the representation of life—if the novel were an elaborate trompe-l'oeil which deceives people into making human responses to figures of the imagination—then anything in the novel which detracted from that purpose would be a serious fault. And that is how some critics have considered the interpolations of Fielding's Narrator, who by his asides and rhetorical tricks breaks the illusion which holds together the world of Tom Jones by reminding the reader that he is reading a novel.

For this reason the anonymous pamphlet writer of 1751 might have deemed Fielding to be "our English Cervantes," because by increasing the novel's depth of focus, by multiplying the perspectives by which the action is viewed, Fielding is following his Spanish master more than by merely creating characters who travel along the highway, and whose actions are sometimes described with mock-heroic bombast. Both Cervantes and Fielding, by diverting the reader's attention momentarily from the human events of the novel, are focussing it on the novel as fictional construct, and therefore demanding an aesthetic response. It is a movement towards what Ortega y Gasset calls "artistic art," as opposed to the "impure art" which "reduced the strictly aesthetic elements to a minimum and let the work consist almost entirely in a fiction of human realities" (p. 10). The novel, of course, because of its tradition of being "realistic" is always subject to such a tendency, whereas Ortega y Gasset, in his
consideration of modern art, was writing at a time when there was a discernible movement among many arts away from the representation of natural objects towards increasing abstraction—a movement which Ortega y Gasset called "The Dehumanization of Art," not in a derogatory sense, but in an appreciation of an inevitable movement from the human preoccupations of topical relevance to aesthetic considerations, in the understanding that "an object of art is artistic only in so far as it is not real" (p. 10).

In his essay Ortega y Gasset distinguishes between the response of the ordinary mass of people, to whom the experience of art is no more than a heightening or intensification of their attitudes to everyday life and the attempts of the artist to deny this type of response by a concentration on the medium at the expense of fictional "reality." As Ortega y Gasset points out, "Not only is grieving and rejoicing at such human destinies as a work of art presents or narrates a very different thing from true artistic pleasure, but preoccupation with the human content of the work is in principle incompatible with aesthetic enjoyment proper" (p. 9).

Such a tendency to build a barrier between the audience and the life depicted within the work of art is scarcely a modern phenomenon. Works of art that at times shock the audience into an awareness of their own artificiality can be cited from all periods. What aroused Ortega y Gasset's concern was that the art of his contemporaries seemed deliberately to negate human concern by dealing with abstractions which appeal mainly to a minority of "people possessed of the peculiar gift of artistic sensibility" and at the same time alienating the "hoi polloi" (p. 11). However, "aesthetic distancing" is commonly held to be a principle of art, especially in comedy, where distortion, exaggeration or rhetoric is necessary to produce a comic response from the representation of events that are not intrinsically
comic. The spirit of comedy does not reside in the events which are portrayed, but rather in the artistic vision by which they are given form. It is not difficult to think of human situations which are potentially horrific, grotesque, or even tragic, and also potentially comic, when given a treatment which allows the audience to laugh at the human predicament, while insulated from human emotions. Thus the traditional spectacle of the man slipping on a banana skin can be funny only as long as we do not imaginatively share the pain of his fall.

Similarly, the scene in which a father commands his daughter to marry a hated, repulsive suitor, and is deaf to all the girl's entreaties, could create some consternation in a person who responded with sympathy for the girl's plight. An eavesdropper at such a scene in real life might quite likely develop an antipathy towards the unreasonable and overbearing father, especially if the scene ended in violence towards the attractive daughter. This response, of course, is precisely the effect of reading Clarissa Harlowe's letter of February 25th to Miss Howe (I, 43-45). Clarissa, having been sent down to tea, finds herself the object of scrutiny by the members of her family. Her isolation is emphasized by the lack of conversation, the abrupt answers to her politeness, until one by one the footman, her brother, her sister, and her mother depart, leaving her alone with her father. The dramatic preparation of the scene emphasizes Clarissa's feeling of helplessness in her isolation. In the page of dialogue which follows, all of Clarissa's expressions of humility and obedience are interrupted by her father's harsh demands, until the scene dissolves in Clarissa's tears, when Mr. Harlowe withdraws, leaving her prostrate on the floor, a picture of abject misery. It is probably no coincidence that Fielding's *Tom Jones*, published the following year, includes an almost identical situation involving Squire Western and Sophia, with the difference
that in Fielding's scene the enraged father is portrayed with even more violence (VI, vii, 247-257). Where Mr. Harlowe demands complete obedience to his will, in language that is reminiscent of an Old Testament Jehovah, Squire Western vents his anger in oaths and threats, finally breaking from Sophia "with such violence that her face dashed against the floor" (VI, vii, 250). Considered by itself, Fielding's scene would seem to be the more affective because of its emphasis on violence and passion, and its promise of much more drastic consequences than Richardson's. Nevertheless, within the context of Richardson's novel the unrelenting heartlessness of Mr. Harlowe becomes the mainspring of the whole tragic movement of the plot, while the rhetoric of Fielding's novel has already immunized his readers from accepting too black a view of its human possibilities. The potential horror of the scene is ironically undercut in the same chapter, when the enraged Western sends Tom Jones to comfort Sophia in her distress.

It is necessary to distinguish between two different concepts of irony in order to explain the difference between Richardson's and Fielding's treatment of a similar incident. At one level there is the dramatic (or practical) irony inherent in the actions and expectations of the characters within the novel. Most stories depend for their effect on the unexpected turn of events like the "Reversal" and "Discovery" in Aristotle's analysis of tragic plots. This use of dramatic irony is as important in Clarissa as in Tom Jones; in both novels events turn out contrary to the characters' expectations. Fielding's work, however, shows a development in the form of the novel in the ironic perception of events achieved through the creation of the Narrator, who adds another dimension to the perspective of the work, a dimension that is barely hinted at in Richardson's novels. Consequently, not even the most naïve reader of
Tom Jones could seriously anticipate the hero being hanged on the gallows, any more than the theatre audience could perceive the rescue of MacHeath as anything but a convenient dramatic device. In contrast, the villagers of Slough were supposed to have rung their church bells in celebration of Pamela's wedding after that episode of the novel had been read to them. 24

One of the characteristics of modern art listed by Ortega y Gasset is the tendency "to be essentially ironical" (p. 13). In his view, the previous century had favoured works which contained "a core of 'lived reality'" upon which the aesthetic process succeeds in "endowing the human nucleus with glamour and dignity" (p. 22). In contrast the twentieth century now showed its "loathing of living forms or forms of living being" by adopting a distant attitude to the life it depicts. The modern attitude thus resulted in a feeling of aroused detachment which denied the pathos of human involvement with the inevitable result that art becomes comical, or as he puts it, "waggish":

The waggery may be more or less refined, it may run the whole gamut from open clownery to a slight ironical twinkle, but it is always there. And it is not that the content of the work is comical—that would mean a relapse into a mode or species of the "human" style—but that, whatever the content, the art itself is jesting. To look for fiction as fiction—which, we have said, modern art does—is a proposition that cannot be executed except with one's tongue in one's cheek. Art is appreciated precisely because it is recognized as a farce. (pp. 43-4).

Although Ortega y Gasset is concerned with the change from the nineteenth to the twentieth centuries, his perception of the difference could just as well apply to the differences in the technique of the novel as illustrated by Richardson and Fielding, with the important exception that no-one would accuse Fielding of loathing living forms. 25 Nevertheless, the extra dimension achieved by incorporating the narrator-
historian-critic within Fielding's work does provide a framework to Tom Jones's story, just as the proscenium arch marks the separation between the reality of the theatre and the illusion of the stage. The fundamental irony of *Tom Jones*, therefore, derives from the Narrator's pretense that he is a historian and that the story of Tom Jones which he is recounting has a prior existence in his personal experience or in some unknown historical archives, like the Manchegan archives of Don Quixote. If this pose were maintained seriously throughout the book, and the reader had no choice but to read the story like a factual document, then the effect of *Tom Jones* would be melodramatic rather than comic. Instead, the language of Fielding's rhetoric makes it obvious that the Narrator's role of historian is no more than a mask which gives the fiction a superficial reality. By responding to the ironic language of the Narrator, the reader is invited to see behind the mask, to see the machinery which controls the action on stage, to become aware of the story as a fiction, to appreciate the book as an artifact made by Fielding the novelist.

Fielding's use of irony begins on the title-page which states that *Tom Jones* is the history of a foundling. Apart from perceiving the incongruity of writing history about such a non-entity, we can also see Fielding playing with the several connotations of the word "history." A history, of course, may be no more than the narration of a series of events, either true or imaginary, which is the first and earliest sense of the word given in *OED*. Nevertheless, there is no doubt that Fielding's contemporaries, as well as the modern reader, would have understood the word in its more serious sense, when it comes to mean the methodical record of important events that are verifiable in the annals of the real world. History, in that it deals with ascertainable facts ordered and arranged to explain a whole movement or to follow a chain of events to their natural
conclusion, might seem to be diametrically opposed to the work of the novelist who arranges fictional events into an artistic or moral pattern. The novelist is free to create his own world, but the historian is limited to events that happened in the real world of everyday experience. The Narrator of *Tom Jones* adopts the latter role in the prefatory chapters to most of the eighteen books of the novel, and frequently interposes himself in the story between fictional characters and reader. In the course of the novel the Narrator assumes a variety of attitudes—he may be the host of an ordinary, or a fellow-traveller in a stage-coach—but his pose as a historian recounting how Tom Jones comes to his rightful place in the social world is the structural device that conditions the reader's response to the whole of the novel.

As a historian the Narrator frequently reminds the reader of his responsibility to keep to the facts; he may withhold some items of information or control the extent to which he penetrates a character's motives, but whatever he tells the reader must be taken as truth, because "Truth distinguishes our writings from those of idle romances which are filled with monsters" (IV, i, 126). The Narrator's devotion to truth becomes a chorus to the fictional events of the novel. When the drunken Tom, after rhapsodizing over the Sophia he loves, goes directly off to the bushes with Molly Seagrim, the Narrator pretends to disarm the reader's incredulity at what might be considered an unnatural act by the assertion that "the fact is true" (V, x, 216). And if the Narrator has misgivings about recounting an episode that might be considered unworthy of his hero, then it is because "that historic truth to which we profess so inviolable an attachment obliges us to communicate it to posterity" (V, x, 215). Because he assumes responsibility only for telling the story and not for inventing its happenings, the Narrator is able to absolve himself from the charge of having stretched coincidence
beyond the reader's belief; it even allows him to include incidents which he pretends
to find difficulty in believing. Consequently throughout the novel the Narrator tends
to stress the role of Fortune in bringing about the coincidences which are responsible
for much of the dramatic irony in the novel. He may also show off his prowess as a
historian by tracing in retrospect the chain of events which has led to a surprising
occurrence; he directs the reader to look back to the Upton episode in order to "admire
the many strange accidents which unfortunately prevented any interview between
Partridge and Mrs. Waters" (XVIII, ii, 792); or he takes care that the reader should not
miss the significance of the action when Sophia leaves her muff on Tom's bed at the
Upton inn. 26 Sometimes the Narrator expresses his own sense of wonder at the
remarkable occurrences which he is reporting: "Reader, I am not superstitious nor any
great believer in modern miracles. I do not, therefore, deliver the following as a
certain truth, for indeed I can scarce credit it myself; but the fidelity of an historian
obliges me to relate what hath been confidently asserted" (X, ix, 473). By expressing
his own incredulity the Narrator would seem to be disarming any scepticism on the
part of the reader, except that the constant reiteration of the truth of his narrative has
the same ironic effect as Mark Antony's use of the word "honourable" in his funeral
oration over Caesar. If we were to accept the Narrator's remarks at face value we
would have to believe that he was merely setting before us a true story, and that he
had no control over the facts because "truth distinguishes our writings from those idle
romances" (IV, i, 126). In his privileged position as historian the Narrator has been
"admitted behind the scenes of this great theatre of Nature" (VII, i, 275), and he is
"obliged to record matters as he finds them" (VIII, i, 337). As an historian, the
Narrator's devotion to the truth of his story is his excuse for introducing new characters
or for recording unpleasant incidents.

The ground rules for this type of history are set out for us at the beginning of Book II. Here the Narrator distinguishes between the pedestrian chronology of the mere annalist and the artistic compression and stretching of time which the real historian may use in his narrative to give the proper emphasis to the events. He declares his independence of the temporal laws of the world of everyday reality and calls upon his readers to suspend their disbelief in the world depicted in his history:

For as I am, in reality, the founder of a new province of writing, so I am at liberty to make what laws I please therein. And these laws my readers, whom I consider as my subjects, are bound to believe in and to obey; with which that they may readily and cheerfully comply, I do hereby assure them that I shall principally regard their ease and advantage in all such institutions; for I do not, like a jure divino tyrant, imagine that they are my slaves or my commodity. I am, indeed, set over them for their own good only, and was created for their use and not they for mine. (II, i, 65-66)

The Narrator's manipulation of time is indicated by the headings of many of the subsequent books in the novel, which indicate the time-span of the events included. The early books cover periods of years as the Narrator establishes the situations of the principal characters, but there is a fore-shortening of the temporal perspective as the characters are portrayed in dramatic action: Book IV covers one year, Book V "somewhat longer than half a year," Book VI "about three weeks," and then the action begins that rapid succession of incidents which takes Tom Jones to Upton and London. The central Books IXa and X each cover a period of twelve hours, while the remainder of the Books range from two to six days. The effect is to suggest the acceleration of the pace of the novel when Tom is expelled from the Allworthy household, and the static situation of Tom's minority gives way to the dynamic action of events that will lead him to the recognition of his true rights. The change of pace also
has the effect of bringing the reader ever closer to the action: the panoramic view of
the passage of years in Tom Jones's youth gives way to the recounting of minute details
when the reader is allowed to participate in the dramatic scenes. And yet, ironically,
the Narrator neglects to point out the actual calendar dates which might have suggested
the real historicity beneath the fictional history. 27

So often does the Narrator assert his role as a simple recorder of historical
fact that even the most naïve of readers could not help but respond to the ironic
overtones of one who protests too much, and thus to perceive the fictional quality
of the story. At one point the Narrator seems to drop his mask for a moment when he
admits that "to bring our favourites out of their present anguish and distress, and to
land them at last on the shore of happiness, seems a much harder task, a task indeed so
hard that he does not undertake to execute it" (XVII, i, 753). In a whimsical mood
the Narrator plays with the reader's fear that Tom Jones might be executed:

This I faithfully promise: that notwithstanding any affection which we
may be supposed to have for this rogue, whom we have unfortunately
made our hero, we will lend him none of that supernatural assistance
with which we are entrusted upon condition that we use it only on very
important occasions. If he doth not, therefore, find some natural means
of fairly extricating himself from all his distresses, we will do no violence
to the truth and dignity of history for his sake; for we had rather relate
that he was hanged at Tyburn (which may very probably be the case) than
forfeit our integrity or shock the faith of our reader. (XVII, i, 753)

No reader will be deceived by his use at this point in the story of such words
as "rogue" and "unfortunately," nor would any reader have any expectation of Tom's
meeting with a violent death. In spite of the Narrator's many apparent condemnations
of Tom's behaviour, there is no mistaking his approval of Tom's goodness of heart.
There is also a logical contradiction in this passage. Even if the Narrator were really
a historian, he would still necessarily know the outcome of the events. The one quality
that the real historian cannot incorporate in his work is suspense, because he knows,
and the reader knows that he knows, how his story ends. Suspense belongs in the province of the story-teller who has the freedom to use any artifice he wants in creating his story, and much of the suspense of Tom Jones derives from the mystery of Tom's birth.

In spite of his protestations about keeping to the truth, the Narrator has deliberately withheld his knowledge about Tom's parentage, while carefully contriving that the hasty reader might be misled into thinking that Tom's mother was really the Jenny Jones who reappears as Mrs. Waters. The more astute reader, of course, may be more wary of the trap, but even he can scarcely be expected to guess at the carefully laid plots that are finally revealed in the closing chapters. Instead the reader is expected to trust in the benevolence of the Narrator—to have faith in his powers to construct a plot which will bring Tom to a happy ending, without recourse to miraculous intervention by some deus ex machina, and without stretching the admittedly long arm of coincidence beyond the bounds of credibility. Fielding's success in making every character and incident a part of the overall plan is the source of much critical acclaim of the novel.

Whereas, most analyses of the plot of Tom Jones are concerned with the actions of the characters, and the way the incidents are arranged to achieve the surprise ending, the relationship between the Narrator and the reader is important because it conditions the reader's response. Wayne Booth, in fact, suggests that this relationship might almost be termed a "sub-plot" of the novel, because the "seemingly gratuitous appearances by the narrator" become a "running account of growing intimacy between the narrator and the reader,"=an account with a kind of a plot of its own and a separate denouement." The growth of this relationship is marked by the Narrator's introductory essays on the writing of history, on love, on critics, and on serious writing, which not only serve to explain his literary methods, but also act like a dramatic
monologue to characterize the Narrator as a witty, cultured, wise, benevolent, understanding, and highly moral gentleman who demands that his readers share his standards before passing judgments on his characters. Walter Harding Stuart sees him as an archetypal figure of the period: "He is a study in universality. He cannot be identified as aristocrat, tradesman, scholar, lawyer or clergyman; he is the mythic abstraction of the eighteenth century, the normal man." Without him the novel loses a whole dimension of moral judgment. His direct addresses to the reader make the latter a participant in the world of the novel. Sometimes he figures as a "well-disposed youth" or one of "my worthy readers" (III, vii, 118), or else he may be the "learned and sagacious reader" (VII, xii, 319). Rarely does the Narrator drop the pretense that he is telling a story for the reader's edification and delight. The Narrator is also characterized by the concern he shows for the reader, exhorting him to achieve the same standards of benevolence before judging the actions of the characters. At times the Narrator seems to make a correct attitude on the part of the reader a condition of his being allowed to continue reading the book:

Examine your heart, my good reader, and resolve whether you do believe these matters with me. If you do, you may now proceed to their exemplification in the following pages; if you do not, you have, I assure you, already read more than you have understood, and it would be wiser to pursue your business or your pleasures (such as they are) than to throw away any more of your time in reading what you can neither taste nor comprehend. (VI, i, 228)

Such a pose has its own amusing irony as well as a satirical effect on those who do not lend themselves to the Narrator's doctrine of the good heart. Like his other pose as historian, the Narrator's apparent solicitude for his reader's welfare has a cumulative effect through the Narrator's constant reiteration of his concern, and repeated expression of friendship, which, if we were to consider the relationship as a sub-plot of the novel,
has its own denouement in the opening chapter to the final book:

We are now, reader, arrived at the last stage of our long journey. As we have therefore travelled together through so many pages, let us behave to one another like fellow-travellers in a stage-coach who have passed several days in the company of each other, and who, notwithstanding any bickerings or little animosities which may have occurred on the road, generally make all up at last and mount for the last time into their vehicle with cheerfulness and good humour; since after this one stage it may possibly happen to us, as it commonly happens to them, never to meet more. (xviii, i, 789)

By now the reader is thoroughly prepared for the unravelling of the complications of the plot, and a full appreciation of the world created by the Narrator, whose rhetoric invites us to penetrate his mask of irony, and to view this created world as he does: His constant references to his work as "history," his remarks to his readers, his comments on the writing of the story, all seem aimed at reminding us that we are participating in a literary experience, the subject of which is the redemption of Tom Jones. As we lend ourselves to the Narrator, so the world of Tom Jones recedes in the total perspective of the novel, and we attain, like the Narrator, a comic view of the action. Because the Narrator teaches us how to judge his characters, not only do we suspend our disbelief in him, but we also adopt his moral position of the doctrine of the "good heart" (IX, i, 413). As we gain the Narrator's understanding of his characters so do we learn to trust him not to let anything undeservedly disastrous happen to them. Our attention is diverted so that we no longer fear the torments of the characters when they suffer their tribulations. Instead we wonder how the Narrator is going to extricate them from their predicaments. The Narrator's use of irony forces the reader to make the imaginative leap beyond the literal meaning of the verbal statement in order to join the Narrator on his Olympian plane of understanding. He has created a world which "may indeed be considered as a vast machine in which the great wheels are originally set in
motion by those which are very minute and almost imperceptible to any but the strongest
eyes (V, iv, 188), and when we reach the last page we realize how our trust in his
creation has been justified. In his world all the parts are fitted together into a
co-ordinated whole, all the details become a part of the created pattern. When the
total pattern is finally revealed, we realize that happenings that had before seemed
like coincidence or random accidents were all the time a part of Fielding's grand plan.
When the Narrator writes about "the faith of our reader" there is a suggestion that the
reader must trust to the beneficence of the Narrator, just as Pope's audience was
enjoined to trust in God, because 'Whatever is, is right.' And eventually we come to
realize that the world of Tom Jones is a world created by the novelist, where all is for
the best, according to the novelist's plan:

   All Nature is but Art, unknown to thee;
   All Chance, Direction, which thou canst not see;

During the course of the action Tom Jones appears to have the freedom to act
as he wills; some of his unfortunate choices seem destined to lead him to that disastrous
end suggested by the Narrator-historian, who records but does not direct his life.
Ultimately we learn by the ending of the novel that because Tom Jones is fundamentally
a person of good heart, his restoration to his position of love and wealth had been
predestined by his creator, and all the events and characters are part of the writer's
plan to accomplish this end. Only a reader lacking in faith would have felt the pathos
of the threat of Tom's execution or Tom's despair at the thought of having committed
incest. In the Narrator's world these incidents are all a part of the great design. When
Fielding mentions a world of wheels in motion, we cannot help but be reminded of the
familiar eighteenth-century image of a Newtonian universe as a piece of clockwork,
and we can agree therefore with Wayne Booth's suggestion that "our growing intimacy with Fielding's dramatic version of himself produces a kind of comic analogue of the true believer's reliance on a benign Providence in real life" (p. 217).

Tom Jones presents the reader with two principal levels of illusion. By adopting the mask of the Narrator, Fielding separates the reader from the world of Tom Jones' adventures. Despite all the Narrator's asseverations about the truth of his history, Fielding's irony allows the reader to perceive that the Narrator, too, is as fictional a character as Tom Jones. The tactics of the novelist are like those of an army which, in order to strengthen its position, retreats from one line of trenches to a secondary line of defense. Fielding admits that the story of Tom Jones is a fiction, because to do otherwise for a sophisticated audience would be like trying to hold an indefensible position. For a while the reader may suspend his disbelief and become immersed in the actions of Tom Jones' world, but the interruptions of the Narrator deliberately break the spell of this illusion, and the reader is brought back into the "real" world of the Narrator. Finally, when the complications of the action are all explained, the reader comes to realize that what the Narrator had explained as the coincidences and haphazard play of Fortune are really the crafty manipulations of the novelist, Fielding, who creates both Narrator and Tom Jones alike.

Fielding, using the mask of the Narrator, shifts the illusion of reality from one world to another, changing the reader's perspective of the action. The interpolated story, like the Man-of-the-Hill's tale, creates yet another perspective, when the sole authority for the genuineness of the story is the teller, himself a fictional character. If the Man-of-the-Hill's story should seem like a fiction, then Partridge's interruptions give the telling of it a realistic credibility. During this episode Partridge and Tom
Jones stand in relation to the world created by the Man-of-the-Hill like Fielding's Narrator does to the whole of the fictional world. The novel becomes a Chinese box of fictions created by fictional authors. Cervantes, of course, uses the interpolated tale to the same effect, when his highly romanticized episodes serve to heighten the apparently everyday realism of the fictional structure which surrounds it. When Partridge interpolates his ghost story into the middle of the Man-of-the-Hill's tale, Fielding is multiplying his perspectives like his Spanish predecessor. And also like Cervantes, Fielding allows his Narrator to admit his existence as part of the fiction. The final paragraph of Don Quixote begins with the words: "For me alone Don Quixote was born, and I for him. He knew how to act, and I knew how to write. We two alone are as one..." (p. 1050). Similarly Fielding's Narrator admits to his readers that he is "indeed, set over them for their own good only, and was created for their use, and not they for [his]" (II, i, 66).

Fielding's Tom Jones sets a standard of perspectivism that is not easily attained. None of his immediate successors was able to emulate his control of narrative voice to create the essentially detached and ironic view of his created Kosmos that makes his work seem so modern. Perhaps the measure of his achievement may be best seen by a comparison with one of his sister's novels, Sarah Fielding's David Simple (1744, 1747, 1753). With this, and other works, Sarah Fielding enjoyed a considerable reputation amongst her contemporaries, especially for her "knowledge of the human heart" which Richardson praised in his letter to her of December 7, 1756. According to Richardson, another "critical judge," Dr. Johnson, also rated her power of psychological insight into her characters above that of her brother.

Fielding's own praise of Sarah Fielding's novel may be biassed by his family
interest. Following the Aristotelian model of judging a literary work according to its fable, manners, sentiments, diction, music, and decoration, Fielding analyzes this novel according to the requirements of the genre of the comic epic-poem in prose which he had expounded two years earlier in his Preface to *Joseph Andrews*. (By similar critical criteria Fielding later judged some aspects of Charlotte Lennox's *The Female Quixote* (1752) to be superior to Cervantes' original.) Fielding also made some stylistic changes for the second edition of *David Simple* (also dated 1744), in which his Preface first appeared. His biggest addition is a passage amplifying David Simple's goal of seeking perfect friendship in his travels through the world by making it become a quixotic quest: "This was the Fantom, the Idol of his Soul's Admiration. In the Worship of which he at length grew such an Enthusiast, that he was in this Point only as mad as Quixotte himself could be with Knight Errantry; and after much amusing himself with the deepest Ruminations on this Subject, in which a fertile Imagination raised a thousand pleasing Images to itself, he at length took the oddest, most unaccountable Resolution, that ever was heard of, viz. To travel through the whole World, rather than not meet with a real Friend" (pp. 26-7).

The idea of having a naive hero suffer from the deceits and hypocrisies of a hostile social jungle demands a separation of viewpoint in the narration. To be effective there needs to be a difference between the reader's perception of this world and the character's. Instead, in Sarah Fielding's novel the one-dimensional narrative explains this world alike to David Simple and to the reader, with very few attempts to allow the reader to infer any subtleties of meaning or judgment.

David Simple apparently has the opportunity to learn as much about his world as does the reader, and yet he fails to learn from his experience of the ways of the world
because he is fixed in his character as the naïve, good-hearted, and long-suffering hero. Only the exigencies of the plot of the novel, in which the novelist is determined to create a "moral romance" out of Simple's misfortunes, reunite him with his friends, and promise him a "happily-ever-after" life in the final chapter of the second volume, entitled "Containing two Weddings, and consequently the Conclusion of the Book" (p. 302).

Sarah Fielding's sequel to her work, "Volume the Last" (1753) may have benefited from the example of Tom Jones, because it is in this volume that the narrative occasionally breaks out of the one-dimensional world of the first two volumes. In the final volume Sarah Fielding reverses the pattern of the previous volumes. After establishing the idyllic life promised by her first conclusion, Sarah Fielding gradually strips away the financial, family and social comforts with which she had first rewarded her hero. If the first two volumes present a Quixote who actually finds and marries his Dulcinea, Volume the Last shows David Simple as a Job-like figure who suffers, without cursing or questioning the justice of his misfortunes, but one who is not finally recompensed for his steadfastness. Because of the expectations associated with the romance of the first two volumes, David's reversals of fortune come as a shock, especially when the evils of the English world turn out to be duplicated in the West Indies, and the reader is denied the conventional romance solution of having David's long-lost friends return with riches and relief from Jamaica in the nick of time. Instead, the news of Valentine's death and Cynthia's misfortunes add considerable impetus to David Simple's collapse. The only consolation which he, or the reader, can find in this catalogue of disasters is that the characters die quickly and peacefully. Even the joy of David and Camilla on finding that their children are still alive after their cottage
is burnt down is short-lived; within eleven pages, Camilla and two of her children die of grief, despair and disease.

The only relief to this picture of gloom is provided by the author's ironic perception of some of her villains. Mr. Orgueil's "Rules of Rectitude" enable him to justify to himself his heartless responses and selfish denials of aid to the hero. While the sorrow of Camilla and David on hearing the news of Valentine's death is demonstrated by their tears, Mr. Orgueil restrains himself by his devotion to "the most rigid and inexorable of all the Deities or Idols that ever Man, in his heated Imagination, worshipped; namely, human Reason" (p. 379). Nor is there any possibility of mistaking the author's irony in the use of "Blessing" and "generously" in her analysis of Mr. Orgueil's giving of advice.

One of the many Blessings such sort of Friends as Orgueil generously bestow on a distressed Mind, is the insisting that when they condescend to honour with their Notice a Man inferior in Fortune (especially if so much inferior as to be in a kind of Distress) he should rest perfectly contented with whatever little they think proper to do for him, although it should not prove half enough to keep his Family from starving: for Men of this turn of Mind, look on it as a Reproof, that a Man whom they deign to call Friend, should in any Extremity whatever apply to another Patron, although they are conscious that they themselves will go but a very little way in relieving him from that Extremity. (p. 383).

In this sort of passage, which occurs with more frequency in Volume the Last, Sarah Fielding's rhetoric invites the reader to participate in the process of narration by adding another level of meaning to the literal message of the prose. Her irony is the result of the reader's ability to perceive a more truthful and complete view of Orgueil than David Simple, who, as his name suggests, takes everything, including Orgueil, at its face value. In contrast, the more normal mode of narration of the whole novel can be seen in the following passage:
David was prohibited from making any Application to Mr. Ratcliff by his last Letter: and whilst he had the least Hope, that his dear Son might, by his means, enjoy any future Prosperity in the World, he dared not disoblige him. But now Mr. Orgueil discovered to him a Secret, which even then greatly astonished him, though not quite so much as it would have done at his first setting out in the World; which Secret was no other than that Mr. Ratcliff was himself in Possession of that very Place of Six hundred a Year, which he had, with great Professions of Kindness, pretended he would solicit for him. (p. 382).

Such prose of high definition creates a flat, one-dimensional world-view, lacking any sense of perspective. Because the actions of the three characters are reported without distinction, David's astonishment makes no greater impact than Orgueil's disclosure of Ratcliff's betrayal. In cinematic terms, all three actions receive the same treatment from a distant, but stationary, camera, whereas, because David is the hero of the story, the reader might reasonably expect to see some of his reaction to the hearing of Orgueil's news in close-up, and perhaps to hear some of the ensuing dialogue, which would convey some sense of his consternation. Nor has there been any preparation for David's disappointment. An ironic viewpoint might have allowed the reader to guess that Ratcliff would take the position for himself, while David still pinned his hopes on his supposed benefactor. Instead, Ratcliff's letters make it quite clear to the reader and to David that he is not able to fulfil his promise. Consequently, the news which appears in the above passage is something of an anti-climax, while David's astonishment at the news belies the equanimity or passivity of his behaviour.

Apart from the few passages in Volume The Last when the narration allows the reader to perceive an ironic meaning, the characters' actions and motives are analysed from an authoritative but static viewpoint. The characteristic mode of narration throughout the novel is the prose of reportage, in which events are recounted in the
past tense, and speech is reported indirectly. What is lacking in the novel is the change of perspective that might allow the reader to participate in David Simple's world. Whereas in *Tom Jones*, Fielding, playing with the irony of understatement, balances his narrative between commentary and dramatization, Sarah Fielding's work is almost totally a world created by the author's commentary and moralizing. This world is fixed and static, and comes to life only in such brief passages as Mrs. Dunster's speech (p. 342), or the letters of Ratcliff and Orgueil. For a novel which is concerned with social relationships, there is surprisingly little direct quotation of the speech in which these actions are conducted. Perhaps the most notable achievement of the novel, therefore, is the long monologue which constitutes David's death-bed speech (pp. 430-432), but which, so the author informs his reader, was not "delivered by him in a long-continued Harangue," but instead is composed partly of "what, at various Times, passed in his Mind," and partly of what "fell from his Lips" (p. 430). In this passage, which reads like a soliloquy, David recapitulates the action of the novel, giving emphasis to his sufferings at the loss of his friends and family, but rejecting any sort of humanist or stoic consolation, such as Orgueil had clutched during his illness. Instead, David affirms his belief in a Christian afterlife, and his closing words echo Clarissa's death-bed speech as he proclaims: "'tis with Joy I perceive my own Sorrows are near having an End" (p. 432). 37

The difference between the 1744 and 1753 volumes of David Simple shows a slight development of narrative technique, achieved by making more complex the perspective in which the action is viewed. A better example of this type of development can be seen in the novels of Dr. Smollett. In *Roderick Random* (1748), published anonymously, Smollett hides behind the mask of his character, Roderick, who tells his
life story in a first person narrative. All of the action in this novel is reported and judged ostensibly by Roderick, although there are several passages in which Roderick's naïve analysis of social life and military tactics allows the reader to interpret his comments ironically as a function of Smollett's satire on contemporary events. In the next three novels, Peregrine Pickle (1751), Ferdinand Count Fathom (1753), and Sir Launcelot Greaves (1760-1), Smollett uses a depersonalized third-person mode of narration which allows him more scope in his use of irony to suggest multiple meanings. This mode of narration is particularly evident in Ferdinand Count Fathom in which Smollett deliberately sets out to expose the double-dealing and villainy of his nefarious anti-hero, just as Fielding does in his Jonathan Wild (1743).

Smollett's Humphry Clinks (1771) shows a considerable development of narrative technique by which Smollett achieves a much greater degree of perspectivism. The introductory letters from the Reverend Jonathan Dustwich of Abergavenny and Mr. Henry Davis, the London bookseller, provide a pseudo-realistic framework to the correspondence of the Bramble family which follows. At first it might appear that Smollett is trying to emulate Defoe's trick of creating a completely impenetrable editorial mask in order to make the letters of his characters seem like genuine documents. Dustwich's references to a previous letter and his passing mention of the help he has received from his friends, the Reverend Hugo Behn and the Lawyer Davy Higgins, suggest the sort of corroboratory detail intended to give the letters an air of authenticity. Nevertheless, Smollett ensures that the fictional nature of his characters is perceived in Dustwich's unconscious, but comic, revelation of his own cowardice in his concern for his own safety. Perhaps his fear of a court action for libel might not be unjustifiable; Smollett, however, makes him embroider his apprehension by first
expressing his fear of being flogged for such an action, and secondly by hollowly
denying the evidence of his timidity in an altercation with Lismahago. The comic
exaggeration in this unwitting self-betrayal is the hall-mark of the fictional character,
and the reader's recognition of his fictitiousness is confirmed by Henry Davis' reply.
In a business-like, almost brusque, tone Davis dismisses Dustwich's fears, consoling him
with the fame that would accompany a flogging or being pilloried, and suggesting
the legal advantages of admitting to having been intimidated by Lismahago's reprehensions.
Davis also betrays his callousness in his response to Dustwich's suggestion to publish a
collection of sermons, confessing that they were not his sort of reading, and not popular
with the public. If Dustwich is characterized by his pusillanimity, Davis reveals his
greed. His slighting references to other collections of travel letters, including
Smollett's, tend to suggest that Dustwich's collection would be another set of fact-
orientated descriptions of foreign countries, except that Smollett's irony has already
established that Dustwich and Davis are "unreliable commentators" (in Wayne Booth's
definition), and that the letters which follow their introduction may be expected to be
something different from what they claim.

In the two Introductory letters Smollett's irony creates an ambiguity that is
typical of the story which follows. If Dustwich has to rush from the dinner table is it
because he is afraid of Lismahago, or has the eating of barbel's roe given him an attack
of diarrhoea? Events in this novel are subject to different interpretations according to
the viewpoint of the character who describes them. To Matthew Bramble, the society
of Bath is a "mass of ignorance, presumption, malice, and brutality", 39 while to his
niece Lydia "all is gaiety, good-humour, and diversion" (I, 49). Matthew perceives
the illuminations of the gardens of Vauxhall as "a few lamps [which] glimmer like so
many farthing candles" (I, 116); Lydia sees the same lights as "a thousand golden lamps, that emulate the noonday sun" (I, 119). In the world of Humphry Clinker things are never quite what they seem. If Lydia sees the world through rose-coloured spectacles, Matthew sees it through the dark glass of the satirist. The events and characters that arouse Matthew's wrath and irascibility become the source of amusement for his nephew Jery Melford. A travelling actor may turn up as a bearded Jew, and later become an eligible, gentlemanly suitor; the hero of the book's title enters as a ragged postillion and turns out to be Matthew's long-lost son.

In this novel each of five letter-writers gives his own version of the world as he sees it, and each is a part of the world perceived by the others. Matthew first appears to Jery as "a complete Cynic" (I, 20), but later Jery revises his opinion of Matthew's misanthropy when he secretly witnesses Matthew's generosity to the widow of the half-pay officer (I, 35), while the reader's understanding of Matthew's character has already been conditioned by the act of secret charity which Matthew reveals in his first letter. To the outside world Matthew appears as an irritable, hypercritical valetudinarian. The change of perspective afforded by Smollett's technique of multiple viewpoints enables the reader to see other facets of his character, to see him as a fully rounded character rather than as a one-sided, flat caricature. Matthew Bramble, in fact, is probably Smollett's most successful version of "the amiable humourist" in the Quixotic tradition of the idiosyncratic, idealistic hero, whose journey through the world reveals its vices and follies as he searches for a sane, human way of life. Beneath Bramble's prickly exterior lies the core of human benevolence and sympathy laid bare by exposure to other points of view. As an observer of the polite world of English society, Matthew Bramble describes its dirt and disease, its follies and vices, its
hypocrites and villains, its fools and dupes, with the rancour typical of all of Smollett's satirists.

The sickness that Matthew perceives in English society is reflected in his own bodily ills. The abundance of disease imagery in this novel creates a sense of the corruption that erodes the fabric of the beau monde. Matthew remarks on the contamination of the public baths and drinking water, the fetid air from the stinking river mud, and the water-basin "defiled with dead dogs, cats, rats, and every species of nastiness, which the rascally populace may throw into it from mere wantonness and brutality" (I, 60). Although this is the world through which the travellers meander, nevertheless Smollett's narrative technique establishes Bramble Hall, their home base, as a picture of a happy, healthful society—a flourishing, self-sufficient, rural community, supervised by the benevolent squire. Bramble Hall sets a standard of life against which Smollett's correspondents measure, consciously or unconsciously, the shortcomings of England and Scotland. Throughout the journey of the Bramble menage, Smollett is able to keep in view his vision of an ideal life while simultaneously showing the evils of the contemporary world.

Humphry Clinker is generally regarded as the most entertaining of Smollett's novels because of its wealth of comic characters. Matthew Bramble, Tabitha Bramble, Win Jenkins, and Lismahago all achieve comic stature because Smollett's shifting of viewpoint allows them to expose their own foibles, as well as showing their faults through the eyes of the other characters. The multiple perspectives of this novel are important because they suggest a complex social world in which a person's motives and feelings are not always apparent to the people around him, and not always to himself. In this world people unconsciously reveal in their writings the personality that might
remain hidden in the normal day-to-day social intercourse. The novel also illustrates clearly how a person's perception of the everyday world is conditioned by his temperament, and much of the humorous irony of the work is the result of the same incident or character being viewed from different points of view. As Win Jenkins writes, "there's nothin sartin in this world" (II, 171).

The concept of perspectivism shows a considerable difference of degree of complexity in the narrative technique between Smollett's earlier novels and Humphry Clinker, his last work. If Humphry Clinker creates a greater sense of reality than Roderick Random it is because the complexity of the narrative technique conveys a sense of a complex and dynamic world in which things have many appearances and are constantly changing. In this sense Humphry Clinker, because it reflects a more modern view of reality, is a more modern novel than Roderick Random.

Perspectivism, because it presents varying views of the reality depicted in the novel, necessarily becomes the source of the irony generated when these views conflict. In Don Quixote the Morisco translator doubts the veracity of Cide Hamete Benengeli's narrative, and the characters of Don Quixote and Sancho Panza change their plans in order to spite Alonso Fernández de Avellaneda, the author of the spurious Don Quixote. In Tom Jones the Narrator occasionally admits that he is composing a story, but more often claims to be a historian who has to stick to the truth in retelling the events that happened to a set of his acquaintances. Even in David Simple there are some slight changes of narrative perspective when the narrator's irony allows the reader to perceive meaning independently of the characters, while in Humphry Clinker all of the five main characters, excepting Lismahago, become the narrators of their own stories. The perspectivism of Smollett's novel is the result of the multiple points of view from which
the reader perceives both the characters and the world through which they travel. The effect of such a structure in the novel is paradoxical: because we see the characters from different points of view they seem more lifelike—more like the people we perceive in the real world; yet at the same time we realize that they are all part of the pattern created by the novelist, and as aspects of his grand plan, they are necessarily fictional creations, the author's masks of reality. Perspectivism balances the reality of the novel as a work of art against the illusory reality of its imaginary Kosmos. In the works considered here, the problems of the art of narrative are concealed by the human problems of the characters. The novel presents itself to the reader as a completed pattern. In the next chapter I shall examine the rhetorical devices by which the novelist involves the reader in the process of the novel, making the reader consciously aware of the novel in the process of being written. To a limited extent Fielding's Historian-Narrator fulfills this function in some of the introductory chapters of *Tom Jones*. Sterne, on the other hand, integrates this sense of awareness into the rhetorical structure of *Tristram Shandy*, which will be the main focus of my attention on the self-conscious novel.
NOTES

1 The Nigger of the Narcissus (New York, 1926), p. xiv. Conrad writes "My task which I am trying to achieve is, by the power of the written word to make you hear, to make you feel—it is, before all, to make you see. That—and no more, and it is everything."


6 These episodes are examined in detail by E. Sarmiento in "An Interpretation of Don Quixote," BHS, 37 (1960), 3-19, and George Haley in "The Narrator in Don Quijote: Maese Pedro's Puppet Show," MLN, 80 (1965), 145-165.


8 I have capitalized "Narrator" because I believe, and hope to show below, that Fielding's technique creates a fully realized persona for the teller of the tale of Tom Jones.

9 The History of Tom Jones: A Foundling, ed. Frank Kermode (New York, 1963), 1, i, 27. Subsequent references to this edition will appear in my text. Sarah Fielding uses the same figure in her heading to Chapter III of Book IV of David Simple (London, 1969), p. 251: "Containing such a Variety, as makes it impossible to draw up a Bill of Fare, but all the Guests are heartily welcome; and I am in hope everyone will find something to please his Palate."


12 Quoted by Martin Price in To the Palace of Wisdom (Carbondale, 1964), p. 286. Of Fielding's Narrator, Price comments that "ultimately, behind the work we see the historical author, the real personality behind the mask. . . . The Fielding who appears in his novels is, like Swift and Pope, a shifting series of personae, he is engaged in a constant dance of ironic postures" (p. 296).

13 Preface to The Princess Casamassima in The Art of the Novel: Critical


16 The Rise of the Novel, p. 286.


18 The Rise of the Novel, p. 286.


20 The Rise of the Novel, p. 287.


22 Jose Ortega y Gasset uses the term "imperviousness" to suggest the novel's power to create the illusion of a complete and integrated Kosmos. In his "Notes on the Novel" Ortega y Gasset writes: "By virtue of a purely aesthetic necessity the novel must be impervious, it must possess the power of forming a precinct, hermetically closed to all actual reality." The Dehumanization of Art (New York, 1956), p. 87. Subsequent references to this edition will appear in my text.


24 A modern equivalent to the reaction of the Slough villagers can be seen in the consternation expressed by listeners to the B.B.C. radio serial The Archers. When a popular character was "killed off" many people sent letters of condolence to the character's "husband"; some even sent wreaths for the funeral! The public reaction to Orson Welles' 1938 radio broadcast of H. G. Wells' The War of the Worlds is another example of the naive audience's confusion of the reality of art with the actuality of life—in this case with disastrous results.

25 While Ortega y Gasset's prognosis might be borne out by later developments in the visual arts, his fears for the novel seem unfounded. The contemporary novel still shows its concern with the human condition. Even such an "artistic" novel as Ulysses, with its many levels of artifice, is still founded on a core of human relationships.

26 Maurice Johnson, in his "The Device of Sophia's Muff in Tom Jones," MLN, 74 (1959), 685-690, shows how the image of the muff functions as a thematic symbol of the relationship between Tom and Sophia. No doubt Fielding was aware of
the word's double-entendre, its more scurrilous usage being a colloquial term for the pudenda (cf. the contemporary word "beaver").

27 The reference to the "late rebellion" (p. 311) and the moonrise mentioned as Jones leaves Gloucester (p. 366) have enabled Frederick S. Dickson to construct a historical chronology for the forty-two days which elapse between Tom's expulsion from the Allworthy household and his reinstatement at the end of the novel. In "The Chronology of 'Tom Jones,'" The Library, 3rd series, 8 (1917), 218-224, Dickson notes a certain irony in Fielding's timing of events. Although no days of the week are mentioned in the novel, by Dickson's calendar, Tom's visit to the theatre would have occurred on a Sunday, and Tom would have sent Partridge to cash the banknote on another Sunday, both events impossible in the historical world of England in 1745. The novel also ignores Christmas, although, according to Dickson, the nadir of Tom's fortunes, when he is in jail and learns of his supposed incest and of Sophie's complete rejection of him, occurs on Christmas Day. Six days later it is December 31, Tom is restored to favour and fortune, and the party returns to Somerset to begin the new year. Before these forty-two days of accelerated action, there is a more obvious discrepancy in the chronology of the novel. In June Tom is basking in the warmth of Allworthy's beneficence and Molly Seagrim's love; three weeks later it is November, the winter of Tom's discontent when he is banished from the Allworthy estate.

28 Coleridge praised the novel for its plot: "What a master of composition Fielding was! Upon my words, I think the Oedipus Tyrannus, The Alchemist, and Tom Jones, the three most perfect plots ever planned." Miscellaneous Criticism, ed. T.M. Raysor (London, 1936), p. 437.


32 This fictional technique has been further refined by Jorge Luis Borges. In such collections as his Ficciones (New York, 1962), Borges, instead of writing a palpably fictional story, writes critical and historical articles about works which exist only in his imagination. Non-existent works and non-existent authors thus attain a credibility through the apparently authentic erudition of Borges' criticism.

33 By accepting its irony as characteristic of the modern novel I am following the definitions of Northrop Frye and José Ortega y Gasset. John J. Richetti, on the other hand, claims that Fielding's first two novels "are really anti-novels in that their almost pervasive sense of parody makes them implicitly critical of the 'naive' realism by which Defoe and Richardson seek to induce a psychological participation which must be identified as the defining quality of the specifically modern novel." Popular Fiction Before Richardson (Oxford, 1969), p. 1n.


37 Richardson, in Belford's letter to Robert Lovelace of Thursday Night (Sept. 7th), emphasizes Clarissa's ecstasy of dying. At one point Belford reports Clarissa as saying, "all will soon be over—a few—a very few moments—will end this strife—and I shall be happy!" *Clarissa* (VIII, 102).

38 The best example is Roderick's description of the siege of Carthagena, in which campaign Smollett had served on a man-o'-war. See *Roderick Random*, II, 83-85, 95-98.


40 Smollett's creative imagination is apparent if we compare his Lismahago with Captain Robert Stobo, the historical figure on whom he is based. See George M. Kahrl, "Captain Robert Stobo," Virginia Magazine of History and Biography, 49 (1941), 141-151, 254-268, and *Tobias Smollett, Traveler-Novelist* (Chicago, 1945), pp. 132-143. Stobo's biography is found in Robert C. Albert's *The Most Extraordinary Adventures of Major Robert Stobo* (Boston, 1965).

41 Because perspectivism draws attention to the novel as a work of art, and creates relativistic ambiguous attitudes to reality, it is associated with mannerism. See Arnold Hauser, *Mannerism*, 2 vols. (London, 1965), I, 143. Hauser writes: "Perspectivism, which is one of the essential characteristics of the mannerist literature and appears most clearly in its heterogeneous and antithetical features, also lies behind the humorous outlook and forms one of the main themes of Don Quixote." I shall give further consideration to the novel as literary mannerism in Chapter VII.
CHAPTER VI

THE SELF-CONSCIOUS NOVEL

As a critical tool for the examination of the novel, perspectivism, like the author's mask of reality, functions in two directions. In the previous chapter I considered it as it relates to the creation of the Kosmos, when the multiplicity of narrators and points of view combines with the ambiguity of language to achieve a relativistic perception of the fictional world. But perspectivism also suggests a sense of artifice, directing our attention away from the fictional world towards the novelist as creator of this world.

In the first edition of Pamela, Richardson had used his editorial mask to separate himself from the world depicted in his characters' letters, but the accretion of critical remarks in the succeeding editions and in his other novels makes us conscious of the novelist behind the mask. Fielding's Shamela is not only a burlesque of Richardson's characters, situations, and moral assumptions, but also a parody of his narrative technique. Fielding first imitates Richardson's authorial reticence by assuming the mask of "Conny Keyber" as the author-editor of Shamela who immodestly prints commendatory letters to himself. Fielding's prefatory material creates an appropriate tone of inept deception, when the deceiver ironically and unwittingly exposes his own shortcomings, just as Shamela will do in the succeeding letters. Even the extravagant praise of Aaron Hill's letter, included in the second edition of Pamela, is turned against Richardson. Aaron Hill had demanded to know the identity of the "wonderful AUTHOR of PAMELA," praising "the Comprehensiveness of his Imagination," because he has "stretch'd out this diminutive mere Grain of Mustard-Seed, (a poor Girl's little innocent, Story) into a Resemblance of That Heaven, which
the Best of Good Books has compar'd it to. ² Fielding's Tickletext quotes from Hill's letter, but this particular sentence becomes suggestively scurrilous when Fielding substitutes "etc." for the words "innocent, Story." Conny Keyber is so obviously a clown's mask for the real author that the direction of Fielding's attack on Colley Cibber and Richardson is unmistakable. Not only does Shamela denigrate the moral value of Pamela's actions, but Parson Oliver's letter also exposes the fallacy of Richardson's editorial mask, and ridicules his claim that Pamela's story has its foundation in truth. By posing as the editor of the manuscript, Richardson had sought to present a novel without a novelist, in which its epistolary format demanded the sense of belief normally evoked by documentary evidence. Fielding creates a fool of an editor to burlesque Richardson's rhetorical stance, just as Shamela's Letter VI pokes fun at his technique of writing to the moment in the present tense (p. 313).

In his Preface to Joseph Andrews Fielding distinguishes between the "comic and burlesque" as the difference between what is true to nature, and what is "monstrous and unnatural" (p. 8). Such a distinction recognizes the difference between Shamela and Joseph Andrews, and can be read as a straightforward piece of literary criticism. Within the context of the novel, however, the Preface becomes a part of the novelist's strategy, having an important function as part of the basic narrative structure. The Preface sets a standard of serious critical writing against which to measure the literary pretensions of the presumed author who begins the first chapter of Book I with a literary essay in praise of the art of biography exemplified by Pamela and Cibber's Apology for the Life. If Joseph Andrews, according to the title-page, is written in "the Manner of Cervantes," then Fielding's Preface enables the reader to distinguish between the real author who dignifies his work by appealing to an ancient literary
tradition of the "comic-epic in prose," and a second author, like Cervantes' Second
Author. Fielding's second author, the Narrator, displays his own fatuity in his
literary judgments, and in his patent misunderstanding of his characters' actions. The
author of the Preface is distinguished by his serious, erudite tone of scholarship,
while the Narrator who begins Chapter I adopts the flippant air of the hack-writer.
The Narrator's introductory chapter of Book II develops his tone of pretentious
professionalism—the mark of the hack-writer who compares dividing a book into
chapters with the butchering of meat. 3

Fielding's Narrator of Joseph Andrews is not, however, a static figure.
His development as a character is illustrated by his introductory chapter of Book III,
in which he strikes a new note. Here his praise of truth cannot be regarded as ironic
mis-statement. Moreover, his defense of satiric portraiture in the representation of
general figures rather than the libel of particular individuals is a common justification
of satire. In this essay the Narrator provides a strong argument for preferring the
generalized truth of his fictional biography over the fantasies of romance-writers and
the deceptions of historians. In his praise of Don Quixote the Narrator seems very
like the writer of the Preface, and in his description of the virtues of the unnamed
peer and commoner, he points towards the exemplary figure of Squire Allworthy,
mentioned by Joseph (p. 198), who becomes the paragon of Tom Jones. The
Narrator may begin as a cynical hack-writer, but he ends as a person who values
truth, honesty, and generosity, achieving a stature similar to that of the Narrator-
Historian of Tom Jones.

This development in the attitude of the Narrator can also be illustrated by
his intrusive comments in his telling of the story. In the opening chapters he
continues his facetious interpolations and naïve misjudgments, with the same incompetence that he shows in Chapter I. The absurd genealogy of the Andrews family (p. 15) is echoed by the tributes to Colley Cibber (pp. 17, 23). The Narrator assumes that Lady Booby lays her hand "accidentally" on Joseph's (p. 22), and he writes facetiously about the "allurements of her native charms" after first listing the odious qualities of Mrs. Slipslop's person (p. 25). In Chapter VII he demonstrates again his lack of scholarship in forgetting the names of the "ancient sage" and "the philosopher," whose thoughts he repeats (p. 27). The cumulative effect of these and other interpolations is to create a tone of disdainful amusement. Despite the Narrator's protestations about the truth of his story, for him it is just a story, giving him the opportunity to exhibit his "fine writing" (p. 30), as in his heroic simile describing Mrs. Slipslop's attempt to ravish Joseph (p. 26). The Narrator's comments, confessions, and instructions to the reader provide a rhetorical framework which seems to denigrate the story of Joseph Andrews, as if this story were just another moral tale, like (in his simplistic view) Richardson's Pamela. Fielding's Narrator is characterized by the tone of his narrative, which is determined to a large extent by his attitudes toward the characters and their actions. Just as the three prefatory chapters show the narrator becoming increasingly involved with the truth of his story, so do his comments gradually build an air of reality into the world of Joseph Andrews. At first Joseph Andrews seems to exist merely as the hero of a tale, a convenient figure of naïvety designed to enable the Narrator to exploit the satirical possibilities of Lady Booby's and Mrs. Slipslop's actions. In the second chapter Joseph is "the hero of our ensuing history" (p. 14), and in Chapter X the Narrator admits that Joseph "would not have had an understanding sufficient for the principal subject of
such a book as this, if he had any longer misunderstood the drift of his mistress" (p.37).

Such comments which emphasize the fictitiousness of the character are confined to Book I. In the succeeding books Joseph's existence is assumed to be a part of the historical reality which the Narrator-Historian is recording, until in the final pages the Narrator brings the aftermath of the story up to date in the gossipy details of the Andrews' good fortunes. The mode of the narrative changes from manifest storytelling to pseudo-journalism, a change that is reflected in the change of tense from the past preterite of narration to the present tense of the final page.

The development of Fielding's Narrator draws the attention of the reader to the process of narration within the novel. The ostentatious passages of mock-heroic style, the interruptions of the narrative by the Narrator's interpolations, the elaborate heroic similes, and the carefully planned action, all suggest the presence of the novelist behind the mask of his Narrator. In Joseph Andrews the perception of the novelist at work in his novel is subservient to the illusion of reality created in the telling of Joseph's story, yet the display of the art of narration within the novel has led William Coley to compare Fielding with Gide, because both novelists, by this view, exhibit the quality of "self-conscious formalism":

But in modes where the intrusion of the author becomes an aesthetic principle, is made part of the subject matter, there the effect is a good deal more complicated. What happens is a kind of aesthetic chiasmus. The "author," who in more conventional modes stands for his craft (art) in an invisible and rather mysterious way, now is actually seen working, as it were, commenting on his devices. He comes in effect to stand for the "reality" that we always suspected was behind the mystery of artifice. On the other hand, the narrative materials, which in conventional modes shine lifelike through the transparency of art, are now seen as what the visible craftsman has been devising, the object of his craft, in a word, art. Thus the parties to the dualism appear to have exchanged significations. To put it another way, the dualism now appears resolved, not by the denial of the claims of one of its parties, but by the strange
ambiguity of the claims of both. For writers of epochs faced with exhausted or outmoded forms, such distortions by formal device have had an important function. By confusing the reader as to what is reality and what is distortion or artifice, they seek to arouse his curiosity to examine the claims of each in a new light.

The self-conscious display of the novelist is also manifested in the interpolated stories which achieve an air of reality through the dramatization of the narrators and audience, becoming an analogous paradigm of the whole novel. The Man-of-the-Hill's tale in Tom Jones exemplifies the narrator at work. This lengthy interruption of the principal story has often been regarded as an unnecessary delay, and is eliminated in Somerset Maugham's edition of Tom Jones. Nevertheless, the thematic connection between the stranger's story of imprudence and selfishness, in contrast to Tom's own history, has justified its inclusion in the novel. Moreover, the stranger's telling of the story serves as an exemplum of the Narrator's remarks concerning probability and verisimilitude which are the subject of the introductory chapter of Book VIII in which the story occurs. This story is thus a test of the reader's credulity, relying as it does on the coincidence that the impoverished hero rescues a stranger on the streets of London to find that the stranger is his father who had come to London expressly to find his long-lost son—a coincidence that is just as believable as Tom Jones' meeting with his putative father, Partridge, or his encounter with Dowling in the inn at Gloucester, both of which incidents occur earlier in the same book.

What is more important is the manner in which the story is told. The Man-of-the-Hill begins his strictly first-person narrative with a chronological catalogue of events in the traditional mnemonic mode. Were he to continue like this for six chapters, then the story of Tom Jones would be forgotten, in spite of the thematic links. Instead, his narrative is constantly interrupted by Partridge's interjections and
comments, the effect being to create a dramatic context for the telling of the story as an analogue for the Narrator's telling of the story of Tom Jones. Although the Man-of-the-Hill includes some dialogue and dramatized narrative, the credibility of his story lies not in the sense of reality created by his rhetoric, but in our awareness of the situation in which the story is being told. Its authenticity derives from our belief that it is part of a dialogue between characters we already believe in, just as our sense of the reliability, dignity, trustworthiness, honesty, and truthfulness of the Narrator is our authority for suspending disbelief in his story of Tom Jones. Not only do Partridge's interruptions help to create this sense of involvement, but because he acts as an extremely naïve listener, he helps to clarify some of the Man-of-the-Hill's statements. His naivety also allows the reader a certain superiority of understanding, with the realization that the facts of a story may be interpreted in different ways according to the narrator's view of life, just as the Man-of-the-Hill and Tom Jones differ in their views of humanity which they express at the conclusion of the story. Thus Glenn Hatfield suggests that the dramatized setting for the story lets the reader discern the illusion of an objective reality existing independently of the narrator's rhetoric:

While the story is being conveyed through our ears, the circumstances of its telling are subjected to our eyes, and this gives us an added perspective on the total situation that creates an illusion of objectivity. Our consciousness that the story is being told by a fallible human being and that other points of view are possible, as suggested by the tonal and stylistic variations of the interruptions, encourages us to separate the "objective" elements of the story (those consistent with the more immediate world of Jones and Partridge) from the subjective (those at odds with that world). The moral that the hermit draws from his tale is that human nature is universally corrupt, but the moral the reader discovers is that one of the consequences of imprudence may be a mind so embittered by experience that it sees corruption even where it is not.
To make this point even clearer Fielding gives us another example when Partridge interrupts the Man-of-the-Hill to tell his own ghost story, in an apparent contradiction of the Narrator’s warnings to authors in the introductory chapters of the book. In contrast to the careful phrasing and balanced sentences of the Man-of-the-Hill’s almost literary style, Partridge rambles and digresses through his story. Yet in spite of the differences in the style of their narrations, in one respect they are similar: both of these interpolated narrators misinterpret the "facts" of their stories. Just as the Man-of-the-Hill views his life story as a proof of man’s inhumanity to man, so does Partridge announce that his anecdote is a true story of a ghost. When Partridge reaches the climax of his story, his listeners, and, of course, the readers, easily perceive a different explanation, and his dramatized audience respond with smiles and laughter. So too, does Tom Jones reject the Man-of-the-Hill’s black view of human nature. Neither of these interpolated narrators is able to arrive at a satisfactory evaluation of the "facts" which he narrates. To promote the reader’s belief in these "facts," Fielding has created the illusion that these stories have an objective content separable from the manner in which they are narrated and evaluated. In many ways Partridge’s incompetence as a story-teller adds to the verisimilitude of his story. Although it purports to be a ghost-story, his story has the ring of credibility, not because of any intrinsic qualities of character or plot, lacking as it does even the corroborative historical details of the Man-of-the-Hill’s and Tom Jones’ stories, but because Partridge’s digressions, his unnecessary explanations, his display of inconsequential learning, his concern for exactitude in unimportant details and names, his vagueness about the judge’s remarks, and especially his fragmented sentences and colloquial style, are all typical of the way such a person as Partridge
would tell a story. While the Man-of-the-Hill's story follows the formal pattern of
the literary tradition, Fielding has heightened the sense of reality in his novel by
including analogues of the intrusive narrator at work in the telling of his story. If
the Man-of-the-Hill's tale seems like a stale literary convention, then his very
fictiveness serves to make Partridge seem less of a fiction. And if Partridge's story
seems like a fictitious anecdote, then it helps to create a sense of reality around the
dramatic situation in which it is presented. Fielding's perspectivism is particularly
effective because he exposes the process of fiction to the reader, and yet preserves
the sense of reality in its primary image of the Narrator as a teller of the story of
Tom Jones. Thus the writing of the novel becomes for a while the subject of the
novel. Coley makes this reduplicating of the process of the novel a point of
comparison between Fielding and Gide:

To invoke the Gidean optics, it is the effect of reduplicating
mirrors, in which the image of the immediate foreground (the
almost life-size image in what we tend to think of as the "first"
mirror) seems more "real" than any others in the infinite series
of small counterfeits "within" or "behind" it. "Seems", of
course, not "is". Because the apparent triumph of art is pure
trickery. Itself at one remove from the original, the "first"
image of the mirror series is thus no less artificial than the
others.6

The interpolated stories in Book VII of Tom Jones are closely related to the
discussion of the credibility of fiction in the introductory chapter of this book. In
spite of many objections to the superimposition of critical discussion on a fictional
story, modern reassessment of Fielding's work has established the general relevance
of the prefatory material as well as the Man-of-the-Hill's tale, even though both
were eliminated by W. Somerset Maugham in his edition of Tom Jones, while William
Empson dismisses Fielding's introductory chapters as "literary prattle."7 According
to Somerset Maugham, to read "the novel as a novel" is to be interested only in the life of its characters. Nevertheless, it is possible to see the introductory chapters of *Tom Jones* as integral to the structure of the work, because in these essays Fielding's Narrator becomes explicit about the nature of fiction and the problems of telling a credible story. The Narrator performs the conjuror's trick of telling his audience how the illusion is achieved while simultaneously deceiving them with his sleight of hand. In his introductory essays in the first part of *Tom Jones* the Narrator maintains his role of Historian, but in the prefatory chapter of Book VIII he drops this mask and deals directly with the novelist's problem of making his story believable. Hence it is possible to distinguish between two levels of self-conscious narration: first there is the ironically playful tone of the pseudo-historian who claims his story is a true transcription from life which he has witnessed; at a deeper level the reader can perceive the Narrator as a self-conscious novelist who voices his concern with making the story of Tom Jones true to his understanding of human nature, and credible to the reader.

The Narrator is revealed, in Wayne Booth's terms, as "the implied author" and becomes "a rich and provocative chorus." In both the Narrator's roles of historian and self-confessed novelist, it is as Wayne Booth says, "his wisdom and learning and benevolence that permeates the world of the book, set its comic tone between the extremes of sentimental indulgence and scornful indignation, and in a sense redeem Tom's world of hypocrites and fools." If Book VIII is recognized as the beginning of this explicit consideration of the novel as a created fiction, then it can be seen that the succeeding prefaces differ from those of the first seven books. In Book VIII the Narrator distinguishes between his species of writing and that "which is called the marvellous," between writers who
"indulge a wanton and extravagant imagination" and those, like himself, who keep "within the bounds of possibility" (VIII, i, 335). In particular he inveighs against the use of the supernatural, and cautions the modern author to be sparing in the use of ghosts, unless they wish to raise a "horse-laugh in the reader" (VIII, i, 337), which is the unwitting effect of Partridge's ghost story. The Narrator also recognizes that truth might be stranger than fiction, and that marvellous and surprising happenings which the real historian must include in his narrative are a danger to the writer of fiction who must keep within the bounds of probability in order to retain his reader's credibility:

Nor is possibility alone sufficient to justify us; we must keep likewise within the rules of probability. It is, I think, the opinion of Aristotle, or if not, it is the opinion of some wise man whose authority will be as weighty when it is as old, that it is no excuse for a poet who relates what is incredible that the thing related is really matter of fact. This may perhaps be allowed true with regard to poetry, but it may be thought impracticable to extend it to the historian; for he is obliged to record matters as he finds them, though they may be of so extraordinary a nature as will require no small degree of historical faith to swallow them. Such was the successful armament of Xerxes described by Herodotus, or the successful expedition of Alexander related by Arrian. Such of later years was the victory of Agincourt obtained by Harry the Fifth, or that of Narva won by Charles the Twelfth of Sweden. All of which instances, the more we reflect them, appear still the more astonishing. (VIII, i, 337)

The Narrator's examples make it clear that here he is talking about real history, and not the pseudo-history of Tom Jones. This historian may sometimes "fall into the marvellous, but never into the incredible." The novelist faces the danger of becoming a writer of romance, by "falling into fiction" and "deserting probability," without "the public records" and "concurrent testimony" which provide corroborative evidence for the historian to sustain his reader's belief (VIII, i, 338). Provided that he keeps within these bounds, the novelist may then be "entitled to some faith
from his reader," and may therefore be able to convince him of unusual characters
and unexpected incidents which lie beyond the reader's experience, because (and
here the Narrator quotes from the fifth chapter of Longinus' Bathos) "The great art of
all poetry is to mix truth with fiction, in order to join the credible with the surprising"
(VIII, i, 341).

In the preface to Book IX the Narrator continues his discussion of the novel,
making the distinction between "what is true and genuine in this historic kind of
writing" and what is "false and counterfeit" (IX, i, 409). Now he justifies his
particular method of combining narrative and discourse, because "the composition of
novels and romances" makes little demand on the writer, whereas "to invent good
stories and to tell them well are possibly very rare talents" (IX, i, 410). In his view
the writer must have the genius of invention and judgment in order to create his story,
but he must also display his understanding of the characters of men, his good heart,
his capacity for feeling, his sense of humour, and his learning (IX, i, 411-414).
Such an elevated view of the novelist might be considered somewhat immodest if we
were to assume that Fielding were speaking in his own voice. Instead, through the
mask of the Narrator-Historian's language of irony, we can in these prefaces catch
brief glimpses of the novelist who shapes his material in order to create an illusion of
reality. Again, in the prefaces to Book X, XIV and XVI, he draws attention to the
introductory essay as the mark of the accomplished novelist. In Book X, he also
admits that "this work may, indeed, be considered as a great creation of our own"
(X, i, 440), implying that the author stands in relation to his created world like God
to the real world, and cautioning his readers not to make a hasty judgment of his
work before they are able to perceive the whole. In his role of the grand man of
letters, the Narrator in Book XI castigates the critics who might pick at his faults, characterizing them as malicious slanderers, like literary executioners or poisoners, in a massive pre-emptive attack which, through its language, connects the critic with the basest and most execrable of criminals.

Having established his position as creator and law-giver of the world which he is describing, the Narrator uses his authority to tease the reader in a discussion of the fruits of virtue, by hinting at the forthcoming "ruin of Sophia" (XV, i, 670), or playing with the idea that Tom is faced with hanging, while he, the Narrator, is faced with the problem of rescuing him without recourse to the supernatural deus ex machina that was available to the ancients and to the story-tellers of Arabia and Persia. Although such a discussion forces the reader to penetrate the Narrator's mask of the historian, he cannot, at a first reading, fathom the mystery that the Narrator has concocted for him, and must trust to the beneficence and skill of the Narrator to extricate Tom from the tangled web of misfortune which he, like Atropos, Clotho and Lachesis, had woven for his characters. Perhaps it is true of this novel, that it cannot be read for the first time, in the sense that the reader cannot appreciate the Narrator's control and planning until he too shares his knowledge of the totality of the work—that the novel, like a poem, exists as a whole rather than as a sequence of events in a dimension of time. It seems as if the Narrator recognizes the reader's difficulty in perceiving the total plan. In the preface to his final Book XVIII, in which he bids farewell to the reader, the Narrator promises that the conclusion of the book "will be plain narrative only" (XVIII, i, 790), but two pages later he again intrudes into the narrative to instruct the reader to turn back to the Upton scene in order to appreciate his narrative skill in keeping Partridge and Mrs. Waters from
meeting, and thus enabling him to use Partridge as the honest (but mistaken) bearer of the news that Tom had committed incest.

Isolated from the rest of the novel which deals with the narrative of the life of Tom Jones, the series of prefaces to Books VIII through XVII reveal Fielding's concern with the problem of creating fiction. Particularly they show his concern with retaining the reader's belief, or at least enabling him to suspend his disbelief, and in these outspoken comments Fielding is letting the Narrator give away the pretence of his pose as a historian. All the Narrator-Historian's protestations about the truth of his history are undercut by the admission that it is all a fiction. While the action of Tom Jones may be perceived variously as reported by an eye-witness of its events, or as by a person whose experience encompasses the facts in the life of Tom Jones, or as a moral pattern developed by the historian, nevertheless the final and most total perspective reveals the writer at work. There is no question that Tom Jones is the most self-conscious of all of Fielding's prose fictions. Although the Narrator of this novel shares many personal qualities and stylistic idiosyncracies with the narrators of Jonathan Wild, Joseph Andrews, and Amélia, to the extent that Arthur Sherbo believes "he is essentially the same man in all four of the novels,"11 his intrusive presence is much more evident in this novel, and only in Tom Jones does he give such extensive consideration to the nature of prose fiction.

The "real" world of Tom Jones, whatever its historical and psychological consistency, we know to be a creation of the novelist—the illusion that we are reading the history of a "real" life exists in the reality of the experience of reading the novel. Fielding himself expressed this view of the relation between fiction and reality in his Preface to the Journal of a Voyage to Lisbon, when he praised the
power of all classic poets whose genius was not to be limited by keeping to historical limits; they achieved much more than a simple representation of life: "They are not indeed so properly said to turn reality into fiction, as fiction into reality."  

Just as the Narrator makes explicit his part in the creation of this illusory world, so too does he characterize many of the readers who are supposed to be experiencing the reading of the novel under his guidance. The direct addresses to the reader, the hints, apologies, directions, and compliments are a constant reminder to the actual reader of the artificial dimension of the novel as a rhetorical structure of discourse between narrator and reader, which Wayne Booth suggests becomes a "running account of growing intimacy between the narrator and the reader, an account with a kind of plot of its own and a separate denouement." Of course, the reader to whom the Narrator bids his affectionate farewell in the preface to the final book (XVIII, i, 790), need not be identified with the modern reader, any more than the Narrator who depicts himself seated "in a little parlour" (XIII, i, 581) is necessarily Fielding himself. Henry Knight Miller makes the distinction between the Implied Reader, a counterpart to his Implied Author (my Narrator), and the actual reader, while Arthur Sherbo distinguishes between "Inside" and "Outside" readers. Fielding's "readers" are generally considered by the Narrator to be somewhat naïve, enabling the Narrator to be ironically tactful in sparing their sensibilities or helpful in giving explanations of events which the real reader will already have seen through. Sometimes the Narrator will jog his Reader's memory (III, i, 97), compliment him on his understanding and good sense (XII, xii, 566-7), or pretend to make the Reader's goodness of heart a condition of his being allowed to read the rest of the story (III, ii, 228). But the dominant tone throughout the novel is that of polite deference with
which the Narrator shows his consideration for the Reader's sensibilities. While this relationship between Narrator and Reader is extremely important in determining the moral tone of the novel and in evaluating the characters in Tom Jones' world, the explicit references to the act of reading the novel serve also to emphasize its fictional dimension. In the preface to Book II the Narrator defines his role as the creator of the "new species of writing," and the role of the readers who are subject to his laws which they "are bound to believe in and to obey" (II, i, 65-66), creating what Henry Knight Miller terms a "rhetorical bond between the Author and the World (in a synecdochic sense)." Miller continues:

The actual reader is expected to participate in as many roles as the author himself does in that rhetorical mimesis (more properly, prosopopeia), wherein he puts on a hundred faces and tongues to create—to represent—a world that interacts in astonishing complexity with the world represented by the Implied Reader. And this literary polity, like other polities, in the ruling myth of the day, is based upon a Contract—the implicit contract that Coleridge would later call willing suspension of disbelief, a contract that, in point of fact, every author and every reader make. For, as Fielding declares, if the Author holds to his part and observes the laws that pertain to his genre, he "is then entitled to some faith from his reader, who is indeed guilty of critical infidelity if he disbelieves him" (VIII, i, 341).

Research into the rhetorical function of the intrusive "reader" is a comparatively recent development in Fielding criticism. Wayne Booth's study of "The Self-Conscious Narrator in Comic Fiction Before Tristram Shandy" stresses the use of the intrusive narrator in the works of Cervantes, Furetière, Scarron, and Marivaux as progenitors of Fielding's narrative technique, and necessarily takes notice of the interplay between the intrusive narrator and the intrusive reader. While Booth finds that all of Fielding's rhetorical "tricks of narrative intrusion" had been exploited by Marivaux in his Pharsamon, ou les Folies Romanesques (1737), he also shows that Fielding's work was typical of a fashion of narrative style during the
1750's, and he claims that "the progression from Fielding through Charlotte Summers and Captain Greenland (and a great many other works) to Tristram Shandy is too continuous to have been accidental." ⑭

The History of Charlotte Summers (1749) ⑮ is a particularly good example of the playful interchange between the narrator and the reader. The most intricate interpolation comes at the end of the fourth chapter in which Lady Bountiful has adopted the attractive parish waif, Charlotte, and taken her home. The anonymous author ends the chapter with a note to the reader: "But now having handed my pretty Parish Girl into a Coach with good Mrs. Margery, and seen them in the Way to the Lady Bountiful's House, I shall permit the Reader to take a Nap, or entertain himself any other way most suitable to his Inclination, only let him remember that he left off at the End of the 4th Chapter" (I, 66-67). Chapter V has the usual synoptic rubric referring to Miss Summers, but the scene is now the reading of the novel, and the character, Miss Arabella Dimple is an intrusive reader, lying in bed and giving instructions to her maid to bring up the "first Volume of the Parish Girl!" that she had been reading in the afternoon (I, 67). Polly returns with the "dull Book," and then the two characters argue about where she should begin to read. Miss Arabella wrongly recalls the narrator's words bidding her to remember that she left off reading at the 6th chapter—in mistake for the 4th—so Polly begins reading Chapter VII and the death of my Lady Fanciful's Squirrel (I, 68). These words are the actual words of Chapter VII, repeated some dozen pages later, but at this point neither the fictional reader nor the real reader has any inkling of the connection between Lady Fanciful and her squirrel and the story of Charlotte. Miss Arabella expresses her bewilderment, and after some discussion Polly finds her way back to the fourth chapter, repeats the
author's conclusion as quoted above, and continues reading the story. Her reading and the real Chapter V now merge into one level of reality, which is again split into separate realities when the narrator breaks off the story with the words: "But the Reader must remember Polly, Miss Dimple's Maid, is reading all this while. She had just come to this Length, when she looks about at her Mistress and finds her fast asleep. . . . its time to put an end to the Chapter, when pretty Miss Dimple sleeps over it." (I, 89). Other intrusive readers such as Miss Pert and Beau Thoughtless are introduced as shallow, inattentive readers who need the Author's particular care in holding their attention, while a Miss Censorious (like Fielding's "curious" or prurient reader) portrays the reader who is too apt to jump to conclusions about the characters, and is rebuked by the Author (I, 25-26).

On the basis of these and other works, Wayne Booth concludes that all of the devices of the intrusive narrator and reader were avoidable to Sterne when he began writing Tristram Shandy. Booth rejects the traditional view of the development of the novel which shows Sterne's work as a devastating parodic satire of the classic plotted novel of Richardson and Fielding. Instead of Tristram Shandy being the complete reversal of an established tradition, Booth suggests that "in one sense, Sterne's development can be considered as merely the reductio ad absurdum of one major tendency in preceding fiction; he has taken a device which in previous writers was subordinate to other ends and made it an end in itself."18 Some modern commentators have continued to see Tristram Shandy as some sort of generic sport, or, in John Traugott's words "an inexplicable anachronism,"19 as if Sterne's work, through some sort of literary time-machine, had jumped through two centuries of development of the form of the novel, in order to link up with our contemporaries who
are still grappling with the problem of capturing the experience of life in a form of prose narrative, and especially those who make the consciousness of this struggle the subject of their work.

Sterne's achievement in developing his self-conscious rhetoric of narration is best illustrated in comparison with an earlier work which bears some resemblance to Tristram Shandy. Thomas Amory's *The Life and Opinions of John Buncle Esquire* (1756) has a title, and a list of *dramatis personae* giving John Buncle as the "supposed autobiographer," suggesting that this work has a similar structure to that of Tristram Shandy. John Buncle also acknowledges his debt to Locke's *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, because this work had taught him to examine his own abilities, and showed "how greatly true knowledge depended on a right meaning of words, and a just significancy of expression" (p. 3), while his outline of his studies in philosophy, cosmography, mathematics, languages and history, seems in retrospect like an embryonic "Tristrapaedia." Buncle's story begins, not with his conception, like Tristram Shandy, but when, as he says, "the midwife wheeled me in" (p. 1), and unlike Tristram, Buncle glosses over his childhood and early education to get quickly to the first of his marital adventures with Miss Noel, who dies on the eve of their wedding. The book is essentially a record of Buncle's quest for a wife and fortune, and traces Buncle's courtship and marriage of seven beautiful heiresses, each of whom dies with suspicious promptitude and regularity—three of smallpox, two of fever, one from drowning, and one from a carriage accident. Interspersed with Buncle's brief but frequent interludes of married life are his "opinions"—long dialogues on many aspects of religion in which Buncle invariably overwhelms his opponents with his arguments based on his principles of "Christian-Deism," and essays upon such diverse
subjects as algebra, calculus, biology, medicine, anatomy, and chemistry. These subjects, like the stories of John Orton or Carola Bennet, or like "The History of Orlando and Belinda," are digressions in accord with the principles of Locke's associationism, and are linked in the narrator's mind with the details of the episode of his life which he is recounting. As pseudo-autobiography which emphasizes courtship and travel, and manages to include a miscellany of stories and learning, John Buncle might seem to be very close to Tristram Shandy in its basic narrative method. There is, however, a fundamental difference between the tone of the two narrators. Where Sterne's language of irony, the colloquy between Tristram and his intrusive readers, and the defeat of Tristram's attempt to tell his life story, all help us to perceive Tristram as an ironic mask of reality, in Amory's work there is no clear separation between the author and his narrator. Instead there is every indication that both author and narrator intend that their story, with its accompanying pious moralizing, is to be taken seriously. Buncle's tone of sententious didacticism is apparent in his opening paragraph:

That the transactions of my life, and the observations and reflections I have made on men and things, by sea and land, in various parts of the world, might not be buried in oblivion, and by length of time be blotted out of the memory of men, it has been my wont, from the days of my youth to this time, to write down memorandums of every thing I thought worth noticing, as men and matters, books and circumstances, came in my way; and in hopes they may be of some service to my fellow-mortals I publish them. Some pleasing and some surprising things the reader will find in them. He will meet with miscellany thoughts upon several subjects. He will read, if he pleases, some tender stories. But all the relations, the thoughts, the observations, are designed for the advancement of valuable learning and to promote whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report. (p. 1)

Buncle maintains this tone from cover to cover, and when his adventures
become outlandish, when his opinions become ludicrous, when his topographical
descriptions become grossly exaggerated, the reader waits in vain for some knowing
hint by which Amory could have lifted his Buncle-mask momentarily to share the
reader's awareness that Buncle's seriousness had become ironically comic. Buncle
turns out to be a very odd character, but there is no indication that his creator
recognizes him as such, and the reader is left with the uneasy suspicion that John
Buncle is really the life of Thomas Amory. The dates of some of the events of the
book, his reference to his previous publication, Memoirs containing the Lives of
several Ladies of Great Britain (1755), his acquaintance with Edmund Curll the
bookseller, and his directions to the reader to read the details of his voyage around
the world in The Voyages and Travels of Dr. Lorimer, all suggest the sort of
corroborative detail that has the ring of truth. Not only is John Buncle unconscious
of some of the humorous effects of his narrative, but so, too, is his creator; the two
become identified just as Defoe may be identified with his fictional autobiographers.

John Buncle presents an unusual case because the mixture of anecdote and
learning which constitute its narrative style seem to belong to the tradition of
intrusive narrators as in Fielding and Sterne, but because the novel lacks self-
consciousness or the self-display of the novelist at work, the work becomes a
throwback to the pseudo-documentary works of Defoe and Richardson. The difference
between John Buncle and Tristram Shandy is essentially the difference between the
novel as the supposedly true imitation of actual life, and the self-conscious novel
as a display of artifice. Where Amory purports to give the unvarnished details
of Buncle's, and perhaps his own, life, Sterne allows the reader to perceive his
control and manipulation of the Tristram who is supposed to be writing his
autobiography. E.A. Baker, in discussing the unconscious humour of John Buncle, comes close to a description of the plan of Tristram Shandy:

The Life of John Buncle has many of the same merits as the life of Samuel Pepys, not the least of which is the unconscious humour of the book. Buncle himself is utterly devoid of a sense of humour; his heavy seriousness is something unconscionable. But I doubt if there be a more egregious example in literature of the unintentionally comic. The entire plan, or no-plan, of the book, with its aimless narrative and irrelevant digressions (the story seems to exist for the sake of the digressions) is so absurd, and the idea is so comic of the man going out to try his fortune in the world, "not like the Chevalier La Mancha, in hopes of conquering a kingdom, or marrying some great Princess, but to see if I could find another good country girl for a wife, and get a little more money; as they were the only two things united, that could secure me from melancholy, and confer real happiness." (p. vi)

Buncle is not the only precursor of Tristram Shandy. While Mrs. Piozzl claimed that in The Life and Memoirs of Mr. Ephraim Tristram Bates, Commonly Called Corporal Bates, a Broken-Hearted Soldier (1756) she had found "the very Novel from which Sterne took his first Idea," Wayne Booth lists many other works featuring self-conscious narrators, and gives special attention to John Dunton's Voyage Round the World; or, a Pocket-Library (1691) and The Life and Opinions of Bertram Montfichet, Esq. (1761) because they typify the tradition which combines memoirs, narrative, and discourse into a work like Amory's or Sterne's. Buncle, however, is instructive because its peculiar collage of a life-history intermingled with learned essays, religious debates, prayers and meditations, sexual adventures and odd characters, makes it the sort of book that Tristram was trying to write.

Moreover, Buncle avows a melancholy attitude to life, and at the same time seems to invite a certain prurience in his attention to sexual matters, just as Tristram does. Above all, both Buncle and Tristram are fictional characters who, for the edification of the readers, are trying to capture the experience of their lives in print.
More important than their similarities is the fundamental difference in the effect that each of these novels achieves. Unlike the single level of consciousness present in John Buncle which gives rise to its unconscious humour, Tristram Shandy gives us two levels of self-consciousness. In the explicit, "surface" mode of the narrative we see Tristram struggling with the problems of authorship, sharing with his acknowledged readers his plan, or "no-plan," of writing, giving the sources of his information, shifting from one time-plane to another, jumping from one geographical location to another, and teasing the prurient expectations of his supposed readers by playing with the semantics of double entendre. In the course of this monologue he manages to trace the chain of events which leads from a wound suffered on the battlefield in the Netherlands to his own wounded manhood, and from the pedantic learning of the middle ages to the misfortunes of his birth and christening. Yet at the same time we realize that Tristram Shandy is the mask of the real author, Laurence Sterne, who has given Tristram the impossible, self-defeating task of writing his autobiography. All of the action of the novel takes place within the theatre of Tristram's mind; it is the action of a would-be novelist seeking to discover the truth in memories of his own experience. Tristram can explain his wayward, digressional method of narrative with reference to Locke's associationism, but we realize that these supposedly spontaneous flights from straightforward narrative are really the blocks that the real author has created in order to defeat Tristram's expectations of telling his life-story.

In the "classic" form of autobiography or in the novel as autobiography, the centre of the action, as in John Buncle, is invariably occupied by the writer's memories of himself. The dominant image is the character of the writer in earlier.
times, presented through descriptions of his appearance, his thoughts, his actions or achievements, and his dealings with other people. Although Tristram, as the narrator, is present in every scene, through eight of the nine volumes he scarcely appears as an actor; in fact, if we ignore his "presence" as the ovum at the moment of conception, as the baby in the process of birth, and as a five-year old urinating out of the window, we can say that the young Tristram never appears in his Life. Volume VII, of course, is concerned with the older Tristram on tour through France, and in this volume the point of view of the narrator shifts with his traveller. At no point in any of the other eight volumes does the point of view shift to the young Tristram. There is no "I did this" or "I heard that." Even the celebrated incident of Uncle Toby and the fly which happened when "I was but ten years old" (II, xii, 113) need not necessarily have been remarked by the young Tristram, although one might guess that he had been present at the dinner table as the "lesson of universal goodwill then taught" stays with him through his life. Instead, the young Tristram, is no more than a fixed point in time, or rather the three fixed points of his conception, his birth, and his accidental circumcision, being the focal points linking all of the characters and incidents of the Shandean world. There are, of course, remarkably few scenes in which the young Tristram can even be presumed to have been present. The scene of the circumcision (V, xvii, 376) gives practically no attention to the unfortunate boy's responses. The incident is recounted in retrospect from the point of view of Tristram the narrator, on "this day (August the 10th, 1761)," who disclaims the seriousness of what had happened thirty-eight years previously. Tristram tells of the chamber-maid's actions and quotes her words to the five-year old Tristram, but there is nothing from the boy's point of view, no memory of the experience.
Instead, with the falling of the sash, the narrator follows the distraught Susannah and her flight to uncle Toby's house.

While it is true that in many respects *Tristram Shandy* owes much to the eighteenth-century development of the art of biography—in its apparent devotion to the truth, its frankness, its citation of sources, its delight in oddity, and as Clarence Tracy points out, in its narrating of amusing and instructive anecdotes—yet as a biography, it is without a subject. The hero disappears. He begins as an ovum about to be fertilized by the homunculus, but that is the last we see of him, until he reappears as the mature novelist sitting in his study. The major events of his life—his birth and circumcision—tell us not about his features, but his lack of them. Instead of growing into a conscious perception of the world and of his own identity, as Stephen does in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, Tristram begins as a non-entity and recedes from our view, because so much of the novel's action concerns events which happen before his conception.

Because the joke is sustained for nine volumes, some ironic amusement is derived from this reversal of the reader's expectations, and as the world's longest shaggy-dog story, *Tristram Shandy* merits Yorick's final encomium on the finest cock-and-bull story he has ever heard. The most important effect, however, is that Sterne has disturbed the traditional equilibrium of the novel, diverting the focus of the reader's attention from the hero to the narrator. As the hero disappears into the infinite series of causes which have moulded his life, so the novel becomes completely taken up by the consciousness of the forty-three year old Tristram who sits in his study writing his memoirs. The "Life" of the title-page is displaced by his "Opinions."

By dislocating the novel's usual centre of gravity in the hero, and changing it to the
diffuse levity of the narrator, Sterne forces the reader to share the novelist's self-consciousness. By creating the figure of Tristram as the novelist at work, Sterne constantly shocks the reader into a reconsideration of the relationship between his art and the illusion of life which it creates. The "oddity" of Tristram Shandy, which has so often been regarded as a barrier between the reader and the life of the Shandy family, is the rhetorical device for "making strange" his illusion of life by drawing attention to the techniques of his art, and exploring the possibilities of his medium.

This function of Sterne's rhetoric has received increasing attention from modern critics, especially in those comparative studies which link Sterne with such twentieth-century mannerists as Gide, Joyce, and Mann. That Sterne's Tristram Shandy is a novel about the writing of a novel is well established, and we are also fully aware of the difference between Aristotelian and Longinian views of art—between the novel as a finished product and the novel like Sterne's which is forever in the process of being written. There is no doubt that the hero of the novel is the figure of Tristram-the-novelist in his struggle to tell the story of his life, and if he is doomed to failure in this regard—if all the wealth of memories and experiences which spring to his mind take him ever further from his goal—it is no tragedy, because unwittingly in failing to tell the reader of his own life he has managed to re-create the life of the members of the Shandy household. The world, or Kosmos, created in this novel has "the form of a mind," because its events are linked, not by chronological sequence, but by the random associations of Tristram's consciousness. Tristram's problem is to translate his holistic view of this fictional "reality" into the linear, verbal structure of a novel published in annual instalments.
Sterne's manipulation of time is one of the keys (or as Tristram would say "handles") to the novel's self-consciousness. The novel is founded on the "real" time of writing—the historical moments which find the author in the process of composing his manuscript. Tristram pictures himself as a writer in his study; he gives what might well be the actual historical dates when Sterne was engaged in his work—"March 9, 1759" (I, xviii, 44), "March 26, 1759" (I, xxi, 64), "this day (August the 10th, 1761)" (V, xvii, 376), "this 12th day of August, 1766" (IX, i, 600). A few corroborative details add to the sense of reality, bolstering the reader's belief that this writing springs from the moment of the novel's genesis, when it first takes shape as words on paper in the act of composition. It is a rainy day, the time is between nine and ten in the morning, the writer is wearing a purple jerkin and yellow slippers, but no wig or cap, he is sitting in a cane chair with "two knobs on the top of the back of it,—they are fasten'd on, you see, with two pegs stuck slightly into two gimlet holes" (III, xx, 200)—or the door with the faulty hinge is ajar, just as it was on the day he is describing when his mother overheard a conversation between his father and uncle (V, vi, 358), and the single image serves to unite the two realities of the writer's past and present. The reader infers that the mature Tristram, the author, is working in the same setting that forms the scenes of his childhood.

Even the artifacts of the author's trade become absorbed into his fiction. The pen and ink which he mentions are "real" because the reader knows that they are a necessary part of the process by which the author's thoughts are realized in print. When Tristram writes about drawing a straight line with "a writing-master's ruler, (borrowed for that purpose)" (VI, xl, 474), the very line appears on the printed
page to "prove" the truth of his words. When Tristram wishes to illustrate his father's consternation on hearing of the misnaming of the infant Tristram, he makes a parallel with his own situation as a writer: "It is not half an hour ago, when (in the great hurry and precipitation of a poor devil's writing for daily bread) I threw a fair sheet, which I had just finished, and carefully wrote out, slap into the fire, instead of the foul one" (IV, xvii, 292-3). The credibility of his father's reactions in the fictional past seems to be corroborated by the author's report of his own actions in response to a writer's mishap. If the reader might doubt the truth of the report of his father's actions forty-two years previously, how could he possibly doubt the truth of what had just happened in the process of writing a mere half-hour ago? Tristram's own actions as a writer in distress serve as a comparison to help the reader understand how his father accepted the bad news, when he writes: "Instantly I snatch'd off my wig, and threw it perpendicularly, with all imaginable violence, up to the top of the room—indeed I caught it as it fell—but there was an end of the matter . . ." (IV, xvii, 293).

From Tristram-the-writer's point of view, his work exists as a verbal structure written in ink upon paper, the words occasionally augmented by lines or squiggles to amplify their meaning. But within the text there is also recognition that for the reader the work exists as a printed book to be deciphered and understood. The black pages and the marbled page (I, 33-34, III, 227-228) are more than just Shandean jokes on the reader, because they draw the reader's attention to the artifact of the book as an object which exists in present reality. And when Tristram refers to these pages in his text, the reader has before him the real objects as evidence which seems to verify the truth of Tristram's words:
Read, read, read, read, my unlearned reader!—or by the
knowledge of the great saint Paraleipomenon—I tell you before-hand,
you had better throw down the book at once, for without much reading,
by which your reverence knows, I mean much knowledge, you will no
more be able to penetrate the moral of the next marbled page (motley
emblem of my work!) than the world with all its sagacity has been
able to unravel the many opinions, transactions and truths which still
lie mystically hid under the dark veil of the black one. (III, xxxvi, 226)

The physical text which exists in the reader's hand also becomes a part of
the fictional action of the novel when Tristram refers to the missing Chapter 24,
"which I was obliged to tear out" (IV, xxv, 315), or the blank pages (VI, xxxviii,
470-1) which Tristram leaves for the reader to use for his own description of the
widow Wadman, or the asterisks which are so helpful to him in marking a hiatus
(VI, xxxiii, 463). Perhaps the trick that is most quintessential to the Shandean
manner is Tristram's leaving of Chapters xviii and xix of Volume IX blank, jumping,
in his story of Uncle Toby's courtship, from the knock at the door to Toby's promise
that Mrs. Wadman would see the very place where he was wounded. Having
reached the climax promised for so long, Tristram now begins another lengthy
digression including his Invocation and the story of Maria, before returning to his
story in Chapter xxv. Here he includes the missing Chapters xviii and xix,
suitably headed in Gothic print, to set the scene for the anti-climax of his shaggy
dog story. Tristram's trick seems to justify his dislocation of the normal order of
events, as if the transposition were merely a writer's whim, yet at the same time the
reader is aware that the displaced chapters are part of Tristram's delaying tactics,
and that the actual sequence in the text of Chapters xxv, xviii, xix, xxvi is quite
within the normal order of Tristram's narrative. The apparently dislocated text
serves as a reminder that all of the events of the story of Uncle Toby exist in the
eternal present of Tristram's consciousness, and that there is no logical necessity for
one moment to precede another.

Just as the time-dimension of the writing of the work is marked by the historical dates, so does Sterne also create another time-dimension for the reader in the act of reading the novel, by which the reader re-creates both the story of the Shandy family, and the author's struggle to tell that story. Tristram begins his eighth chapter of the second volume with the words: "It is about an hour and a half's tolerable good reading since my uncle Toby rung the bell" (II, viii, 103), and immediately sets up a trap for both the hypercritical and unwary reader. At first Tristram seems to be suggesting that he is preserving the unity of reading-time and narrative-time equating the time taken to read of Uncle Toby's and Walter Shandy's discussion with the time that Obadiah would need to ride eight miles and back to fetch Dr. Slop. Then Tristram anticipates the objection of his hypercritic, who would complain that my Uncle Toby had rung the bell only four pages before. (Actually, it is not clear in the narrative that he did ring the bell. Walter Shandy would more likely have rung it, or Obadiah could have appeared on the scene without being summoned.) If the hypercritic objects that only two minutes thirteen and three-fifths seconds have elapsed since he read about that non-event, then Tristram's defense is the poetic licence of the writer who has the power to move his characters at will. But Tristram has no need for such an excuse because Obadiah runs into Dr. Slop outside the stable-yard, and is able to return to the house with him within the limits of actual reading-time. Thus Sterne demonstrates first the power of the writer to lull his reader's suspicions with the breezy "an hour and a half's tolerable good reading," seemingly letting himself be caught out by his hypercritic, and then re-shaping his narrative to nullify the critic's carping. Here
Sterne is playing with a false correlation between two of the time-dimensions of his novel, and if the reading-time is verifiable by reference to the reader's stop-watch, the trick also creates a sense of objective reality about the time-duration of Tristram's historical past, as if Tristram were adhering in his narration to a pre-existent clock time, instead of using the artistic licence of the writer of fiction.

Reading-time, writing-time, and historical time are only three of the time-dimensions of *Tristram Shandy*. The novel is a collage of time present, time past, and time future, both in the history of the Shandy family, and in the history of Tristram's literary composition. The two worlds of Shandy Hall and the writer's study constantly meld with each other in the continuum of Tristram's consciousness. From the tangled skein of Tristram's memories, Sterne pulls out loose threads of the past and present. He pulls at one loose end until it tightens in a knot, and then takes up another thread of the narrative. All of these threads are connected with each other, and together they constitute Tristram's sense of self, reminding us, because of Tristram's fictitious nature, of Hume's dictum: "The identity, which we ascribe to the mind of man, is only a fictitious one."

While the references to the writer at work on his manuscript and to the reader with the printed text in his hand can refer to objective realities outside the novel's fictitious world, nevertheless the writer-reader relationship is also part of Tristram's rhetoric of fiction. The novel's consciousness of its author and its reader gives rise to two levels of illusion.

At one level the writer appears to be taking the reader into his confidence by explaining his haphazard, impromptu methods of composition. When Tristram explains his Shandean writing, his digressive-progressive manner of telling a story,
his beginning with one sentence and trusting to Almighty God for the next, or
describes his work as a machine or hobby horse—when he considers alternative ways
of telling his story, of keeping to a straight line, of the contrary motions in his
work, of his ungovernable pen—he is creating the illusion that the whole book has
sprung spontaneously onto the paper in the act of writing. Such a view is belied
by the careful substructure of historical chronology which Theodore Baird's study
made clear, but the frequency of these comments, and the regular references to the
beginning and ending of chapters all seem to involve the reader in the moment of
creation when the writer is choosing how to continue his narrative, and together
they constitute an important aspect of Sterne's rhetoric of fiction. 31

The second level of illusion emerges almost imperceptibly from the first
through the rhetoric of Sterne's conversational or "conversationalistic" style. 32
Tristram refers explicitly to this illusion as he nears the end of his first instalment:
"Writing, when properly managed, (as you may be sure I think mine is) is but a
different name for conversation" (II, xi, 108), suggesting that the words on the page
flow from his pen with the same spontaneity and the same consideration for the
listener as the words spoken in polite conversation. The pretence that the writer
is speaking to the reader-listener is sustained throughout all nine volumes by the
constant direct addresses to his imaginary audience in a great variety of
personages: not only does he use "sir" and "madam" with great frequency, but the
implied reader-listener may also be "my Lord," "your worship," "your reverences,"
"dear girl," "Jenny," "gentle reader," "Sir Critick," "the hypercritic," "yon
gentry with the grey beards," "my dear Garrick," or "my brethren," although he
disclaims any pretension to be writing for the serious people identified by "great
wigs or long beards" (III, xx, 202). The effect of conversation is heightened by the imaginary presence of the listener who is enjoined to shut the door, or who, in the person of his sentimental mistress Jenny, is twisting a lock of the author's greying hair (IX, ix, 610-611). While there are a great many occasions in the text where Tristram expresses his solicitude for the reader, or requests the aid of his reader's imagination in creating his scene, at some points the listener-reader replies directly to the author, or interjects his or her own comments:

--How could you, Madam, be so inattentive in reading the last chapter? I told you in it, That my mother was not a papist.--Papist! You told me no such thing, Sir. Madam, I beg leave to repeat it over again, That I told you as plain, at least, as words, by direct inference, could tell you such a thing. --Then, Sir, I must have miss'd a page. --No, Madam, --you have not miss'd a word. --Then I was asleep, Sir. --My pride, Madam, cannot allow you that refuge. --Then, I declare, I know nothing at all about the matter. --That, Madam, is the very fault I lay to your charge; and as a punishment for it, I do insist upon it, that you immediately turn back, that is, as soon as you get to the next full stop, and read the whole chapter over again. (I, xx, 56)

The dialogue in this passage suggests the face-to-face interaction between the author and reader in speech, but of course Madam is also a reader, albeit a careless one, and so the two levels of illusion merge into each other. Madam seems to be present during the composition of the text, because she can voice her perplexities, her words at the same moment becoming part of the text which she is to re-read. Yet Sterne's playfulness in his handling of these two illusions of reality also serves a rhetorical function. Madam is supposed to find a hint in the preceding chapter suggesting that Tristram's mother was not a papist. It is unlikely that any reader would have been more perspicacious than Madam, but the device enables Tristram to draw attention to his subtle hint, and when in the next paragraph he welcomes Madam back into the story--"But here comes my fair Lady. Have you read
over again the chapter, Madam, as I desired you?" (I, xx, 57)—he has gained the reader's attention and has the opportunity to expound on the practice of christening before birth.

Sterne's conversationalistic style has naturally received a great deal of attention because its idiosyncracies signal the presence of the eccentric man of humour in the character of Tristram the author. All written language is essentially derived from speech, especially that poetry which seeks an aural appeal in its use of rhyme, alliteration, assonance, onomatopoeia, and patterns of rhythm. Yet Sterne's style becomes anti-literary in that he deliberately breaks the normal syntactical patterns of formal language in order to create the illusion that the words on the page spring unadorned and unregulated from the free flow of speech. The most obvious signal that Sterne uses to suggest that his writing (or the printed text) is meant to imitate speech is the multitude of dashes of varying lengths which spatter the page. In some cases these provide breaks between syntactical units, and they are quite often used in conjunction with the normal punctuation, but more often the dash serves a special purpose in signalling a break in the continuity of the ideas, when Tristram's train of thought switches abruptly to another track, or when an imaginary reader interrupts. All of these characteristics can be seen in this typical Shandean passage:

--No doubt, Sir--there is a whole chapter wanting here--and a chasm of ten pages made in the book by it--but the book-binder is neither a fool, or a knave, or a puppy--nor is the book a jot more imperfect, (at least upon that score)--but, on the contrary, the book is more perfect and complete by wanting the chapter, than having it, as I shall demonstrate to your reverences in this manner--I question first by the bye, whether the same experiments might not be made as successfully upon sundry other chapters--but there is no end, an' please your reverences, in trying experiments upon chapters--we have had enough of it--So there's an end of that matter. (IV, xxv, 313)

The reader is forced to notice that, in his text, Chap. xxiii is followed by
Chap. xxv, and p. 302 by p. 313; Tristram seems to be answering the objections of an indignant reader. Of the ten dashes that occur in these ten lines, four could be omitted altogether without obscuring the sense, four could be replaced by commas, and three by periods. With normal punctuation restored, the passage would then read like straightforward prose because the syntactical patterns are all completed, unlike the broken and disjointed patterns seen in transcripts of actual speech. Sterne's dashes are essentially a visual effect to add to the illusion of speech which is created mainly by his address to the reader—in this case he uses "Sir" and "as I shall demonstrate to your reverences"—and by the inclusion of such colloquialisms as "by the bye" and "an' please your reverences." Otherwise a great deal of Sterne's conversationalistic prose has the structure, as Hnatko shows, of "carefully and deliberately composed prose." Sterne's dash also replaces the quotation marks that would normally be used to indicate an intrusive speaker, or the speech of a character in fiction. In the above passage the last two dashes set off the sentence: "we have had enough of it." These words could be spoken by the "reverences" whom Tristram addresses, and this illusion of a spoken interruption breaking a speaker's flow is a common device which Sterne uses to change from one topic to another.

As a writer, Tristram is labouring under what seems to be two insuperable difficulties. First he has to translate words from an aural to a visual medium, and in order to create the illusion of conversation he uses the limited resources of typographical art to suggest the tone of voice, the facial expressions, the physical gestures, and even the knowing look, which is a part of spoken language. But words themselves, as Tristram had learned from Locke, are untrustworthy devices, whether in speech or print. Words, rather than painted pictures, or projected
patterns of light, or electronic images, or patterns of sound and posture, or the solid shape of stone, are the fundamental medium of the novel, both for Tristram whose narrative is supposed to be a true recollection of his experience, and for Sterne whose narrative is a fictional construction of Tristram's attempt to portray his life. Thus the final aspect of the novel's self-consciousness is its concern, both in its rhetoric and in its represented actions, with the problem of communication through written language.

The difficulties experienced by the fictional characters have been well documented by Sigurd Burckhardt in his essay "Tristram Shandy's Law of Gravity." Sterne uses the inherent ambiguity of such words as "train," "bridge," or "conceive" to show the lack of verbal communication between his characters. But if words are inadequate to convey accurate meanings, gesture and artifact may succeed: Uncle Toby can draw maps and build models, and Corporal Trim can drop his hat on the ground or wave his stick through the air. So too can Tristram include black, blank, and marbled pages in his book, and draw straight and squiggly lines to illustrate movements that are beyond the capability of words. If Walter Shandy gets carried away by his flow of words, Uncle Toby's only reply is to whistle "Lillabullero."

In Tristram Shandy words can even be dangerous. Walter Shandy decides that the young Tristram must be taught "to conjugate every word in the dictionary, backwards, and forwards the same way" (VI, ii, 409) to create an infinite series of hypotheses. "—The force of this engine, added my father, is incredible, in opening a child's head." But "this engine," to Uncle Toby, only suggests Dr. Slop's screw-threaded, iron forceps which he might use to deliver a baby, and he continues his brother's statement with the idea that the machine is enough "to burst it [the baby's
head] into a thousand splinters." The metaphorical information explosion of my father's system of education becomes a horrifying reality in the physical effects of Slop's instrument.

Sterne demonstrates in many ways how words can suggest different lines of thought in different people, and he plays with the idea that the writer must be especially careful that his words do not suggest obscene meanings to the prurient reader. Just as the Abbess of Andouillets and Margarita split up the words "bouger" and "fouter" in order to urge their mules forward (VII, xxv, 510), so Tristram gives his reader an elaborate warning against misinterpreting his use of the word "nose" (III, xxxi, 218). Of course, such a warning, like the Abbess's plan, serves only to emphasize the possible ambiguities of words. Both in the fictional characters he creates and in his discourse with the reader, Tristram draws attention to the existence of words as separate realities which slip out of the author's and the characters' control.

At one point in the novel both author and character stumble over the same word on one of those occasions when Sterne merges two levels of reality into one, as he does with the time-dimension and with his implied audience. My uncle Toby and my father are discussing Mrs. Shandy's aversion to having Dr. Slop attend her lying-in. My Uncle Toby attributes her reluctance to modesty, and suggests that she "does not care to let a man come so near her * * *" (II, vi, 100). Sterne's asterisks (another of his favourite typographical tricks) tempt the reader to make his own completion, but Tristram the narrator teases his readers by suggesting that the suppression of the word could be the result of either his uncle's bashfulness, his father's interruption by snapping his tobacco-pipe, or his own trick of writing style,
and the figure of speech jumps backwards and forwards between the time of Tristram's writing in his study, and the time-dimension of forty-one years earlier. The two fictional worlds become united by the writer's play on words. Tristram makes this play explicit by repeating Uncle Toby's sentence, and then considering the choices that the writer could have made: "Make this dash, --'tis an Aposiopesis.--Take the dash away, and write Backside, --'tis Bawdy.--Scratch Backside out, and put Cover'd-way in, --'tis a Metaphor;--and, I dare say, as fortification ran so much in my uncle Toby's head, that if he had been left to have added one word to the sentence, --that word was it" (II, vi, 100-1).

The use of language in Tristram Shandy so frequently comes to the fore of the reader's consciousness that it has been remarked that language is not only the medium but also one of the characters of this novel. In his discussion of the language of the novel Henri Fluchère emphasizes Sterne's "verbal proliferation" in his Rabelaisian delight in juggling with words. Sterne's "baroque catalogues" not only ridicule the learned inventories beloved by Walter Shandy, but also draw attention to the wealth of synonyms which spin off from a concept without in any way defining it. Sterne is continually demonstrating the opaqueness of language as a medium interposed between the writer's and the reader's conceptions of the fictional world, and if he seems to be proving the impossibility of communication on the one hand, on the other he is paradoxically showing how Tristram's search to understand his past brings alive the personalities and sensibilities of his fictional characters.

This is the paradox of the artist who disturbs expectations based on a particular convention by extending his medium to its limits. He dislocates the equilibrium of
the normal conventions, asserts the independence of his art from life, and yet still manages to create the illusion of life. Tristram has often been considered to be a literary clown, as if Tristram the writer had deliberately adopted the mask of white paint and motley. It is the clown's eternal tragedy to tackle hopeless tasks at which he is obviously doomed to failure, yet in his futile attempts the clown demonstrates his own virtuosity as a performer. He proves that acrobatic pratfalls demand as much skill as the polished gyrations of the accomplished gymnast. As an autobiographer Tristram suffers a clown's defeat. His progress in writing is a regression in biography; every day that he writes, every page that he completes, takes him further away from the accomplishment of his goal. The ultimate irony of the novel is that in his defeat as an autobiographer, Tristram becomes a success as a novelist in telling the story of the Shandy household.

The same sort of ironic success is enjoyed by Trim in his attempts to tell "The Story of the King of Bohemia and his Seven Castles," except that whereas Tristram starts with his own life story and ends with a fictional reconstruction, Trim sets out to create a fictional story, but ends by telling of his own love affair with the Béguine. His frustration in trying to tell the Bohemian story, which is admittedlly untrue (VIII, xix, 558-9), is the result of my uncle Toby's interruptions as he tries to help Trim achieve an air of credibility in fiction. First, Trim, having put on his Montero-cap, must observe that every word of his fiction is true, and then ensues a discussion of what year Trim should choose for his story. The exasperated Trim chooses 1712, to which Toby objects, partly because the year has for him unpleasant associations, but also because if Trim wishes to include a giant in his story, then it would be better to locate the story "some seven or eight hundred years
out of harm's way, both of criticks and other people" (VIII, xix, 562). The resulting discussion of the relative merits of geography and chronology is a familiar Shandean form of digression threatening to postpone Trim's story for ever, until Trim manages to divert Toby's train of thought with a comparison between Chinese fortifications and his fictional Bohemian castles. Resuming his story Trim betrays his impatience by making his king "The unfortunate King of Bohemia" (VIII, xix, 566), and then must hastily improvise a reason for his choice of word. The last straw is Trim's use of the word "happening," with its suggestion of fortuitous chance (in this case at the whim of the story-teller), because although Uncle Toby approves this word for a fiction, the thoughts of both Trim and Toby are diverted to the events of "real" life in which events seem to have a pattern of predestination. When Trim starts describing the rout of his regiment at Landen, Uncle Toby becomes completely entrhalled with the "reality" of Trim's story, and his imagination enables him to become a witness to its events: "Gallant mortal! cried my uncle Toby, caught up with enthusiasm--this moment, now that all is lost, I see him galloping across me, corporal, to the left, to bring up the remains of the English horse along with him to support the right, and tear the laurel from Luxembourg's brows, if yet 'tis possible--I see him with the knot of his scarfe just shot off, infusing fresh spiirits into poor Galway's regiment... ..." (VIII, xix, 568). Uncle Toby's response is a dramatization of the imaginative contribution that Tristram demands from his implied readers in order to make his story seem real, and also to fill in the salacious details in the hiatus where the delicacy of the story-teller allows him only a line of asterisks. 38

Trim's story of his love affair, which displaces his story of the King of Bohemia, like Fielding's interpolated tales, provides a model in miniature of the
process of story-telling exemplified in the total work. The story illustrates narrative as a conversation between Trim and my uncle Toby, with its secret audience of Mrs. Wadman hidden in the arbour. In Trim's story the "unreality" of the fictional mode where he is patently inventing the details gives way to the "reality" of the mnemonic mode in which he appears to be recounting the story abstracted from his past experience, as if his words were controlled by its correlation with an objective truth.

While the novel projects many different levels of illusory reality, they are all part of the consciousness of Tristram the writer. Whatever claims Tristram might make for the truth of his story—he may print such documentary evidence as his mother's marriage settlement (I, xv, 38-40), or Yorick's sermon (II, xvii, 125-142), or he can refer to his father's pocketbook (I, iv, 9) and the bundle of original papers (VIII, xvii, 556-7)—nevertheless, the credibility of the story depends on our faith in the truthfulness of the narrator. Tristram's honesty as a writer has paradoxically a two-fold effect. On the one hand he disarms our suspicion by his frankness, enabling us to suspend our disbelief in the art of fiction. On the other hand, he draws attention to his virtuosity in the art of fiction by deliberately disturbing the conventions of narrative. His agility in jumping from one time-dimension to another, his discourse with the implied readers, his emphasis on his work as a printed text, and his demonstration of the ambiguity and misunderstanding in the use of the same verbal language which is the medium of his art, are all part of the novel's self-consciousness. Viktor Shklovsky, in a pioneering study of the formalism of the novel, used Tristram Shandy "as an illustration of the general laws of novelistic form," because of the many ways Sterne can be seen to be "laying bare" his literary devices.
Shklovsky emphasizes Sterne's dislocation and transposition of the normal order of narrative, his time-shifts, his digressions, his intrusions and interruptions, the stylistic of Sterne's descriptions of postures, the recurrent motifs, the "making strange" of erotic and sentimental episodes, and the reversed plot-structure in which the main plot of Tristram's life is overwhelmed by Tristram's preoccupation with his "sub-plots." Because Sterne is the artist who "shows us the aesthetic laws which lie behind . . . his compositional devices," Shklovsky claims that "Tristram Shandy is the most typical novel of world literature." 40

Sterne's display of technique has the effect of keeping the reader continually aware of his experience of the novel as the reading of a text. The reader is not allowed to lose himself unconsciously within any particular time-dimension because Sterne's sudden shifts will jolt him into awareness. Sterne plays with literary time in his suspension of the fictional story during his digressions. His "freeze-action," which leaves a character poised on a stair or listening outside a door, is like Cervantes' ending of Chapter 8 of Don Quixote, Part I, the climax of the original Part I, which leaves "the battle in mid-air" when Don Quixote stands ready to fight with the Biscayan. Sterne's virtuosity demands an equivalent agility on the part of the reader who must follow his "time-tripping" in his literary time-machine to understand the Tristram who can simultaneously experience different visits to Auxerre while sitting in the handsome pavilion at Toulouse and "rhapsodizing all these affairs" (VIII, xviii, 516).

Sterne's perspectivism balances the writing of the novel against the created illusion of life in the actions of his characters. The reader is a witness to the creative act, when experience is recaptured and given shape and meaning in the process of
being composed through language. The past history of the Shandy family is manifested in the present consciousness of Tristram. Ultimately we realize that through the recapitulation of his memories, Tristram reveals his own personality. The "Life" and the "Opinions" of the title-page are not separate entities; instead, through the articulation of his opinions, Tristram creates his life, establishing his identity as a bundle of associated ideas and memories. In the perspective of Tristram Shandy the focal point of the entire work is the image of the novelist in the process of writing the novel.
NOTES


3 Robert M. Jordan, in "The Limits of Illusion: Faulkner, Fielding, and Chaucer," Criticism, 2 (1960), 278-305, suggests that Fielding's narrator is "an amiable simpleton" who is "deliberately created by the author and endowed with qualities of mind and personality directly antithetical to his own." While this view is justified by the performance of the narrator in the opening chapters, nevertheless Professor Jordan makes no allowance for the development of the narrator throughout the novel.


6 Coley, p. 13.

7 "Tom Jones," in Kenyon Review, 20 (1958), 233. Somerset Maugham represents an even more extreme view. In his introduction to his edition of Tom Jones (Philadelphia, 1948) he complains about the presence of the author as an essayist who interferes with the telling of the story:

Some critics have greatly admired them [the prefatory chapters to each book] and have looked upon them as adding to the excellence of the book. I can only suppose that is because they were not interested in the novel as a novel. An essayist takes a subject and discusses it. If his subject is new to you, he may tell you something that you didn't know before, but new subjects are hard to find and in general he expects to interest you by his own attitude and the characteristic way he regards things. That is to say he expects to interest you in himself. But that is the last thing you are prepared to do when you read a novel. You don’t care a row of pins about the author; he is there to tell you a story and introduce to you a group of characters. Because it has been my business I have read the essays with which Fielding introduced the various books, but, although I would not deny their merit, I have read them with impatience. The reader of a novel should want to know what happens next to the characters in whom the author has interested him and if he doesn’t there is no reason for him to read the novel at all.
For the novel, I can never repeat too often, is not to be looked upon as a medium of instruction or edification, but as a source of intelligent entertainment. (pp. xxiv-xxv)

8 The Rhetoric of Fiction, pp. 72, 217.

9 Ibid., p. 217. Many readers regard the Narrator, or the implied author, as the true historical voice of Henry Fielding, a view supported by the Narrator's admitting that under the "fictitious name of Sophia" he writes of the real qualities of his "Charlotte" (XIII, i, 581). Although there are undoubted similarities between the historical personage and the dramatized novelist, the author's voice varies and is definitely not the same in all of his novels. Wayne Booth quotes two contemporary writers who support the "separatist" viewpoint. Kathleen Tillotson uses the term "second self" in a discussion of George Eliot's narrative voice, while Jessamyn West writes: "Writing is a way of playing parts, of trying on masks, of assuming roles, not for fun, but out of a desperate need, not for the self's sake, but for the writing's sake." See "The Slave Cast Out," in The Living Novel, ed. Granville Hicks (New York, 1957), p. 202, quoted by Booth, p. 71n.

10 Tony Richardson's film of Tom Jones achieved a cinematic equivalent of this literary effect by showing the opening scenes of the foundling Tom's discovery in Allworthy's bed as a sequence from the silent-film era, imitating the grainy black and white pictures, framed captions, and jerky actions of an early Chaplin comedy. The display of primitive film technique emphasizes the film as a creation of the film director by making the audience conscious of the film as a medium of illusion. After the credit-titles the film reverts to a normal, naturalistic colour presentation which allows the audience to become immersed in the fictional world of Tom Jones from which it is disturbed only by the off-screen voice of the Narrator, and by a freeze-action. See Tom Jones: A Film Script by John Osborne, ed. Robert Hughes (New York, 1964).

11 Studies in The Eighteenth Century English Novel (East Lansing, 1969), p. 8. Wayne Booth, on the other hand, emphasizes the differences between each of the narrators, suggesting that each is created for the particular story which he tells. See The Rhetoric of Fiction, pp. 72-73.


13 The Rhetoric of Fiction, p. 216.


The History of Charlotte Summers, The Fortunate Parish Girl, 2 vols. (London, 1749, dated 1750). The anonymous and intrusive Author of Charlotte Summers, who imitates many of Fielding's techniques, claims to be "the first Begotten, of the poetical Issue, of the much celebrated Biographer of Joseph Andrews, and Tom Jones" (I, 3). The Author also lays claim to "that Truth, the characteristic of an Historian" (I, 28), and praises the "worshipful Mr. F------g, whom I have chose as my Pattern in compiling of this true History" (I, 28). This novel contains an illustrative interpolated tale of Jack Dobson, embedded in a wealth of circumstantial "evidence" which seems to corroborate its authenticity. Subsequent references to this edition will appear in my text.


Baker, in his Introduction, pp. xii-xiii, reports a correspondence in the St. James Chronicle, beginning Oct. 25, 1788, and reported in the Gentleman's Magazine (v. 58, p. 1062), in which an enquiry about the authorship of John Buncle elicited a reply from Thomas Amory's son, who, besides giving some details of his father's lineage and residence, reported that his father had had but one wife.


"As Many Chapters as Steps," in The Winged Skull, ed. Arthur H. Cash and John M. Stedmond (Kent, Ohio, 1971), pp. 97-111. Clarence Tracy reminds us that both Tristram Shandy and Boswell's Life of Johnson maintained an "open" (or tentative, unfinished) form to accommodate Tristram's and Boswell's collection of anecdotes.


26 See Christopher Ricks, "The Novelist as Innovator: Laurence Sterne," *The Listener*, 73 (1965), 218-220; and Northrop Frye, "Towards Defining an Age of Sensibility," *ELH*, 73 (1956), 144-152. Of *Tristram Shandy*, Frye writes, "We are not being led into a story but into the process of writing a story; we wonder not what is coming next, but what the author will think of next."


29 Professor J.F. Stewart, "Process and Time in *Tristram Shandy*," *Transactions of the Samuel Johnson Society*, 5-6 (1972-73), 119-125, Identifies fourteen modes of time, including the three considered here.


31 Tristram's references to the nature of his work are too numerous and too familiar to bear quoting at length. Apart from the many references to chapter endings and beginnings, the most important passages are: I, xiv, 36-37; I, xxii, 73-74; II, ii, 85; II, vi, 100; II, xix, 144; III, xiv, 185; III, xx, 192; III, xxiii, 207; IV, x, 281; IV, xiii, 285-286; IV, xx, 298; IV, xxv, 315; IV, xxii, 336-337; V, vi, 358; VI, vi, 358; VI, vi, 416; VI, xvii, 436; VI, xxxiiii, 462; VI, xli, 473-475; VII, i, 479-480; VII, xliii, 536; VIII, i, 539; VIII, ii, 540; VIII, vi, 545; VIII, xxxi, 584; IX, xxiv, 627-628.

32 The traditional view of Sterne's style as a true imitation of conversation


34 _ELH_, 28 (1961), 70-88.


37 See John M. Stedmond, "Tristram as Clown," in The Comic Art of Laurence Sterne (Toronto, 1967), pp. 66-131. Jean-Jacques Mayoux describes Tristram as "A skillful clown, pretending to be perplexed, tangled even, by the difficulties that he himself created." See The Winged Skull, p. 7. In Tristram Shandy's World, p. 14, John Traugott discusses Tristram's "mask of the professional fool." Tristram Shandy also refers to his "great aunt Dinah's old black velvet mask," which apparently failed to conceal her identity when it became too worn. According to Tristram, "To cover the Mask afresh, was more than the mask was worth—and to wear a mask which was bald, or which could be half seen through, was as bad as having no mask at all—" (VIII, iii, 541, 542).

38 Jean-Jacques Mayoux, "Laurence Sterne," trans. John Traugott, in Laurence Sterne, p. 110, points out that "one reads the account of the rubbing of Trim's knee by the Beguine, rhythmic, prolonged, increased, until producing a sudden ecstasy, and one realizes with astonishment that the author has invited him to witness a scene of masturbation."

39 Shklovsky, p. 66.

40 Shklovsky, p. 89.
CHAPTER VII
THE REALITY OF THE NOVEL

My study of the novel in the eighteenth century began with the premise that the novel tells a story in words, and is distinguished from other forms of prose narrative by the sense of reality which pervades its Kosmos or virtual world. According to the typical eighteenth-century view of the new species of fiction, the novel dealt with the figures and actions of contemporary life in contrast to the fabulous and miraculous adventures recounted in romance. The verisimilitude of the novel was seen to be based on its ability to represent the characters and scenes that were a part of everyday life, and to keep its action within the bounds of probability in order that its story would seem to be a real account of the actual world, while the reader would respond to the joys and distresses of the characters as if they were real people. If art, in the Aristotelian tradition, were the imitation of an object, then the art of the novel was to show human beings in action, so that the reader could find delight and instruction in the utmost fidelity of its representation. By this view, the language of the novel would be a completely transparent medium through which the reader would seemingly be able to experience directly its fictional life. The acme of the novel would then be a narrative equivalent of the trompe-l'oeil when the reader would be convinced that he was reading a story of actual, historical happenings.

Defoe's works would certainly seem to satisfy such criteria of excellence in the novel. The ordinary reader can never be sure that he is reading a work of fiction rather than a work of genuine, or ghost-written, memoirs. Only through meticulous research has the literary historian been able to ascertain that some of his narratives are not genuine biography; others are assumed to be fictitious, partly because of their
stylistic similarities, but mainly because of the lack of evidence to the contrary. If Ian Watt’s concept of "formal realism" were to be accepted as the fundamental convention of the genre of the novel by which the novel achieves its "air of total authenticity" in pretending to be "a full and authentic report of human experience," then Defoe could be regarded as the most brilliant exponent of the genre. In such works as Moll Flanders and Roxana the lack of shape and emphasis in the narrative structure combines with the informal and colloquial registers of language to suggest the amateur story-teller at work. The reader cannot be sure that these works are not what they purport to be—the reminiscences of actual persons, who, through some perverse spirit of exhibitionism, reveal their shortcomings. Considered as examples of "formal realism" such works would be the consummation of the novel form, whereas both common-sense and the weight of critical opinion recognize that Defoe's novels belong to the beginning of the evolution of the English novel rather than its culmination.

In the half-century which followed Robinson Crusoe a combination of cultural and economic factors provided the social conditions which promoted the growth of prose fiction. The novel, as we recognize it today, is the product of a printing technology serving a literate mass audience sufficiently affluent in time and money to enjoy literature in the particular mode of the novel. Unlike other forms of oral or dramatic narrative, the experience of the novel begins with the silent reading of a printed text by a solitary reader. (Perhaps the existential loneliness of Robinson Crusoe may in this sense be regarded as a metaphor for the isolated reader who in his imagination finds meaning and order in the world he creates and populates.) The development of the novel depended on the security and assurance of the Augustan age with its concern for social order and its recognition that any person's perception and
Ian Watt points out how such a belief in the power of the individual to perceive reality was analogous to the philosophical positions held by Descartes and Locke. Later, Hume's scepticism would make the individual's perception of the phenomenological world a matter of belief, and the individual's sense of identity no more than a fiction. Thus every man's life was like his own novel, with the self, a created character, as its hero, living in the particular world created out of his perceptions. The fictional techniques of "formal realism" are the verbal representations of man's perceptions of his world, his "impressions" in Hume's terminology involving the recording of names, references, locations, and images, embedded in a definite time-scale to create the sense of particular, individualized people living at a particular time and place. The sense of reality in the novel thus parallels the sense of reality which we feel about our own everyday existence, although Hume showed that there could be no logical, philosophical argument to justify such a feeling of belief. Elements of "formal realism" can be found in the fiction of any period. Passages of Homer and Boccaccio, or Elizabethan and Restoration fiction, all show signs of "formal realism." So, too, does "formal realism" continue to be an important element of fictional technique to the novelists who followed Defoe. Yet what is evident from my study of these eighteenth-century works is the development, not of more comprehensive or convincing techniques of "formal realism," but rather the increasingly explicit revelation of the fictional nature of the work.

After Defoe, the novel shows an increasing degree of self-consciousness by which the novelist displays his virtuosity in the creative intelligence behind the mask adopted for the narration of the novel. In Defoe's works the novelist is barely to be seen as a faint presence haunting the title-page, and intruding no further into the book
than the Editor's preface. Except for Robinson Crusoe in which theme, character, and viewpoint are so completely integrated that the separate identity of the author is not an issue, Defoe creates no moral framework to provide a perspective by which the reader can judge his characters. We are never sure that Moll Flanders is really a mask for Defoe. There remains a faint, uneasy shadow of suspicion that Moll's story might be a genuine confession. The lack of a clearly defined authorial mask means that the narrative provides no firm standpoint or moral norm. With no hint of direction in the narrative framework of the story, the reader is left to his own resources to judge Moll as if her story were a real case-history instead of a fictional story, resulting in the ambivalence typical of critical responses to this work.

The first edition of Pamela may well have presented the same sort of problem to its contemporary readers. Nevertheless, Richardson's development as a novelist shows him becoming increasingly aware of the nature of his art, and this awareness is reflected in the critical material of his prefaces and postscripts. If there were any doubts whether Pamela was a true collection of letters, they would have been dispelled by the publicity and public interest which followed its first appearance, and the expanded critical material that prefaced the second edition. ³ Similarly, the publication of Clarissa being spread over two years, there was ample time for the public to speculate how Richardson might solve the creative problems of writing the novel. Within the novel the concentrated focus of attention on the problems of filial duty and sexual waywardness in all of the principal characters' letters is indicative of the moral intelligence of the author who creates and controls the action. While such a controlling viewpoint is felt rather than seen in Richardson's works, in Fielding's novels this function is made explicit in the person of the Narrator. In his role of
Historian, the Narrator may be regarded as a device to provide literary distance between the reader and the action of Tom Jones' world. The discrepancy between the putative Historian's knowledge of this world and what the reader is allowed to perceive creates the ironic framework by which events that are potentially disastrous can be viewed with comic detachment. At the same time the Narrator admits implicitly in his introductory chapters to being the creator of this Kosmos when he discusses the nature of fiction, and the eighteenth-century novel is well on its way to giving the reader a self-conscious disclosure of the nature of its own being.

Whereas in Tom Jones the story of the hero is presented as a completed, although fabricated, action, Tristram Shandy goes one step further by showing the novel constantly in the process of becoming itself. Tristram involves the reader in the very process of writing, when the supposed author tries to make a coherent pattern out of the random memories of his life's experience. Sometimes the story might appear like an accurate personal recollection or an eye-witness account of the happenings and conversations of the Shandy household; at other times Tristram Shandy creates the illusion of a dialogue between the story-teller and the reader. But both modes of narration are based on the conscious realization that they exist within the limits of a book and within the limitations of printed language, created in the imagination of an author who is responsible for setting Tristram to work on his impossible task. The experience of reading Tristram Shandy has two dimensions: on the one hand the reader is concerned with the life of the novel—the depiction of human feelings in Tristram's memories of the Shandy household; on the other hand the reader is concerned with the means by which Tristram re-creates his memories. At this second level, when the reader is interested in how Tristram is to tell his story, he is experiencing the essential problem
of the novelist's art which is to give shape to his perception of his world through the
use of language. **Tristram Shandy** is thus a self-conscious novel in which the
quintessential aesthetic problem of the novel is made explicit and solved in Sterne's
creation of Tristram's consciousness. If **Tristram Shandy** is the world's most typical novel,
it is because Sterne demonstrates the indissolubility of form and content—that the life
of the novel is created and exists only in its language. All of the past life of the
Shandy family exists only in the present of Tristram's consciousness, and Tristram comes
to life only in the written dialogue between novelist and reader.

Sterne's mask in the persona of Tristram provides him with the narrative device
that holds together the two realities of art and life, because both are part of Tristram's,
and hence the reader's, conscious concern. In making the reader aware of the process
by which the novelist's art creates the illusion of life, Sterne may be seen to be
emulating the archetypal model of Cervantes at a much more fundamental level than
that of its story and characters, which I examined in my second chapter.

Throughout Cervantes' **Don Quixote** the reader is reminded that he is reading
a book, the text of which has been translated from three Arabic manuscripts discovered
accidentally by the Second Author. The reliability of the actual text is often held in
doubt, sometimes by a vague "they" (p. 833), sometimes by Cide Hamete Benengeli
in the text (p. 588), or in a marginal note incorporated into the text by the translator
(p. 696), or sometimes by the translator himself (p. 557), who also feels free to comment
on Cide Hamete's trustworthiness, or eulogize him for preserving this history (p. 807).
All of these comments presume the actual historical existence of the original Don
Quixote whose story must be preserved in the Manchegan archives and folk-lore. The
world in which Don Quixote lives is bounded by hints of an actual historical existence
on one side, and by the actual literary text on the other. Cervantes' novel makes its own genesis a part of its fictional world, illustrating how historical fact becomes literary fact. With the example of Don Quixote's lunacy before him, the reader is admonished to use his judgment before deciding on the credibility of the text. Even Don Quixote's own account of his descent into the cave of Montesinos, although supposedly reported with word-for-word accuracy by his biographer, is not to be trusted.

Cide Hamete warns his readers against accepting such verbal evidence as truth: "So, if this adventure seems apocryphal, it is not I who am to blame, for I write it down without vouching its truth or falsity. You, cautious reader, as you are wise, must judge for yourself, for I cannot, and should not, do more" (p. 696).

Don Quixote is a novel which openly questions the nature of its own reality, matching its hero's power to believe in a world of enchantment and romantic fantasy, with the reader's belief in its fictional world. The novel even tests the reader's belief by leading him into logical cul-de-sacs where the characters question their own existence. Our doubts about Cide Hamete's veracity are openly confronted in Part II, Chapter 3, when Don Quixote learns from the bachelor Sansón Carrasco that his exploits have been published in a book. Quixote consoles himself with the thought that any book about knight-errantry "must of necessity be grandiloquent, lofty, distinguished, and true" (§. 544). Sansón confirms the comprehensiveness of Cide Hamete Benengeli's text, which includes even the drubbings which Quixote had received. Quixote would have preferred that Cide Hamete had omitted such actions as diminished the stature of the hero, but Sansón points out the difference between the licence allowed the imaginative poet, and the responsibility of the historian: "It is one thing to write as a poet, and another as a historian. The poet can tell or sing of things, not as they were, but as
they ought to have been; the historian must relate them not as they should have been, but as they were, without adding to or subtracting from the truth" (p. 547). In this episode the characters censure Cide Hamete's history because he has included in it "The Tale of Ill-Advised Curiosity" which is irrelevant to the story of Quixote's adventures. Later, Cide Hamete will carp in the beginning of Part II, Ch. 14, at having to confine his work to a few characters according to the dictates of the Aristotelian rule of the unity of action. Cide Hamete would prefer to let his talents loose in "digressions and episodes of a more serious and entertaining character." In Part I of the history he had indulged his muse with such tales as "Ill-Advised Curiosity"; later he feels the responsibility of a historian in sticking to the Quixotic theme, although he has "the capacity to deal with the whole universe" (p. 834).

Such interaction between the characters within the story and its supposed author is the source of some of Cervantes' most complex ironies. By diverting the reader's attention from the story of the life depicted within the work to the composing, discovery, and translation of the actual text, Cervantes is multiplying the perspectives of his novel, creating another dimension for its illusion of life. When Don Quixote discusses the historicity of Part I of his adventures, the reality of the text as an actual artifact adds the credibility of circumstantial evidence to the fictional character. Similarly, Sancho Panza explains how he was robbed of his mule and what he did with the hundred crowns, information that has been neglected in Part I, and which Sansón Carrasco promises to have corrected if it should be reprinted. Moreover, Sansón Carrasco tells Don Quixote of the popularity of the first part of the story of his life among all classes of readers, and of the many editions of the work that had been printed (pp. 545-6).
Cervantes' fiction also defends itself against the spurious Second Part of the Ingenious Gentleman Don Quixote of La Mancha published by Alonso Fernández de Avellaneda. This book, which appeared in Tarragona in 1614, becomes a part of the fictional world when Don Quixote is shown a copy of it, and turns over its pages before condemning it for its lack of decorum, style, and historical truth and accuracy (pp. 950-1). The apocryphal continuation even becomes part of the plot of the genuine Part II because the confrontation diverts Don Quixote from his original intention of travelling to Saragossa, as hinted at the end of Part I (p. 514); instead he decides to go to Barcelona, where he has another opportunity for condemning the false Quixote when he visits a printing house (p. 979). Cervantes also pokes fun at Fernández in Chapter 72 when he has Don Quixote meet Don Alvaro Tarfe, one of the main characters in the spurious Second Part, and convince him that the Don Quixote and Sancho Panza described in Fernández's story of Saragossa had been imposters. Thus Cervantes absorbs Fernández's fictional characters and events into his own Kosmos as a peripheral impersonation of the "real" Don Quixote and Sancho Panza.

Because Cervantes takes the elements of the knight's quest from the classic mode of chivalric romance, and uses them to create a new form of the realistic novel, it is convenient to think of Don Quixote as an example of literary mannerism. In his Four Stages of Renaissance Style, Wylie Syper emphasizes Cervantes' perspectivism, and draws this analogy between the literary and visual arts of the Age of Mannerism:

Quite like the mannerist playwright, Cervantes complicates his perspectives—improvising, swerving, yielding to the moment—not satirically always but with awareness that the world can be looked at from above and below, as romance and pathos, by Sancho and Don Quixote. Like Montaigne, Cervantes is neutral. The reality of madness and the madness of reality; we never know which Cervantes is presenting. Quixote says to the Duchess, "God knows whether Dulcinea exists on earth or not, or
whether she is fantastic or not fantastic. These are not matters whose verification can be carried out to the full." But he insists that "love and fancy easily blind the eyes of the understanding, which are so necessary for choosing one's estate." And he has Hamlet's suspicion that his mind may be tainted: "I most certainly know that I am enchanted . . . ." Like Parmigianino or Velazquez, Cervantes deliberately raises the question about the reality of his fiction . . . .

There is considerable justification for the use of the term "Mannerism" in the criticism of works of art which show a preoccupation with the style of their own forms. In this sense mannerism suggests a display of the artist's virtuosity and sense of bravura in the triumph of technique over difficulty, sometimes resulting in sophistication or preciosity in style. Essentially the art of mannerism indicates the artist's self-conscious concern with the classical forms of his art; yet in his imitation of the classical modes, the manneristic artist characteristically distorts the harmony and normality of his model, achieving a new, and more subjective, or expressive, art. As Arnold Hauser says, mannerism is "classicism with a completely self-conscious style." The result is that classic themes are treated from "unexpected points of view and eccentric angles." The shift in the surface meaning of the work—the dislocation of the normal expectations associated with a particular form of art—inevitably emphasizes the reality of the work of art itself, diverting attention from any other reality of life, religion, or myth which it imitates. Hence the art of mannerism often seems to be playing with shifting planes of reality, holding an ambiguous position between the demands of art and life, expressing "a problematic, relativistic attitude to direct, concrete, practical reality."

Although the term "mannerism", according to OED, has a respectable history of usage in English from the early nineteenth century when it was used in literary reviews, modern use of the term derives from German studies in art history, particularly those by Dvořák and Friedlander; which describe the style of Italian painting during the late
Renaissance. Various studies of Italian art such as those by Biganti, Bousquet, Murray, Rowland, Shearman, Smart, Smyth, Wolf and Wurterburger, have led to the definition of the Age of Mannerism as the prevailing style of art between Renaissance Classicism and seventeenth-century Baroque. In one sense it is an age of transition, but an age with a sufficient conformity of style to create its own identity, and the period has been narrowed to the eighty years following the death of Raphael in 1520, with Michelangelo, Parmigianino, and Rosso as its characteristic figures. Yet, as the 1970 Conference of the New England Renaissance Society well illustrated, the Age of Mannerism cannot be limited to the consideration of sixteenth-century Roman painting. The parallels with sculpture and architecture have long been recognized, but the papers presented at this conference admitted the consideration of literature, music, drama, and even the art of decapitation, as sharing the characteristics of their age. Such a broader view of Mannerism begins with Curtius' study of mannerism in Renaissance literature. Shearman, who bases his study on the painting of Renaissance Rome, also applies the term by extension to other forms of art, and he gives examples of mannerism as it appears in sculpture, architecture, the Italian pastorale, the madrigal, the intermezzi, the art of scenography, the design of fountains and staircases, and the development of gardens and grottoes, in which the natural scene was diverted to the cause of artifice. Shearman shows that in the juxtaposition of the illusions of reality with the illusions of artifice, the spectator's attention "was monopolized by art." Because the Age of Mannerism may be seen as a revolution in art, Hauser's study of Mannerism is important because he examines the political, religious, sociological, and cultural changes of the period to explain the artists' feelings of anxiety, doubt,
instability, scepticism, self-conscious concern, neurosis, tension and strain which he finds expressed in its works of art.  

It is true that the art of Mannerism is particularly a sixteenth-century phenomenon, yet there is no denying that mannerist tendencies can be discerned in other periods. Even within the Age of Mannerism there is recognition that not all artists were mannerists, nor is it necessary that all the works of a mannerist artist be examples of mannerism. As the characteristics of Mannerism become more closely defined, both in visual and literary arts, so it is possible to see that moments of mannerism might appear in any age, just as we recognize that baroque tendencies are not confined to the Baroque Age. Perhaps the best analogy is the term "romanticism." Arthur Lovejoy's essay "On the Discrimination of Romanticisms" makes it clear, as the Oxford Companion to English Literature admits, that there is no clearly accepted definition of "romantic." Nevertheless, the first four decades of the nineteenth century are recognized as constituting a period of English romanticism with its dominant figures of the Romantic Poets. At the same time the tendencies of romanticism can be traced through both earlier and later periods. While Roman painting of the sixteenth century is clearly recognized as the geographical and historical centre of the Age of Mannerism, it is also understood that other arts in other places may share some of the same characteristics of style. Hauser cites Don Quixote as the prime exemplum of mannerism in prose fiction, while Daniells' treatment of Comus and Lycidos as works of mannerism adds considerably to our appreciation of Milton's early achievement, and to our understanding of Dr. Johnson's criticism of these works. For the critic devoted to the norms of classic theory, such distortion of classic forms must inevitably appear as the degeneration, rather than the evolution, of an art form. It is no coincidence that
Johnson's judgment of Lycidas is matched by his criticism of the metaphysical poets, of whom John Donne is frequently cited as a mannerist, and by his comment on the transience of Tristram Shandy.  

We may now be able to distinguish between the Age of Mannerism (appropriately capitalized) as the period of Italian painting in the late Renaissance between the Classical and Baroque periods, and (in lower case) the display of mannerism in those arts which are characterized by their self-conscious style. In the latter sense "mannerist" can apply to any art form in which the artist achieves a new standard of accomplishment through the dislocation or distortion of the classical modes, expressing a strong sense of the individual artist. Examples of mannerism can be found in various periods and in many art forms, in the particular works of an individual artist, and in certain aspects of a particular work.

What evidence is there of mannerism in the art of prose fiction? James V. Mirollo notes that "very little has been done with mannerist fiction and drama," of the period, and suggests that the critic should pay more attention to the way in which a story is told by "studying their formal modes of presentation." Thomas M. Greene points out that "it is typical of mannerist art in all mediums that it invites us to notice its rhetoric." Arnold Hauser suggests that Don Quixote is an example of "pure mannerism," and that Cervantes is the proper starting-point "for discussion of the fundamental outlook on life that lay behind mannerist literature," because in his work "there appears more plainly the uncertainty about being faced with reality or unreality, the misgivings about where truth ends and illusion begins, that are fundamental to mannerism." In Hauser's view, "No other writer expresses the doubtful and ambiguous nature of things with such bewildering and at the same time fascinating power, clothing
it in a playfulness to which the reader can adopt no attitude other than that of 'conscious self-deception.'”

Of all the conscious imitations of *Don Quixote* in eighteenth-century English fiction, only Sterne's *Tristram Shandy* approaches the mannerist complexity and ambiguity of *Don Quixote* when, in Hauser's words, "the frontiers between fictional and objective reality are continually crossed and re-crossed, and the characters pass with the greatest nonchalance from their own sphere of life into that of the reader." So many of the characteristics of mannerism which Hauser discerns in *Don Quixote* are also apparent in *Tristram Shandy*, that Sterne is worthy of consideration as a mannerist who transforms the traditional mode of narrative fiction by developing a completely self-conscious style. When Hauser describes the mannerist style of *Don Quixote* in terms of the alienation of its obsessive hero, the capriciousness of his narrative method, its formlessness and lack of proportion, and "the author's insatiability in producing ever new episodes, digressions, and commentaries," we feel that he could well have been referring to *Tristram Shandy*. Similarly, "the combination of details by a kind of cinematic montage technique, working with continual jumps, interpolations, flashbacks, and dissolves" would seem to be more typical of Sterne than Cervantes, in which case my examination of the self-conscious art of *Tristram Shandy* may well add weight to Shearman's statement that "in the eighteenth century there occurred a resurrection of the spirit of Mannerism . . . ."

Within the period I have chosen for my study of the novel, *Tristram Shandy* shows the culmination of a tendency of the novelist to lay bare the nature of his art, showing the reader the mechanism by which he achieves his illusion of reality. Using the metaphor of the mask of reality, we can say that the eighteenth-century novelist,
and especially Sterne, allows the reader to perceive the presence within the work of the real author who hides behind the mask of his self-conscious narrator. While such questioning of the reality of narrative art may be typical of mannerism, Sterne's concern with the nature of communication in his emphasis on the use of language can also be considered as typical of modernism, as Robert Gorham Davis points out: "To the multiply ambiguous self-consciousness of the novel, as Cervantes played with it, we need only add the self-consciousness about consciousness itself, which Sterne learned from John Locke, and we have most of the ingredients that we need to take the not very long step to, say, the ambiguities of Last Year at Marienbad." Of course, as Robbe-Grillet's film-scenario makes clear, it is always last year at Marienbad. The time-scale collage, which is characteristic of such Robbe-Grillet novels as Les gommes (1953) and Le voyeur (1955), is also reminiscent of Sterne's playful manipulation of time in Tristram Shandy. Even to consider the novel as a rhetorical structure implies that the ambiguity which Sterne showed to be an inevitable aspect of human communication must necessarily affect the reading of the novel. To the extent that no two readers can possibly share the same language experience, each person having his own ideolec, so it is true that no two readers can read the same novel, and it may not be entirely picayune to suggest that by the same line of reasoning, no-one can ever read the same novel twice. Just as the novelist creates his Kosmos in the writing of his work, so does the reader re-create this Kosmos in the act of reading. Given the identical structure of words, readers of the same language community will create close approximations of each other's Kosmos and the author's. Yet the ambiguity of the novel is inherent in the ambiguity of the verbal medium through which it finds its form. As language inevitably changes with time and place, so is a novel re-created with varying
effect by different generations living in different cultures. The power of the novelist
depends on his use of language to convince the reader of the truth of his vision. The
story of Clarissa as told in the synopsis of a scenario delivered to the desk of a
Hollywood mogul would be a ludicrous joke in a culture in which sexual promiscuity
is the norm rather than an aberration. If Clarissa still lives in her world of Christian
tragedy, it is because of the power of Richardson's rhetoric in his choice and ordering
of more than a million words to create this Kosmos, and to invest it with the moral
significance which makes Clarissa's virginity a matter of transcendent importance.

The modern novelist who deals with topics of contemporary, topical relevance
would seem to be at a considerable advantage in creating the illusion of reality
which is the keystone of the novel form. Yet today's realism easily becomes
tomorrow's fantasy, once a work is separated from a temporal, geographical, or
cultural context which gives importance to the ideas embodied in it. We may nod
our heads in agreement when reading one of Aesop's fables, not because we accept
the credibility of his world of talking animals, but because we subscribe to the moral
lesson manifested in his story. So, too, the truthfulness of a sacred myth depends
less on the intrinsic qualities of its story than on whether we recognize the universal
significance of its symbol system. Folk tales and legends demand a community of
interest and belief shared by the story-teller and his audience. Satire demands
that we recognize the particular historical targets on whom the satirist heaps his
calamity. The novel, however, is essentially a product of the printer's and
bookseller's technology, finding its form in the printed book available to great
numbers of readers. The fact of mass circulation implies a separation of the writer
from his readers, and without the social bonding of close-knit community, or with
the passing of years, the novelist must depend on the power of his written word to make his illusory world become a reality for his reader.

In its outward shape the novel may imitate the form of any of the types of narrative prose with which we are familiar. The novel may look like a memoir, a chronicle, a biography, a confession, a history, or a piece of reportage, just as Richardson's works look like collections of letters. On the other hand, the novel may deal with stories of spies, or cowboys, space voyages, or detectives, explorers or lovers, just like the entertainment fantasies of pulp fiction. Richardson's story of Clarissa is not so far removed from the fairy stories of princesses locked in towers guarded by nasty witches and ogres. Yet the story is not the novel. Vladimir Nabokov begins his Laughter in the Dark with the words "Once upon a time" and tells the whole of his story in the first five lines. Then he continues: "This is the whole of the story and we might have left it at that had there not been profit and pleasure in the telling; and although there is plenty of space on a gravestone to contain, bound in moss, the abridged version of a man's life, detail is always welcome." The "detail" in Nabokov's novel is not simply the "facts" of "formal realism," but rather the language of narration which gives value and sympathy to what in the first five lines might seem to be a trivial and sordid life history. Nabokov's language both creates and evaluates the life of his character—the story is merely an abridgment.

The importance of language in the creation of narrative is best illustrated by another piece of modern fiction. In his "Pierre Menard, Author of Don Quixote," Jorge Luis Borges creates a fictitious author who is determined to re-write Don Quixote in the original Spanish. In Borges' parable Menard is doomed to fail at
such a heroically impossible task, but he succeeds in producing some passages which are identical to Cervantes' original. The result is startling. Cervantes' words take on new meaning when they are seen to spring from a modern sensibility, and Borges' story becomes a parable of the reading experience by which the reader's perception of a work changes with the accretion of ideas and feelings that become attached to the words of the text with the passage of time. Many of Borges' stories deal with the interpenetration of fiction and life, and his images which suggest the infinite possibilities of the human creative imagination invade the everyday world until reality itself seems no more than a fiction, as if in the world of Berkeley's idealism all our perceptions, and man himself, owed their existence to God the novelist. In "Tiön, Uqbar, Orbis Tertius" Borges develops the idea of a fictional Kosmos. First there is the fictional country of "Uqbar" which appears as a fake entry in a mysterious edition of an encyclopaedia. Then Borges' narrator encounters one volume of a fictional encyclopaedia in which generations of writers have conspired to create the fiction planet of Tiön, and suggests the beginning of an even more immense undertaking with the creation of "Orbis Tertius" in its own language. Borges' parable suggests not only the infinitude of creativity, but also how fiction becomes a part of our reality—art invades life, and man subscribes to its systems.

The development of self-consciousness in the eighteenth-century novel may seem to have led to a dead end with the publication of the last volume of Tristram Shandy in 1767. If it were regarded as an over-extended and unfinished piece of narrative improvisation, Tristram Shandy might seem to be a parodic attack on the traditional novel. By this view the chaos of Tristram's world of unfinished and ant климатику action played out in the theatre of an eccentric mind given to whimsical
wandering and digression could seem to be an absolute contrast to the carefully
ordered world of previous fiction, in which all actions are fitted into a coherent plan
with the author in complete control. Yet the lesson of *Tristram Shandy*, which Sterne
makes clear through his display of fictional technique, is that the events of a novel--
of any novel--can occur only in the mental worlds created by author and reader.
*Tristram Shandy* lives on as a book, because Sterne's characters, especially Toby
and Walter, live, and are re-created through language with every reading of the
novel. *Tristram Shandy* makes us realize that the world of fiction is always a mental
world, and Sterne's characters, like Fielding's or Richardson's or any other novelist's,
conform only to the logic of laws devised by their creators for the particular worlds
which they inhabit.

The meaning of the novel is found in the gap between life and art, when we
compare the patterns of the novelist's Kosmos with our own perception of our real
world. *Tristram Shandy*, the self-conscious novel, teaches us to read all novels, by
maintaining the distance between the imaginary world of fiction and the everyday
world of perception. Just as the works of modern novelists have led to a better
understanding of Sterne's novel, so does Sterne help us to read the works of Joyce,
Nabokov, or Robbe-Grillet. The interaction between literature of the past and the
present is itself one of the major themes in the fiction of Jorge Luis Borges, who,
by writing about fictitious authors who are responsible for books which exist only in
the author's imagination--when fiction itself is fictionalized--may be attaining a new
level of self-consciousness in his stories. 31

I have illustrated the development of self-consciousness in the novel, from
Defoe to Sterne, in terms of the authors' masks of reality, because this device most
clearly defines the relationship between the novelist and his imaginary Kosmos. The pretence adopted by the novelist for the telling of his story is fundamental to the whole structure of the work, resulting in the particular view of life exemplified in his created world. Since the language of the novel is the only medium of communication between the novelist and the reader, the novelist's mask of reality may be seen as a rhetorical stance having a double function. The novelist must simultaneously convince the reader of the reality of his created world, and paradoxically allow him to perceive this world as an imaginative creation—an illusion of reality rather than reality itself. The mask of reality, because the reader perceives it as a mask, connects the two realms of art and life, in which the novel finds its form. Recognizing the existence of a real author behind the narrative mask, we can now see that the novel's air of reality, which is quintessential to the genre, depends not on the characters and actions within its fictional world, but on the rhetorical power of the novelist to invest the Kosmos with his sense of human value. The development of the eighteenth-century English novel demonstrates through the self-conscious display of the process of fiction how events are given meaning and shape in the reality of the novelist's art.
NOTES

1 The Rise of the Novel, p. 32.

2 Ibid., pp. 12-30.

3 Nevertheless, the heroine of Upton Sinclair's Another Pamela, or Virtue Still Rewarded (New York, 1950), who finds herself in a similar predicament to that of Richardson's Pamela some two hundred years later, reads her predecessor's story with a naïve belief in its factual truth.

4 Walter Starkie points out that Sanson is not exaggerating: by 1612-13, when Cervantes was writing this chapter, three editions of Part I had been published in Madrid, two in Lisbon, two in Valencia, two in Brussels, and one in Milan, a total of about 15,000 copies (p. 546n). When Don Quixote meets Don Diego de Miranda, twelve chapters later, he inflates the publishing history, claiming that his deeds have appeared in "'almost all, or at least most, of the nations of the earth." Don Quixote then anticipates the future when he boasts: "'Thirty thousand volumes of my history have been printed, and it is on the way to be printed thirty thousand times more, if Heaven does not prevent it'" (p. 632).


7 Wylie Sypher, p. 106.


9 Max Dvořák, Kunstgeschichte als Geistesgeschichte (München, 1927), and W. Friedlander, Mannerism and Anti-Mannerism in Italian Painting (New York, 1957).


See his Mannerism, I, 91-133.

Ibid., I, 133.

Shearman, on the other hand, sees little evidence of psychological tension or angst expressed in mannerist art. He emphasizes the grace and elegance with which mannerism achieves new standards of beauty.


Mannerism, I, 309, 322.

Ibid., I, 322.

Ibid., I, 322-3.

Ibid., I, 323-4.

Ibid., I, 324.

Shearman, p. 82.


Borges' images of infinite possibilities in such stories as "The Library of Babel" and "The Garden of Forking Paths" have the effect of making the unreality of the fictional world invade and undermine the reality of the experiential world, just like the appearance of the multiplying "hrönnir" from the fictional world of Tlön. In "The Circular Ruins" Borges' dreamer creates a fictional man who becomes a part of the dreamer's real world, just as the novelist's mask becomes a part of the novel. However, Borges' final twist is to make the dreamer realize that he himself is the subject of someone else's dream. Hence my image of the real author infiltrating his novel behind the mask of his narrating persona becomes in Borges' parable an infinite series of masks, each one the fictional creation of another mask. In Borges' vision, when all possible worlds become fiction, there can be no "real author."
BIBLIOGRAPHY

LIST OF WORKS CITED


Beasley, Jerry C. A Check List of Prose Fiction Published in English, 1740-1749. Charlottesville, Va.: University of Virginia, 1972.


Black, Sidney J. "'Histories' as a Fictional Mode." Boston University Studies in English, 1 (1955), 38-44.


Booth, Wayne C. "Did Sterne Complete Tristram Shandy?" MP, 48 (1951), 172-183.


Crane, R.S. "The Plot of Tom Jones." *JGE*, 4 (1950), 112-130.


The Novels and Miscellaneous Works of Daniel De Foe. 7 vols. London: Bell and Daldy, 1856-1875.


Dickson, Frederick S. "The Chronology of 'Tom Jones.'" The Library, 3rd series, (1917), 218-224.


—. "Towards Defining an Age of Sensibility." ELH, 73 (1956), 144-152.


Hill, Rowland M. "Aphra Behn's Use of Setting." MLQ, 7 (1946), 189-203.


Hughes, Helen Sard. "A Precursor of Tristram Shandy?" JEGP, 17 (1918), 227-251.


Knowles, E.B. "Allusions to Don Quixote before 1660." PQ, 20 (1941), 573-586.


Levin, H. "What is Realism?" *Comparative Literature,* 3 (1951), 193-199.

Link, Frederick M. *Aphra Behn* New York: Twayne, 1968.


_"On the Significance of Don Quijote."_ MLN, 77 (1962), 113-129.


Stedman, Capt. J.G. Narrative of a Five Years' Expedition Against the Revolted Negroes of Surinam, in Guiana, on the Wild Coast of South America ... 1772 to 1777 ... 2 vols. London: J. Johnson and J. Edwards, 1796.


