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This is to certify that we the undersigned, as a committee of the Graduate School, have given Madeline Stephenson Long final oral examination for the degree of Master of Arts . We recommend that the degree of Master of Arts be conferred upon the candidate.

Minneapolis, Minnesota

May 31 1921

C. A. Moore,
Chairman

Joseph Beach

E. W. Elmsted

THE UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

GRADUATE SCHOOL

Report
of
Committee on Thesis

The undersigned, acting as a Committee of the Graduate School, have read the accompanying thesis submitted by Madeline Stephenson Long for the degree of Master of Arts.

They approve it as a thesis meeting the requirements of the Graduate School of the University of Minnesota, and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

C. A. Moore.

Chairman

Joseph Beach

E. W. Elmsted

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THE USE OF THE POINT OF VIEW
IN THE ENGLISH NOVEL

A thesis submitted to the faculty of the
GRADUATE SCHOOL
of the
UNIVERSITY of MINNESOTA

by

MADELINE STEPHENSON LONG

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for
the degree of Master of Arts.

May 1921.

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THE USE OF THE POINT OF VIEW
IN THE ENGLISH NOVEL.

Chapter I.

A detailed study of the point of view and its uses, and a statement of the argument.

Every story, like every person, should have a point of view. Some have the right one; some have the wrong; some have a dozen. The average reader knows little about the use of the point of view. Shifts in point of view annoy him, but he seldom recognizes the cause of his annoyance. In classes in criticism and seminars in writing, the phrase assumes a vital significance, and many stories are doomed to faint praise or total destruction because the point of view is inconsistently used, or because the story has been told from the wrong point of view to enlist the interest and sympathies of the readers.

Rhetoricians, such as Albright(1) and Esenwein(2), have made some study of the point of view in relation to its use in the short-story, but there is remarkably little written directly on the subject of the use of the point of view as applied to the novel, or upon a development of a consciousness of the artistic possibilities in the use of the point of view. It may be thought that I should say with Cervantes, "I am naturally lazy and love my ease too ~~well~~ well to take the pains of turning over authors for those

(1)

1. Albright, The Short-Story.
2. Esenwein, Writing the Short-Story.

~~for these~~ things which I can express as well without," (1) but the truth is, I have turned over many authors without finding much to refute, or much to support me. Since there is so little written on the subject, it would doubtless be well to define the use of the point of view, first, as simply as possible, and then in more technical terms, or in terms of the novel.

If two of my friends ~~undergo~~ an experience together, or have a quarrel, my impression of the occurrence depends upon which one tells me about it, or upon whether it is told by a third person, and whether that third person is an interested party or not. I see it largely from the point of view of the person who tells me. If I know the participants, I may make mental reservations ^{in favor of} one or the other, but if they are strangers, I have nothing but the narrator's point of view and attitude to guide me. And, if any one or all involved in an experience wish me to have a particular attitude toward the event, he or they must take care in the selection of the person deligated to tell me.

So a novelist- a story-teller must decide; first, what story he has to tell; secondly, what impression he wishes his readers to receive; and thirdly, from ~~with~~ the point of view ^{of whom,} among his characters, the story can be told in order most effectively to secure that impression.

Raleigh gives two pages to the subject, in his book on the English novel, naming only three uses of the point of view; the

(2)

1. Cervantes, in the Prologue to Don Quixote, page 5.

third person, in which the author is omniscient; the first person, in which the "whole story is put in the mouth of the principal character;" and the letter form.(1). There are, in the last analysis, a variety of view points, or uses of the point of view, that writers may choose from. They are, in outline form:

- | | | |
|------------------------|--|--|
| 1. First Person
(2) | (A. Principal character--
(B. Minor character
(C. Observer or reporter | (Direct Narrative
{ Letter form
(Diary, or Journal |
| 2. Third Person
(3) | (A. Historian
(B. Dramatist, or invisible observer
(C. Omniscient author
a. One generally omniscient
b. One limiting his omniscience to one, or
a few, characters, who serve as med-
iums, or interpreters of the story. | |

In either person, distinction may be made between
 a. the point of view absolute, and
 b. the point of view relative.

Under class 1,A- first person, principal character- are included all autobiographical, or semi-autobiographical stories, and all fiction written in the autobiographical, in the diarist, and in the letter form. Examples are innumerable: Goldsmith's Vicar of Wakefield; Dickens's David Copperfield; Stevenson's Kidnapped. Classes 1, B and C, include many stories, chiefly Short-stories, whose charm depends largely upon the dialect in which the story is told. Marse Chan is such a story. Of class 1,B, in which a minor character, who is so minor as to be little more than an observer, tells the story, there is no better example than the Sherlock Holmes stories, in which Dr. Watson is the purveyor of the narrative.

Class 1,C, and class 2,A,- when no dialect is used in the former- often approach each other almost to the point of complete

(3)

1. Raleigh, page 148, 149.
2. Esenwein mentions these uses of the first person in a brief discussion of the point of view. Page 109-124.
3. Uses A,B, and a under C, of the third person, were worked out in a Short-story class under Dr. Thomas, at the University of Minnesota.

figure in the scene. In writing from this point of view, the author writes as the invisible spectator at a drama. Like the reporter or observer, he enters into no psychological analysis in an omniscient vein. Like the dramatist, he depends upon setting, dialogue, action, and facial expression. The Spectator and Tatler used much of the dramatic method in presentation of characters. In Sir Charles Grandison, Miss Selby writes a narrative in dramatic form in a letter, with the names of the characters on the margins.(1). Dickens was largely dramatic. James attempted a dramatic novel in the Awkward Age.(#). But the novelist lacks flesh and blood and voice to carry his work to success. The realm of the psychologic is his. Trains of associations, hidden thoughts and desires, mental struggles- these are his meat. Novelists like Sterne(who wrote in the first person) realized the possibilities of the psychologic field and exploited their own mental workings, and pointed the way for other writers in the third person.

Fielding represents the generally omniscient writer, but his omniscience is not so permeating as that of later writers. It is a greater leap from Fielding than from Sterne to James, even though the former wrote in the first person; the latter in the third; for James developed the art of limiting omniscience to the mind of one person, and of making that person the interpreter, or medium through which the story is presented.

(5)

(#). Congreve also attempted a dramatic novel, called Incognito.

The development of the story is "pure drama, rapid and spirited."
Raleigh, page 102.

1. Sir Charles Grandison, page 142.

identification. For instance, in the second chapter of Beauchamp's Career, Meredith writes as an Englishman, giving English history. He begins as a reporter, speaking of "our" England, and "we" as Englishmen. His editorial pronouns are used in reference to the English rather than to the author. On the tenth page of the chapter, he refers to the English people as "they!" He is now frankly the Historian and (from the pronoun) not necessarily an English Historian. He has shifted from the first to the third person, but the shift, in this instance, is not particularly noticeable. (#)

The dramatic point of view is often maintained in short-stories, or in chapters and scenes from novels, but almost never throughout a whole novel. "Dramatic," when so applied to the point of view, is not necessarily used in the imaginative, emotional, or theatric sense of the word. Many times, mere dialogues, or conversations, such as those of Hardy's, or Meredith's, or Eliot's "natives," are designated as scenes or selections exemplifying the dramatic use of the point of view, simply because only externals

(4)

A somewhat similar example of confusion in the use of the point of view is found in Chaucer. One would naturally believe the Canterbury Tales to be written in the third person, yet one discovers, late in the story, that Chaucer himself is one of the Pilgrims, an observer, even a minor character. Troilus and Cresida he tells in the third person, but "he is constantly at the reader's elbow, pleading for her, even in her infidelity,-

'For she so sorry was for her untrouthe,

Y-wis I wolde excuse her yet for routhe.'" (1)

1. Raleigh- page.9.

In his Essay on Romance, Stevenson offers the theory that the first person is the most effective point of view. In a novel of adventure, in which the hero relates his exploits, the reader may identify himself with the hero and so live the tale. This theory may be applicable to the unpsychologized tale of romance and adventure, but in the psychological novel, the impersonality of the third person, particularly as James uses the third person, makes for greater artistry. The writer in the third person may say of his character what he might not write of himself without the danger of being thought priggish, self-satisfied, or vain. All devices for describing oneself physically in the first person are awkward.(1). To ~~analyze~~ analyze one's own mental workings and emotional biases ^{minutely} to imply that one is a scientist, and to imply that is to seem guilty of intellectual priggishness. The writer in the first person, as the hero, must have recorded each thought and feeling and analyzed all. When a novel is in the third person, the hero may think and feel the same things as the hero in the first person, but- in this case- the author is the recorder, and he is more or less the scientist in inverse ratio to the amounts of self-analysis of which his characters are naturally capable.

The writer in the first person is often forced to that obvious device, "I realized years afterward what I did not at the time," or something similar. For instance, ⁱⁿ the thirty-third chapter of Meredith's Harry Richmond, the moralizing is not that of the boy, Harry, at the time the narrative of the chapter took place, but the more mature reflections of the man writing the story and thinking upon it in later years. The suggestion of years afterward' brings forcibly

(6)

1. Albright, in a four page discussion of the point of view, points out the danger of the hero's appearing egoistic in the first person (p.66) and the difficulty of describing oneself(p.67).

to the mind of the reader the fact that the events are long since decided, and that it is only a story after all.

It is not easier also for the reader to identify himself with, or find himself in the psychology of, a third person than in the revelations of a writing "I?" It is not that a reader may not see in an autobiography similarities to his own life, but the writer of such a novel writes, or seems to write, of himself; his "I's" and "me's" stand out like a trade mark. There is a bare possibility that a book written in the third person may have been written about oneself.

To this amplified definition of the uses of the point of view, there is only a word to add. Whether the writer assumes general omniscience, or limits his use of the point of view very definitely, there are two modifications of the term- the point of view: the point of view absolute and the point of view relative. When something is seen through, or with, the eyes of a given character and the character's reactions, thoughts, etc., are given in his own terms, the point of view may be termed absolute. This method may be used throughout an entire story, as in Sterne's Sentimental Journey (first person), or in Henry James's The Ambassadors (third person), and be limited to one character, or it may alternate with the point of view relative. In historical passages and sometimes in the so-called dramatic, or merely conversational sections, neither modification of the point of view- absolute or relative is applicable. The point of view relative is very closely related to the dramatic method, but there may be passages, in a book, in which the action and the conversation is so general that no one character can be designated as the leading character on the scene. Passages of "native" conversation (already referred to on page four), found in Hardy, Eliot, and Meredith, are good examples. If it is said that a certain portion of a book is

from the point of view relative of a given character, that is to say that a certain prominent character was present throughout the scene and was the "lead," although no omniscient details were presented. So in drama, we cannot see through the eyes of a star, but an audience is inclined to accept his attitude toward the other characters, to accept- in a word- the point of view relative.

The importance of the choice and use of the point of view must be already evident. In tracing the development of its use as an art in the novel, it will be seen that development was largely unconscious in the eighteenth century and well on into the nineteenth, but there are glimmerings of light, reachings out, achievements here and there. Given the beginnings of a conscious^{ness} of the point of view and the culmination, the whole matter of its use and development becomes clear.

It will be apparent that the use of the point of view was influenced in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries by the output of biographies, autobiographies, dairys, and personal letters, and by the demand for true stories.

The third person offered more difficulties as well as more advantages to the writer. It is easier to digress in the third person than in the first. When the "true" story gave place to honest fiction, and the biographical method gave place to omniscience, writers revelled in their freedom, sometimes knowingly, as revolutionists revel and misuse freedom after a successful rebellion.

The growing consciousness of the artistic possibilities in the use of the point of view reached its culmination and expression in the theory of the first person advanced by Stevenson and in the theory of the third person, defined by Henry James. Of these two theories, we

are more concerned with the second, for the former has to do with the novel of adventure, or the romance, while the second has to do with the novel, as we understand the novel from its most strict and limited definition.(1).

Neither Henry James nor any other other author expresses the distinction between the point of view relative and the point of view absolute, but James uses both and inclines so appreciably toward the use of the latter that it is evident from his novels, more than from those of his predecessors, that the use absolute gives the reader greater sympathy with the leading character and a feeling of kinship not inspired by the more objective treatment. A judicious combination of the two modifications of the already limited omniscience(that is, of a single view point in the third person) proves the most technically perfect and artistically satisfying use of the point of view in the novel.

(2)

1.Horne, in his Technique of the Novel, offers an excellent definition.

Chapter II.

A consideration of the use of the point of view by the noteworthy predecessors of the English novelists.

Part 1.

A few observations on the use of the point of view up to the middle of the seventeenth century.

It is impossible, in the present study, to make any survey of literature from the Westcar Papyrus ^(#) to Don Quixote, but there are conjectures that may be made with some assurance and two or three authors who should be mentioned.

There was a natural tendency in the tale toward making one or two characters control the story. Myths and Allegories are somewhat diffuse, but the old stories of heroism were often related at first by the hero whose prowess they concerned. It is probable that what we have as legends were first related in the first person by the heroes, or principal characters, or by minor characters, or observers. Others, who had not been on the scene, took up the story and retailed it in the third person, adding to it ⁱⁿ length and impossibilities. After tales began to be circulated in written form, the first or third person was used according to whether a participant, or a complete outsider, was the writer. Carlyle said that

(#) ⁽¹⁰⁾ It is interesting to note what Horne has to say of the chaotic use of the point of view in the earliest written story (which was not English, but Egyptian)- Tales of the Magicians, from the Westcar Papyrus. "There is no clear separation marking the tales within tales. At times it is the scribe, the actual writer of the papyrus, who addresses us. At times King Cheops speaks. Then again ⁽¹⁾ his sons carry on the narration, or some character within the tale." ⁽¹⁾ Horne, page 31.

history could be read in the lives of a few great men. So fiction, that rose hand in hand with history, is a record of the lives and deeds of a few central characters, surrounded by others.

England's most noted allegories, from Piers Plowman to Pilgrim's Progress, were written in the first person, chiefly because the allegory was given as the dream, or vision of the writer. Piers is the central character of his allegory; Bunyan is an observer.

The romance was the first form of fiction to gain a foothold in England. Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, one of the best of the early romances, is narrated in the third person. . It adds nothing artistically to the use of the point of view. In these early tales and romances there is little or no psychology, and the point of view is not an issue of great importance. They are simple relations of adventures and scenes closely related to history. (#). We are concerned with romances and picaresque tales, in this study, only so far as they influence that later development of literature- the novel- in the matter of point of view, or as they illustrate growing facility in the use of point of view.

Digressions are as marked in the picaresque tale, when it is related in the third person, as in the romance. In Nash, "no pretext is too slight to excuse a digression, or to introduce an imaginary conversation between the author and the reader." (1). It is in Pierce Penniless his supplication to the Devil that Nash intrudes, through his use of the third person, to address the reader directly and to discuss the book. In Jack Wilton, the author, as Jack, can say as much as he pleases without violating point of view.

(11)

(#) "The earlier prose romances for the most part kept to the beaten path and chronicled deeds." The Gesta Romanorum, on the other hand, had a long "moralization" appended. (2).

1. Horne- page 88.

2. Raleigh- page 40.

which is already in the first person. Jack appears braggy, describing his own exploits, but this is one of his characteristics and, therefore, acceptable.

In Don Quixote, to which every reader of Fielding, Smollett, and Sterne points as an influence, we find many tendencies related to the point of view that are emphasized in later works of other authors. Cervantes poses as the historian and claims that his story is true. He says of Don Quixote, "Some authors say that his first adventure was that of the pass called Puerto Lapice; others, that of the windmills, but all that I could discover of certainty in this matter, and that I meet with in the annals of La Mancha, is that he espied an inn." (1). This pose of truth-telling is here a ^{humorous} pretense; in later novels- usually in the preface- the claim is made seriously and is meant to be believed.

Much of the story is told in the most dramatic manner. Throughout most of the novel we are constantly with Don Quixote, following his deeds, knowing his thoughts, keeping his point of view as far as Cervantes' satire will permit.

Don Quixote is of that type of book that is to be discussed more at length later, particularly in connection with the study of Fielding and James, in which satirical, or slightly personal, treatment is more to be desired than perfect impersonality. These exceptions are cases in which the leading character is naïve, simple, or unbalanced. What Es^{en}wein calls the "close relation" (2) between author and story is usually to be felt, if one's sensibilities are trained to detect such vibrations, ~~except, perhaps, in such cold and~~

(12)

1. Don Quixote-

Prologue, page 30,31.

2. Esenwein, Writing the Short-story, page 114.

impersonal tales as those of the Russian Short-story writers, but it is unnecessary, and it is ^{nowadays} bad form for an author to plead directly with the reader for some character. If the character is deserving and is adequately drawn, it will plead for itself. But when a character is humorous or ludicrous, without in the least suspecting his ~~or her~~ condition, to accept completely the point of view of such a character would be to place the story on the same dull, mirthless basis as the perceptions of the character. The artistic author does not say, "Ladies and gentlemen, laugh here. What the hero imagines to be so serious is really no sort of catastrophe at all to a person of sense." The writer should indicate by more subtle means that the hero's mountain is only a molehill.

A reader cannot identify himself with Quixote, for the man is insane, and he is interesting only as the reader finds him amusing in his vagaries, or more particularly as Cervantes finds him laughable, and finds more laughable the romances that he is parodying. Had Cervantes possessed the consciousness of point of view manifested by Henry James, he might have remained invisible, even as a satirist. The reader might have felt Cervantes without seeing him. But he intruded in the first person to address the reader, though not so extensively as Nash. He intrudes also in short essays, so popular with eighteenth and nineteenth century novelists. Little digressions, such as the discussion of detailed historians, are numerous. (1).

There are also shifts in point of view in the third person from the consciousness of one person to another. In the scene of

(13)

1.
Don Quixote- page 142.

the night skirmish over Maritormes, we are told that the Innkeeper, in another room, woke and suspected that Maritormes was responsible for the noise. Only an omniscient author could know what he "suspected," for he did not speak. We know also that Sancho thought himself possessed by a nightmare and "thereupon fell to beating the poor wench." (1). Cervantes does not limit his omniscience absolutely to his leading character.

There could have been no special consciousness of the use of the point of view as an art among these early writers. Yet there is some improvement in its use between the day of the Westcar Papyrus and ^{that of} Don Quixote, doubtless an unconscious improvement, due more to a desire for clearness than to a perception of the possibilities of the point of view. Stories like Jack Wilton are consistent because they are largely true and are related by the principal character.

Don Quixote shows a great improvement over previous uses of the third person. If a reader cannot identify himself with Quixote, nor very often see through his eyes, if in short Quixote's can rarely be called the point of view absolute, his is, at least, the point of view relative throughout most of the novel, for he is almost always on the scene. Yet as the hero of a novel of adventure, in which a heroine plays small part, he would be apt to be on the scene, as the hero of an old legend or romance would be. Cervantes recognized now and then that he digressed and published his recognition in the phrase, "But to return to our story;" but he does not apologize, and it is very likely that he realized that he was holding up his

narrative, rather than that he was violating point of view. His Preface and Prologue offer no theory of the point of view, and do no mention it. So from the study of Preface and novel, it is reasonable to conclude that his improvement in its use was more unconscious than conscious.

Part 2.

A consideration of the use of the point of view by the immediate predecessors of the English novelist, with special attention to the influence, exhibited in them, of actual autobiographies, biographies, and personal letters.

We come now to the immediate predecessors of the English novelist. There were, in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, certain very definite and striking influences on the method of storytelling and, consequently, on the point of view. The great number of actual autobiographies, journals, biographies, and letters, published and eagerly read, naturally offered a form for fiction. The demand for true stories (and the readers of the time, like children, demanded a "really, truly" story) caused writers to exercise extreme care—whether dealing with facts, rumors, or fiction—to account for every bit of material, not to throw in scraps of information, essay-wise, unrelated to the knowledge of the biographer, or autobiographer. As the biographical craze waned, the novels—for a time—became less unified in point of view, but the decline in unity was not a result of declining consciousness of the point of view, but of a lessening in the demand for absolute truth.

The first person was particularly popular, because the autobiographical manner lent a note of complete verity. What biographer could know as much about the central character as the central character himself? The writer who wrote as "I" could give every thought and feeling. The biographer could only relate what had been told him, or what he had guessed, or what had been revealed by some form of expression.

Moreover, many of the picaresque stories, though not actual autobiographies, and not unmixed with many "tall" stories, were based upon the adventures of the writer. If he had no desire to conceal the facts, it was natural for him to write in the first person. Nashe's Jack Wilton, which has already been mentioned in these pages, is a good example.

Raleigh points out several advantages in the use of the first person. (a) "Vividness of personal narration by an eye-witness;" (b) "a dramatic center and a certain unity," (c) "evocation of sympathy for the central character." (1). All of these advantages are secured to a high degree in the Henry Jamesian use of the third person, but in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries there was ~~very~~ unity only in the use of the first person, never in the third. (#)

(16)

(#) In Roger Boyle's Parthenissa (1654), a "stranger richly armed, is presented to us impersonally. After some pages, he relates the history of his life, which is destined "to delay the main narrative for several hundred pages." (2). The Princesse de Clèves (1678), one of the most famous of the romances of the seventeenth century, may have contributed to the art of character analysis, but it did not influence the use of the point of view for the better. "The heroine is often forgotten as one reads; the hero wholly so." (3).

1. Raleigh- page 148, 149.

2. Ibid " 94.

3. Horne- page 77.

This quality of "vividness of personal narration" was one sought after by writers who used the biographical as well as the autobiographical form. Some so-called biographers wrote in the first person, but were not themselves the central characters; they were minor characters, or observers- "eye-witnesses." This is Mrs. Behn's method in Oroonoko. Those who wrote in the biographical third person intruded as "I", the biographer, as Nash did in Pierce Penniless.

Pilgrim's Progress differs from all such biographies in that it is the relating of a dream, but the method is essentially the same. The dreamer speaks in the first person, but he is not the hero, nor even a minor character in his story. He is an eye-witness of Christian's journey. This narrative, published in 1678, approaches the use of the Henry Jamesian theory of the point of view more nearly than any other tale, or so-called "novel" of the seventeenth century. We follow Christian, knowing his every move and even- by some occult ^{Power} vouchsafed the author in his dream- every thought and feeling. When Christian is on his way to Mr. Legality's house, hard by the high, overhanging hill that he was afraid to pass, we are told of his feelings what only an omniscient writer could know. "His burden now seemed heavier to him than before. There came also flashes of fire out of the hill, that made Christian sweat and quake for fear that he should be burned." (1). Here is a curious use of the point of view. As readers, we do not accept completely the point of view of Christian, as we would were he the hero of a ^{novel} written in the third person, nor yet the point of view of a mere observer, but a point of view that combines both of these. There are a few shifts from the presence of Christian to scenes such as those in which the naïve conversations of the Giant and his wife, Diffidence, are given, (2)

1. Pilgrim's Progress, p. 26. (17) 2. Ibid, pages 116, 118, 120.

but these scenes are brief, and the story is- until the end of the nineteenth century- a model of unusual unity. There are no "mean-whiles," or "asides." Horne says, "Not one word is introduced to show the author's skill or wit, or to tell us one fact, however interesting, that does not bear upon the central purpose." (1).

Biographies have always been more numerous than acknowledged autobiographies. Fake biographies began to be popular in France in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. (2). In the seventeenth century and into the eighteenth, readers' curiosity turned to the lives and scandals of real people, and criminal biographies furnished not a little of the reading of the time. Bernbaum says, "Of such works the seventeenth century was remarkably prolific." (2). The autobiographies and biographies of Mary Carleton and of her husband, John Carleton, are interesting examples of the criminal biographies of the seventeenth century.

Closely allied to these biographies were the thinly veiled lives and scandals given to the public by writers such as Mrs. Manly and Mrs. Haywood. (#). From these it was only a step to imitations

(18)

(2) A "discovered" Vie de Virgile, supposed to have been written in the fourth century, was afterward proved, by a careful study of the diction, to have been written no earlier than the eleventh century. Similarly, the dialect of a Vie d'Homere was proved not to be that of Herodote. (3).

(#) Mrs. Manly contributed The Secret History of Queen Zarah, and Mrs. Haywood, The Amours of the Sultana of Barbary to the veiled lives and scandals. "Others, like the 'Memoirs of Mlle. de St. Phale' (1690), involved sectarian and political interests; still others, like Bunyan's 'Grace Abounding' (1666, dwelt chiefly on the spiritual meaning of life. ---- Since they centered their narrative about one person--- they might teach the writer of fiction unity of action." (4)

1. Horne- page 72.

2. Bernbaum- Mary Carleton Narratives, p.40.

3. Chassang- Histoire du Roman, p. 307-309.

4. Bernbaum- Mary Carleton Narratives, p.5.

and fake biographies, written to satisfy the love of scandal that flourished more widely and more consumingly in those days than in even the American University of today. Morgan makes the statement that "Realistic fiction in this country(England) was first written by way of the direct imitation of truthful record."(1). And Chandler says of the biographers," Their narrative method instructed great story tellers."(2).

Mrs.Manley, Mrs.Haywood, and Mrs.Behn tried a number of forms. The first used the third person in Queen Zarah, which inclines toward the historical rather than the biographical method; that is, the author reveals less personal than historical knowledge of and interest in the incidents. Mrs.Haywood wrote much in the third person and contributed nothing to the use of the point of view as an art. In Love in Excess, she shifts the point of view from hero to heroine, from heroine to friend, and back again, and no one is fonder of the "story within a story," that has flourished from the Tales of the Magicians, down through Boccaccio, Chaucer, and others, to Fielding.

Mrs.Behn made the claim of authenticity in most of her tales, publishing letters, writing in the biographical or historical third person, or in the first person as a reporter or minor character. In the letter form, we have

Agnes de Castro

and The Tower Watch;

in the historical third person,

The Lucky Mistake;

in the first person- reporter,

The Court of King Bantam

(19)

1.Morgan,Charlotte- The Rise of the Novel of Manners, p.62.

2. Chandler, Frank W.- The Literature of Roguery, p.181.

and The Adventures of the Black Lady;

and in the first person- reporter and minor character,

Oroonoko.

There are inconsistencies in some of her tales⁽¹⁾ which indicate the intrusion (at least) of fictitious material. Bernbaum claims that "we find in the historical background of Oroonoko several improbabilities and one misstatement."⁽¹⁾ And Raleigh declares, in discussing The Fair Jilt, "The character may have been real--- but the language resembles that of the most high-souled of the heroic ladies"⁽²⁾ But in the matter of the point of view, Mrs. Behn is fairly consistent.

She states her proposed use of the point of view in her preface to Oroonoko: "I was myself an eye-witness to a great part of what you will find set down here; and what I could not be witness of I received from the mouth of the chief actor in this history, the hero himself, who gave us the whole transactions of his youth."⁽³⁾

But she is guilty of one considerable error in use of the point of view in this same story. When she goes (upon discovering Imoinda's identity) to visit the lovers together for the first time, she declares that she had already learned from Oroonoko all that she had previously related. "I was so impatient to make these lovers a visit," she says, "having already made a friendship with Caesar, and from his own mouth learned what I have related."⁽⁴⁾ But she could not have known of Imoinda's being sold into slavery, an event which she had previously related, for Oroonoko did not know of it until

(20)

1. Bernbaum- page 424.

2. Raleigh- page 68 (Bernbaum refers to this statement of Raleigh page 94).

3. Mrs. Behn- Works of, vol. 5, page 129.

4. Ibid- page 174.

he met Imoinda, and he had only met her ^{(or the island),} for the first time, since he had seen the narrator of the tale. However, this is the only noticeable misstep in a tale that is unusually consistent for its period.

Defoe is more artistically conscious of his point of view than Mrs. Behn. He too shows the effect of autobiographical and biographical writings very strongly. Cross, like many critics already quoted, declares that "In Robinson Crusoe and Pamela and hundreds of other novels down to the present, the journal has played a not inconsiderable part." (1).

Tuckerman, in his History of English Fiction, throws some light upon Defoe's development. It became Defoe's custom, "on the death of a celebrated person, to write his life immediately." (2). In reference to the story of the sailor, Selkirk, about whom Defoe wrote Robinson Crusoe, Tuckerman says, "The interest taken in England in the narrative of this event revealed to Defoe's acute mind a great literary opportunity." (3). That Moll Flanders was inspired, both in subject and in form, by the Mary Carleton narratives and other such criminal biographies and autobiographies seems very evident.

None of the works that Defoe supposedly "edited" are believed to be actual autobiographies, although some plots, like that of Robinson Crusoe, are founded upon fact; but all of his novels, except Mr. Duncan Campbell, a Biography, are in the first person, autobiographical form; that is, the principal character is the narrator.

(21)

1. Cross- page 22.
2. Tuckerman- History of English Fiction, p. 184.
3. Ibid- page 186.

In the use of the third person, Defoe- like Mrs. Behn- indulges in the old Chaucerian confusion between the reporter and the historian, inclining generally toward the latter. While the desire to appear authentic makes for unity in most instances, it makes for ^{confusion,} ~~for~~ artistically, though not actual incoherence, in the biography. . If a biographer is a contemporary and an acquaintance of his hero, we can excuse his speaking now and then in the first person; but when the writer partakes more of the nature of a historian than of a biographer, there is no sufficient excuse for his intrusion in the first person, addressing the reader. This fault Defoe had in common with writers who preceded him, and with many novelists who followed. He says of a letter he included, "The letter being very remarkable, I shall present it to the reader, as it was given into my hands." (1). Early as he was, Defoe followed his Mr. Campbell more closely than James follows Isabel Archer, but I attribute this consistency to a desire of the author to make the story pass as an authentic biography and to the influence of picaresque writers, who followed the hero very closely, rather than to any Jamesian consciousness of the use of the point of view. However, this same consistency doubtless influenced later writers who made a study of methods, quite as biographies and autobiographies influenced Defoe.

Tuckerman again offers an interesting observation. "From writing the life of a well-known individual, Defoe advanced to writing the life of a fictitious person (his Cavalier) amidst historical scenes. His next step was to write the life of a fictitious person

(22)

1. Mr. Duncan Campbell- page 6.

amidst fictitious scenes;" that is, Roxana. "Fiction entered into his biographies just as biography afterward entered into his novels!"⁽¹⁾

Defoe never completely abandons his claim of truth. In his Preface to Robinson Crusoe, he says, "The Editor believes the thing to be a just history of fact; neither is there any appearance of fiction in it."⁽²⁾ Of his Memoirs of a Cavalier, he writes, "The ~~the~~ persons concerned in their publication--- have had them in their possession above twenty years."⁽³⁾ He tells us that Roxana is an actual biography also. "The foundation of this is laid in truth of fact; and so the work is not a story, but a history."⁽⁴⁾ "She has told it herself."⁽⁵⁾ In the Preface to Colonel Jacque, he makes his usual claim, but he is willing to smile a little over it. "Neither is it of the least moment to enquire whether the Colonel hath told his own story true or not."⁽⁶⁾

Defoe shows some consciousness of the chosen point of view in the manner in which he has his characters account for their knowledge of the early details of their lives. Picaresque writers in the first person (who have an annoying habit of giving the hero's life history) usually have the hero explain that this early history had been related to him by parents and friends. Defoe's Moll says, "I have heard them (the circumstances) repeated so many ways that I can scarce tell which is the right account."⁽⁷⁾ Roxana says, "I

(23)

1. Tuckerman- page 184-185.
2. Robinson Crusoe- Preface, page LXVII.
3. Memoirs of a Cavalier- Preface, page XXI.
4. Roxana- Preface, page XIII.
5. Ibid- page XIV.
6. Colonel Jacque- Preface, page XVI.
7. Moll Flanders- page 2.

was born, as my friends told me, at Portiers,"(1).

In the first person, Defoe puts his story- not in the mouth of a reporter, observer, or minor character, as Mrs.Behn did- but in that of the principal character, and he keeps more consistently to the knowledge and consciousness, or to the point of view, of that character than Mrs.Behn. Horne says, "Having striven to become Colonel Jacque or another before taking pen in hand, he never deserts his part until the book is finished. If some one else's story is dragged into the tale, at least the interpolation is not told by its own hero in a fashion utterly detached; the narrative is repeated by Colonel Jacque, as he heard it, modified by his personality, his views, his interpretations."(2). This is an excellent illustration of the point of view absolute. In the use of interpolated stories, Defoe is in artistic advance of Fielding and of all eighteenth century authors who wrote in the third person, and of the majority who wrote in the first.

Despite Horne's statement to the contrary, Defoe does sometimes "desert his part," or- rather- he sometimes fails to identify himself completely with a character, or to give the reader the impression of the point of view absolute. When Moll repents, after she has been imprisoned, she records that her repentance came about because of her having been caught and deprived of her liberty. True- such is her reason for repentance, but this is Defoe's analysis, not Moll's. She had not the subtlety of mind to understand her actual motives. Yet rather than completely violate the point of view, Defoe offers his analysis in the words of Moll. Analysis found in Gold-

(24)

1.Roxana- page 1.

2.Horne- page 94.

smith's Vicar Of Wakefield does not so violate the use of the same point of view because the Vicar is capable of self-analysis.

The reader sees only what Moll sees and knows her thoughts, but the passage just referred to shows that Moll is sometimes made to think more than she would- that her thoughts are not always in her terms, and the reader does not see the things Moll sees as colored by her moods and reactions to any great extent, as one does later in Sterne. Moll's is more often the point of view relative than the point of view absolute. It is a little difficult, too, for one to imagine a woman, like Roxana,^(#) claiming now and then that she is describing some disgusting scene in order that it may serve as a warning to woman readers, but if Defoe could labor under the delusion that such literature might promote the cause of virtue, a character like Roxana might.

Defoe naturally has better success in seeing through the eyes of a man. In Robinson Crusoe, definite examples of such complete identification are enough to give the impression that the bulk of the story is from the point of view absolute of Robinson. When the natives swim the creek on Crusoe's island, Defoe does not give the mere details, "The two who swam were yet more than twice as long swimming over the creek as the fellow was that fled from them." The passage reads, "I observed that the two who swam were yet more than twice as long etc." (1). In other words, the reader is made to feel that Robinson Crusoe wrote his own story, and was not a mere mouth-piece for Defoe. The seeing ~~thus~~ through the hero's eyes gives us that sense of identification that Stevenson speaks of in the Essay on Romance.

(25)

1. Robinson Crusoe- page 225.

(#) The difficulty Albright mentions of describing oneself is very evident in the case of the attractive Roxana.

Summary.

Actual autobiographies, biographies, and letters^{then,} greatly influenced the method of story-telling. The demand for "true" stories was another influence. When Mrs. Behn stated in her preface that she was an "eye-witness," she was probably less concerned with stating her proposed use of the point of view than with making more credible her claim of truthful narrative. Yet she entered^{so} completely into the character and consciousness of this "eye-witness" that she deceived the very astute. Hence, if she had not a consciousness of the point of view as an art in itself, she was conscious- in her use of the first person, at least- of the influence of a consistent use of the point of view absolute on the vraisemblance, ~~narrative~~, and she carried this use to some degree of excellence.

Defoe did not always realize so well as Mrs. Behn the point of view absolute. His failure to identify himself completely with Moll has been noted, but here was a more difficult problem than Mrs. Behn faced. She observed her principal character; Defoe was his principal character, or tried to be. He succeeded very well in Robinson Crusoe. How much Defoe's advance toward an artistic use of the point of view was influenced by his consciousness of it and how much by his desire for vraisemblance is a question that cannot be definitely settled; but, until Sterne, no one incorporated an interpolated story so well as he, or apparently felt the need of giving such a story through the consciousness of the central character. Certainly Mrs. Behn and Defoe contributed toward the development of the use of the point of view as an art, and exerted an influence upon later writers.

Chapter III.

The development of the use of the point of view in the early English novel, determined from the study of the novels of Richardson, Smollett, Sterne, and Fielding.

Part 1.

The use of the first person, by Richardson, Smollett, and Sterne.

In Richardson, hailed by many critics as the first real novelist, we find again a claim of truthful foundation, but not of absolute verity. Unlike Defoe, he does not profess to print actual letters in the case of either Pamela or Clarissa. The author wrote a letter to Aaron Hill, explaining, "About twenty-five years ago, a gentleman, with whom I was intimately acquainted, met with such a story as that of Pamela. She was not a personal acquaintance." (1). That such claims of verity as he makes were occasioned by a childish desire, on the part of the public, for a true story is proved by the letters showered upon Richardson asking, "Is it true? Was there ever a Pamela in real life, and did MR. Richardson have the honor of her acquaintance?" (2).

In regard to Sir Charles Grandison, it is not clear how much of the book Richardson meant his readers to accept as a true history. From one sentence in his preface, it seems evident that he acknowledges creating a character. "The Editor apprehended that he should be obliged to stop, but it was insisted on by several of his friends that he should produce into the public view the character and

(27)

1. Pamela, vol. I- Heineman's Preface, page XLV.

2. Ibid page L.

and actions of a man of true honor. "(1). But it may be that, as an "Editor," he intended to "Produce into public view" a true story, for- in the Author's Preface, he writes, "It happens fortunately that an account of the juvenile years of the principal character is narratively given in some of the letters." But Richardson does not insist upon the claim of truth- here or elsewhere- nor does he make any ado about the letters he uses having been found, or given to him for use. That readers were well aware that Clarissa's fate lay with Richardson's sense of literary values and the fitness of things, rather than with Lovelace, is apparent from the letters written to Richardson, by readers, pleading for the heroine's happiness. It is not probable, either, that the friends, who insisted that Richardson produce "the character and actions of a man of true honor," supposed that Richardson had such a story at hand, nor that he succeeded in collecting such a great bulk of letters from so many writers. As Richardson progressed from Pamela to the end of Sir Charles Grandison, he doubtless became less and less concerned over the matter of making his readers believe his offerings to be authentic histories.

With Richardson, we come to a consideration of the letter form. Letter writing had been popular in England over a long period. Up to 1622, letters took the place of newspapers. Cross points out that the Portuguese letters, "which tell a true story, and which furnished the plot for some later works of fiction (Agnes de Castro, by Mrs. Behn, for instance), suggested also the form" (2).

Richardson made a success at professional letter writing before he thought of becoming a novelist. Yet his acceptance of the letter form was probably not so casual as some suppose. He says in

(28)

1. Sir Charles Grandison- Preface, page XXXVIII.

2. Cross- page 23.

his preface to Sir Charles Grandison, "The nature of familiar letters, written as it were to the moment, while the heart is agitated by hopes and fears, on events undecided, must plead an excuse for the bulk of a collection of this kind." (1). In this quotation he states what Raleigh offers as one of the advantages of the first person (given on page sixteen), ^{Raleigh adds} ~~plus~~ the advantage of being able to kill the hero or heroine (as in Clarissa Harlowe), if the author wishes. (2).

Mr. William L. Phelps says, in his discussion of "Richardson's Place in the Novel", "there is no instrument like a confidential letter for the process of vivisection." (3). While I do not agree with his absolute preference for this instrument, for reasons already advanced in ~~favor~~ of the use of the third person, it does seem to me that a confidential letter, "written to the moment, while the heart is agitated," ^{should} ~~maintain~~ the point of view ^{absolute} ~~more~~ consistently and easily than a direct narrative, in the first person, written some time after the events are decided. Pamela's point of view is more absolute than Moll's, and Robinson Crusoe's point of view (in a narrative supposed to have been written from time to time on the island- not all in one piece when the story events had ended) is more absolute than Moll's or Roxana's, but not so impressively absolute as Pamela's. The little details, not necessary to the story, but necessary to a realistic letter, of place and time of writing, etc., bring the reader very close to the writer, just as a personal letter brings one a sense of closer relation with ~~the~~ friend than any autobiography of his that one might read. Richardson uses the letter as an instrument of vivisection and uses it well.

(29)

1. Sir Charles Grandison, vol. I. Author's Preface, page xxxix.
3. Ibid " " Preface by Phelps, page xi.
2. Raleigh- page 149.

Certainly, if Richardson was influenced by the first volumes of Marivaux's Vie de Mariane, he improved over it in use of the letter form. Mariane's letters were written after the events were all decided. The first person, direct narrative, would have done quite as well, or better, for the great danger of the letter form is proximity- a danger amply manifest in Marivaux and Richardson. Despite Richardson's appreciation and artistic use of the letter form, he was not without fault in his use of the point of view.

As far as ^{consistency of} point of view is concerned, Richardson's first novel is the most exemplary. All of the letters in the first two volumes of Pamela (which are the novel proper), except seven, two from her father, and five from Lady Danvers, are written by the heroine. So completely is the novel from Pamela's point of view that, had Richardson attempted what Raleigh offers as one of the advantages of this form, killing the heroine, it would have amounted in effect to a break in point of view, for someone strange, or little known to the reader must have recorded the circumstances of her death as a climax to her story. Such an ending would have left the reader with as cheated a feeling as if Moll Flanders or Jack Wilton had been declared suddenly dead by the author.

There are two diversions from the letter form in Pamela. The first consists in a few pages from Pamela's Journal, which is very like a letter, and which we could as readily imagine in the hands of the Editor as the letters themselves.

The other diversion is an intrusion of the Editor, at three various intervals, to give a synopsis between epistles. Pages ninety-three to one hundred, one hundred fifteen to two hundred eighty-three, and the conclusion- pages three hundred forty-four to three

hundred forty six are occupied by such accounts. Yet even in this matter, Richardson retains something of the artistic and consistent method of handling the point of view by intruding as the editor of the letters, not as an author. At least we may pardon these intrusions for their abbreviating effect- if one may speak of abbreviations in connection with Richardson.

However consistent Richardson may have been in his use of the letter form as a method in the first person, he did not choose what one would now consider the best point of view from which to present the story. Granted that women are prone to confide their most intimate secrets, there are yet limits to their confidences, particularly those in written form, and it seems incredible that Pamela should have written all that she did. In fact, a woman of Pamela's supposed character and delicacy would have stated her fears to her parents in such undetailed terms that there would have been no story at all. The third person-omniscient, with the omniscience of the author limited to Pamela's consciousness, would have been the more appropriate form. However, such a self-conscious and perfect use of the third person was not known in Richardson's time, and he used the point of view that he could handle most artistically.

In Clarissa Harlowe, Richardson shows improvement in use of the point of view in some directions and shows new faults in others. There are no inserted synopses by the editor. The conclusion(1) is supposed to have been written by Mr. Belford and there is only a Postscript of some forty pages added by the editor to answer objections made to the catastrophe and to other passages. In this Postscript, the editor becomes identified with the author; this happens again

in Sir Charles Grandison, in which the editor adds a concluding note of three pages answering objections. That these notes are added at the end shows again the writer's notion of keeping to some use of the point of view, but it is also noticeable that he is not so particular in these two novels (as he was in Pamela) about appearing as editor rather than author, undoubtedly because he is not so concerned about the claim of truth in the latter two novels. That the artistry displayed in the introduction, or intrusion of "editor" or "author" is in direct ratio to the claimed authenticity of the story should be a proof to the effect that the consciousness of the point of view as an art and the striving for verisimilitude rose hand in hand. Authors eventually discovered that- quite aside from any childish desire to make readers really believe a story to be the very truth- it was easier for a reader to accept, believe, and enjoy a tale as he read it, if the author were not constantly talking to him, interrupting his imaginative transmigration, and showing only too plainly that "it was only a story."

Aside from editor's intrusions, the point of view in Clarissa Harlowe and Sir Charles Grandison is not so well used in some instances as in Pamela. In Clarissa, which contains five hundred thirty-seven (537) letters in all, there are twenty-seven (27) letter writers, and consequently as many points of view. In a book of reasonable length, such a collection of letters from so many people would be a "hodge-podge of letters, not a novel. In so long a novel (eight volumes), it is possible to become acquainted with most of the characters, and there is ample room to develop, or present two, even three or four points of view, completely, but there is no excuse for such a number of correspondents.

Although the novel is written about Clarissa, and it is her story, as Pamela is Pamela's story, she writes ^{not} quite a third of the letters, and Lovelace, the hero-villain, is responsible for a few more than Clarissa. ~~About~~ ~~then~~ ~~two~~ thirds of the novel, then, is from the points of view of the two principal characters. In so long a novel, two points of view hold the attention better than one; a little variety is very welcome. The reader knows Clarissa's fears; he knows Lovelace's plans, and he fears for Clarissa when she is yet in ignorance of the next move of her Nemesis. Suspense is gained by this method, and it is gained more artistically in the letter form than in a novel in which one group of characters are carried to an exciting point and left with events undecided while the author goes back, as Hardy does, with a bold "meanwhile," to another set of characters. The letters of Belford (who writes ^{nearly} one sixth of the entire number) and of Miss Howe (who writes one ninth of them), with those of Lovelace, make possible Clarissa's natural, long silence after the accomplishment of the crime, and aid in suspensive treatment. Miss Howe's letters are justified by the slight relief they offer from Clarissa's harassed tone. It is possible, by reason of Belford's constant reappearance throughout the book, or books, for Richardson to conclude Clarissa's unhappy career without the aid of her letters and without the necessity of introducing new writers, or new points of view at a critical time. Thus far, Richardson's use of the point of view is artistic.

Of the other twenty-three letter writers, the point of view of none is important. They write between nine and ten per cent (or one tenth) of the letters and, since theirs are rather shorter than those of the principal characters, less than nine percent of the novel. Colonel Morden writes ten; Mrs. Norton, eleven. None of the others write more

than five; some, only two; and eleven, only one letter each. We do not become acquainted with these people. They are of no great importance in the story. If they are used, it is chiefly as tools, and as such they should be kept in the background, and not be given a momentary flash of the spotlight with their one or two letters.

For example, the letters of Joseph Leman offer only a slight hint as to Lovelace's machinations concerning Clarissa (information that could have been supplied by Lovelace to Belford in a few sentences) and seem to be inserted merely to show Richardson's ability to write from the point of view of a low class individual who could not spell. We have had Clarissa's story cubed- from the point of view of the hero-villain, from a man friend of his, from a woman friend of the heroine- and an inside view from the heroine herself. Other points of view are only annoying.

This fault is again evident in Sir Charles Grandison, in which there are twenty-one(21) letter writers (or points of view) for three hundred nineteen(319) letters, one hundred eighty-six(186), or about fifty-eight(58) percent of these from the point of view of the heroine, less than thirty(30) percent from the hero, and only twelve(12) percent of the letters from the nineteen minor characters. As in Clarissa Harlowe, there is a greater number of letters from the "lead" than from the "star." However, in Clarissa, the difference in numbers of letters between "lead" and "star" is very little. In Sir Charles Grandison, only one volume out of the seven can be said to be- to any extent- from the hero's point of view. This is the fifth volume, in which Sir Charles writes twenty-eight(28) letters to Miss Byron's six(6). On the whole, Sir Charles is presented from Harriet Byron's point of view.

Here is one of these rare cases when a form of the first per-

son is preferable to the third. Occasionally, a character may be made more interesting or likeable by being presented from the point of view of a relative, or a devoted friend. In Harry Richmond, Meredith's one novel in the first person, the remarkable and eccentric character of Richmond Roy is seen through the eyes of a worshipping child and (as Harry grows up) a loving son. By this device we are tricked into liking a character we might otherwise have very little sympathy with. We can excuse Harry's overlooking his father's discrepancies where we could not excuse Meredith for open indulgence.

It is essential that this monster of virtue (Sir Charles) be presented from the point of view of an adoring woman. Even so offered, he is quite too perfect to please us. Given only from his own point of view, he would be insufferable. Richardson probably would not agree with us that Sir Charles is a prig, but he must certainly have had sufficient consciousness of the point of view to see that his "man of honor" would prove more pleasing to his public from the point of view of the woman who loved him than from his own, or he would not have made poor Harriet write twice as many letters as Sir Charles. Harriet has entirely too many letters to write, but for this fault we must blame the prolixity of the writer, not his use of the point of view, which is- in this instance- very fortunate.

The nineteen lesser characters offer some material in the advancement of the story, as in Clarissa Harlowe, but their letters are as unnecessary and as inartistic in effect as an intrusion of details unknown to the hero in a novel of the first person. If there is an exception to be made, it is in the case of Lady Clementina. Predecessors of Richardson who used the letter form were less ana-

lytic, less capable of reproducing the point of view absolute of their characters. They used the letter merely to tell the story and might better have used the direct narrative. Richardson falls into this fault occasionally, usually in the letters of unimportant characters, but-in the main- he uses the letter as an "instrument of vivisection,"^{and} makes the most of the point of view of each leading character.

With Smollett's first novel, published the year ~~of~~ Clarissa Harlowe, 1748, we return to the picaresque narrative in the first person. Like other picaresque heroes, Roderick Random explains, consistently enough, "How I understood the particulars of my birth will appear in the course of these memoirs,"⁽¹⁾ and it appears that he learned them through his father, met with in Spain. But this narrative adds no more to the use of the point of view as an art than any of Defoe's tales. Peregrine Pickle and Ferdinand Count Fathom, as narratives in the third person, will be discussed later, but the Memoirs of a Lady of Quality⁽²⁾ should be mentioned here. These Mem-oirs, which are- of course- in the first person, direct narrative, occupy ninety-one(91) pages of the book, Peregrine Pickle; they are very like Moll Flanders and Roxana, both in method and in subject matter. In this same novel (Peregrine Pickle), one finds inserted the Memoirs of Mr.M. Since Smollett's ~~works~~ works in the first person, direct narrative, are really picaresque tales, not novels, and since they illustrate no advance in the use of the point of view, it is useless to discuss them here.

Smollett does realize considerable success in the use of sev-

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1. Roderick Random- page 5.
2. Peregrine Pickle- pages 335- 426.

eral points of view (that is, in the use of contrasted view points of several characters, each given in the first person) in his one novel in the letter form, Humphrey Clinker. There are, in this novel, seven letter writers responsible for eighty (80) letters. The heroine of such plot as there is writes only eleven letters, or ~~between one eighth~~ and one seventh of the total number. Her brother Jerry, from whose point of view part of her story is presented, writes twenty-seven (27) letters, or more than one third of the total, and her uncle, who has very little to say of her lingering love affair, writes twenty-five letters, or about a third also. Jenkins writes nine (9); Tabby, six (6) and Wilson and Loyd one (1) each. The latter two could have been very well dispensed with. Those of Tabby and Jenkins could easily have been excluded so far as story is concerned, but no reader who can tolerate Ring Lardner now and then would exclude them. Moreover, their point of view is interesting.

Smollett uses a number of letter writers with greater success than Richardson for two principal reasons. Smollett has greater versatility in style and characterization than Richardson. He is more concerned with satire and with contrasting points of view in Humphrey Clinker than he is with plot. Lydia's little romance is but a slight frame work, upon which Smollett hangs a satire on Methodism and essays on London and on Bath, social criticisms and cynicisms. Bramble is Smollett himself, very nearly a misanthrope. Lydia, the unsophisticated one, delighting in all the new scenes, is at the opposite end of the plank. Jerry teeters in the middle. The letters of Jenkins and Tabby remind one of Defoe's argumentum ad absurdum; whatever they champion they make ridiculous. The contrast between descriptions of an act as written by the performer, ^{or} a sympathetic onlooker, and by

an unsympathetic observer is often amusing, and the differing emotions aroused by scenes- the contrasting points of view- often produce a humorous effect, never found in Richardson.

Although there are a number of points of view there are no inconsistencies; Here again consistency and the claim to truth are united. Smollett says in his Preface, "I have not deviated from nature in the facts, which are all true in the main, although the circumstances are altered and disguised, to avoid personal satire." (1). To carry out this pretense, Smollett put in his introduction a letter to Mr. Henry Davis, Bookseller in London, from Jonathan Dustwich, "As touching what prosecutions may arise from printing the private correspondence of persons still living," (2), and the answer of Mr. Henry Davis, encouraging Jonathan Dustwich in his project.

It is a matter of small import whether the thin thread of plot running through Humphrey Clinker had a truthful foundation, or no. The descriptions of cities, social conditions, and new cults could only have been made on actual observation. Because Smollett was more concerned with satirizing society and with contrasting points of view than with plot, he secured, to a higher degree than Richardson, the point of view absolute of each character. He never sacrificed, to narrative interest, the mood, the imaginative coloring of a scene, or the reaction of a character. For the purposes of rapid fire contrast of opinions and points of view, there is no form of the third person and no other form of the first person so appropriate as the letter form. The shifts from letter to letter make the shifts from one point of view to another seem less forced than those in a novel in the third person, such as Meredith's Egoist. Here are two contrasting

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1. Humphrey Clinker, Preface- page viii.
2. Ibid page 1.

points of view, Sir Willoughby's and Clara Middleton's, given completely, and something of a third, Laetitia's. But I would not recommend that such a novel as Meredith's Egoist be put into letter form, despite contrasting points of view, for the novel is not a social satire, nor a travelogue; it is a novel of plot and character, with a good deal of plot incident. Such a novel becomes unduly long and very tedious in letter form, but for purposes of social satire combined with striking contrasts in view point, the letter form, ~~as it is used~~ by Smollett, is unsurpassed.

Turning to Sterne, we find again the narrative in the first person. There are three very particular differences between Sterne's two principal works, Tristram Shandy and A Sentimental Journey. Tristram Shandy, the narrator, is not the most interesting character of the tale; Yorick is the narrator and principal character of his story. Tristram Shandy is the direct narrative, written after events are decided; A Sentimental Journey exhibits a strange mixture of forms of the first person- much of it "written to the moment." Neither story has any unified plot, but A Sentimental Journey has a fairly definite, usually chronological sequence of incident, while Tristram Shandy is built upon the process of association, a curious method, known as "Shandyism." ^{Both} A stories are related as true narratives.

In Tristram Shandy is found a presentation of a father from a son's point of view- an experiment somewhat similar to that of Meredith in Harry Richmond, mentioned on page thirty five. In this case, the object is not to make the reader like the father, but to heighten the humor, for the point of view is that of a humorous and humorsome boy. Like Defoe's and Smollett's heroes, Tristram explains that he got his early history from his uncle Toby and from papers of his mother, but it is a great strain on the mind to ima-

gine anyone's recording or telling him so much that is utterly trivial, and if the point of view is consistent, nothing else impresses one as so being. "The story he has to tell," Raleigh says, "if it can be supposed to exist, is nothing, but a starting point for digressions, an occasion for defining all that is not his story, but to use the favorite figure of Mr. Walter Shandy, might, could, would, or should have some possible, probable, or conceivable bearing on what would be, or ought to be, his story." (1). It may be that Sterne has colored his first person with more of the tone of real reminiscence than Defoe or Smollett, but aside from this there is nothing good to say of the technique of the story. Since Tristram Shandy is not really a novel, but a sort of curious exercise, it is not worth while to discuss it at length in connection with the use of the point of view.

A Sentimental Journey cannot, strictly speaking, be called a novel, ^{but it is almost one.} but it is too subjective a story to be classed with either novels of romantic adventure, or ^{with} picaresque tales. The mingled uses of the first person are curious, but not so curious as the method of Tristram Shandy. The first twenty-one pages are reminiscent in tone. They form an introduction to a kind of Travelogue-Journal—the sort of introduction that a man who had written a Journal, and who decided suddenly to publish it, might offer as an explanation for having written it, and as ^a synopsis of events leading to the opening of the Journal. The introduction opens dramatically, with no indication of setting. "They order," said I, "this matter better in France." — "You have been in France?" said my gentleman." (2). Following the introduction is a twelve page Preface, or essay on

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1. Raleigh- page 196

2. Sentimental Journey, vol. I.-page 1.

travellers, written in the *Désobligeant* in France, at the moment that Sterne (or Yorick) has decided to write a Journal. From this point on, much of the story is "written to the minute," in the manner of "familiar" letters, but there are digressions. There is "The Fragment,"⁽¹⁾ the story of a notary, translated from a bit of paper. The story is not told as our traveller remembered it; it is given to us exactly as he read it. But at least, the narrator had a written document to supply; he did not attempt to make us believe that he remembered word for word a long story related to him, as *Peregrine Pickle* is supposed to have done in the case of The Memoirs of a Lady of Quality. There is another "Fragment" on the town of Aldera, a bit of legend, rather than of fact observed by Yorick.⁽²⁾ The passage called "The Translation" is not a relation of events of the moment, but a return into the past to explain to future readers of the Journal the writer's meeting with the Marquisina di F, in London.⁽³⁾ There are little personal essays on such subjects as "The Wig," or upon the "French sublime, that is more in the word and less in the thing,"⁽⁴⁾ or upon the "Dwarf" in France.⁽⁵⁾ Besides these, the novel is punctuated with little philosophic, or epigrammatic utterances, and heroic apostrophes. "Hail, ye small sweet courtesies of life,"⁽⁶⁾ Yorick writes, in the heroic manner of Fielding, preparing for the approach of Sophia. "In transports of this kind," he records wisely, "the heart, in spite of the understanding, will say too much."⁽⁷⁾ And again, "Surely- surely, man! it is not good for thee to sit alone."⁽⁸⁾

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|---------------------------|----------------|-----------|
| 1. A Sentimental Journey- | pages 132-142. | (vol. 2) |
| 2. Ibid - | vol. 1. | page 106. |
| 3. Ibid | " | " 182 |
| 4. Ibid | " | " 157, |
| 5. Ibid | " | " 188. |
| 6. Ibid | " | " 161. |
| 7. Ibid | " | " 188 |
| 8. Ibid | " | " 172. |

It is well that Sterne wrote in the first person, for had he chosen the third for his Sentimental Journey, all of the short essays and epigrams would doubtless have been given in the first person (à la Fielding), by Sterne, the author, rather than through the consciousness of Yorick, the hero. As the story is written, the various moralizations are either made at the instant that the writer, penning his Journal, is struck afresh by what he has experienced, or they are recollected as having been made, amidst other scenes, at the moment of the experience. Though there are digressions from the main narrative, there are no diversions from the first person, and no passages that a diarist might not insert in his Journal. Such consistency was not promoted by a desire to make the story appear true, but doubtless by the fact that it was true in the main.

We have, in the Sentimental Journey, the point of view absolute in the first person, raised to the nth degree. It is easier to identify oneself with Yorick than with the observer in Pilgrim's Progress, because the allegorical nature of Bunyan's book and the occasional omniscience of the observer makes it difficult for the reader to accept it literally as a personal experience. It is not to be expected that a novel in the third person (even one of Henry James's) should reach such a degree of subjectivity as A Sentimental Journey, nor would it be advisable for a novel of plot, involved plot incident, and strong character interest (that is, with several characters that should command interest) to be presented so subjectively, except in passages of emotional stress. A reader likes occasionally to find something tangible, to see a minor character as he is, as well as in the light in which he appears to the central character. It is doubtful, however, whether Sterne could have given us any more

disinterested an account of anything in the third person, for he was Yorick. In Stevenson's tales, the heroes are clearer headed, less sentimental individuals than Yorick. They record adventures, not moods, and they describe scenes as accurately as any historian might.

in Humphrey Clinker,

Like Smollett, Sterne is more concerned with observations and moods than with plot, yet Sterne is more subjective than Smollett, or much more emotional. We might easily recognize some of the places and people described in the letters in Humphrey Clinker, but we could never recognize scenes or people in A Sentimental Journey, were we to meet them, unless we were in the same sentimental mood as Yorick. In this story, every face and every building is seen through the eyes of the writer, "I," as colored by his emotion. His own feelings are minutely analyzed, à la James, and the emotions of others, like those of the "little maid," the bird, the old man with the donkey, are given as Yorick interprets them. Vaughan (in the Cambridge History of English Literature) points out that Sterne added something to the novel as an expression of personal, intimate views of life and tended toward the modern, psychological novel. (1)

Sterne's method is, in short, impressionistic. Like Poe, he aims to present not so much a story as a feeling, but not a feeling of horror. So subjective is he, for example, in his description of the scene and the occurrence at "The Remise Door" (2) that a sentimental reader might easily imagine himself, at the moment, standing there, holding the hand of the fair sister of the Count L. One must be Yorick or no one. A Sentimental Journey offers a use of the point of view/that is a forerunner of the use in the subjective portions of such novels as those of Henry James.

1. Vaughan- C.H.E.L., vol.X. chapter III. page (43)

2. A Sentimental Journey, vol.I, page

Part 2.

The use of the third person, by Fielding.

That the majority of novels written are in the third rather than in the first person should be proof that the third is generally thought to offer more privileges to the writer than the first person. The chief advantages offered by the third person have been briefly enumerated. That there are dangers in its use, and that these dangers and the unfortunate results arising from an inability to avoid them were manifest in the eighteenth century novel (and even in novels of the nineteenth century) can be easily shown. Authors who wrote chiefly fiction, and who had no particular desire to make the public believe their stories for the very truth turned naturally to the third person, because it offered greater freedom. But early novelists were not content with privileges; they took liberties. Restraint in the use of the point of view in the third person was not one of their virtues.

It may be thought strange that Smollett, one of the four great authors of the mid-eighteenth century, should not be listed with Fielding for discussion, but the truth is that Smollett is too picaresque greatly to interest students of ~~the~~ point of view. However, lest it be thought that he is dismissed in too summary a fashion, a few pertinent observations may be given. Although he follows Fielding chronologically, because his case may be briefly tried, Smollett may better precede in this discussion.

In Peregrine Pickle and in Ferdinand Count Fathom, Smollett follows his hero very closely, but this is no more than Cervantes or Nash had done. Smollett admits in prefaces and in the course of certain of his narratives that he has written in imitation of Lesage, Scarron, and Cervantes. In Ferdinand Count Fathom, he scolds

the reader for preferring to "accompany Don Quixote and his squire," or "Scarron's ragged troop of strollers," or "Gil Blas," to a "character in humble life."(1). Since there are more of adventures than there is of plot in the two novels mentioned, we must naturally stay with the hero, or miss the fun. In a novel of plot, we may be interested in the machinations of certain characters, not as the affairs of those characters, but as matters which may influence the life of the hero. But in a novel of adventure, only the events of the hero's life are of importance. Even the heroine, in a picaresque tale, if there is a heroine, is insignificant. Smollett, more than any of the picaresque writers he imitates, has a heroine and gives his story some unity by introducing a lady near the opening of his tale for the hero to marry at the end of the book. Very near the end of Ferdinand Count Fathom, Smollett deserts the rogue-hero to unite the heroine with her virtuous lover, but for the most part he walks with his leading character. He deserves, perhaps, more credit than preceding writers of his stamp, for having made a definite statement of method that has some bearing on the point of view. He finds an important central character indispensable to unity.(#)

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(#) Raleigh quotes the statement at length. "'A novel is a large diffused picture, comprehending the characters of life, disposed in different groups and exhibited in various attitudes, for the purposes of an uniform plan.---This plan cannot be executed with propriety, probability, or success, without a principal personage to attract the attention, unite the incidents, unwind the clue of the labyrinth, and at last close the scene, by virtue of his own importance.'"(2).

1. Ferdinand Count Fathom, page 5.

2. Raleigh, page 185.

Smollett's method often resembles Fielding's. He opens the novel, Ferdinand Count Fathom, as the author, with a discussion of the writing of histories of heroes. He gives histories, or biographies, of characters satirically. He is constantly present as "I," and he thinks it not "amiss to anticipate the remarks of the reader,"⁽¹⁾ or to answer here and there the moral and fastidious objections to the tale. That he realized that it was much better to give the life of his rogue-hero, Ferdinand, in the satiric third person than in the terms of the vain, vulgar, bragging adventurer (that is, in the first person), is evident from the author's remark, "The undertaking is now left to me of transmitting to posterity the remarkable adventures of Ferdinand Count Fathom, and by the time the reader shall have glanced over the subsequent sheets, I doubt not but he will bless God that the adventurer was not his own historian."⁽²⁾ Smollett's suggestion that he is writing a "history" is not to be taken seriously. The adventures of his heroes are based upon his own experiences, but he makes no claims of absolute verity in his prefaces.

Smollett and Fielding are equally inartistic in their use of the interpolated story. The Memoirs of a Lady of Quality and the Memoirs of Mr. M, occurring in Peregrine Pickle, have already been mentioned. They are not given through the hero's consciousness, as modified by his interpretation, but are set down in the first person as if the hero- who was present and a listener, or another, had taken down the very words as the narrator of the memoirs talked. Similarly, Tom Jones listens to the Man of the Hill's story, but the story is set down as it was given, not as it might be repeated by Tom. In Joseph Andrews, Watson's story (which has some bearing on the plot) is given at length,

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1. Ferdinand Count Fathom, page 4.

2. Ibid page 2.

and the story of Lennard and Paul is given as it was read by little Dick. Similarly, Mrs. Bennett's story is given verbatim in Amelia. Defoe assimilated such interpolations. Smollett and Fielding give them all in one piece, usually, unmodified by the hero's point of view. Such interpolated stories annoy any but the most leisurely of readers. They are obviously not legitimate parts of a novel.

Fielding's long intrusions, or digressions, are by no means confined to interpolated stories. In Joseph Andrews, Book II, Chapter XIII, there is a sixty-eight line essay on the division of the human species. Later, Fielding offers a "curious discourse,-- concerning public schools." Chapter X, of Book III, is a discourse between the poet and the player, "of no other use in this history but to divert the reader." In Tom Jones, Fielding's intrusions as essayist are briefer than those in Joseph Andrews, but not less frequent. He refers to a broken heart as "a distemper which kills many more than is generally imagined, and would have a fair title to a place in the bill of mortality, did it not differ in one instance from all other diseases-- viz., That no physician can cure it." (1). Again, he informs the reader "As sympathies of all kinds are apt to beget love, so experience teaches us that none have a more direct tendency this way than those of a religious kind between persons of different sexes." (2). Jonathan Wild opens with a familiar essay on the lives of great men. The subject of Amelia is stated in the first sentence, in the manner of the formal essay. "The various accidents which befell a very worthy couple after their uniting in the state of matrimony will be the subject of the following history." (3). By the time of the writing of Amelia,

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1. Tom Jones- page 24.
2. Ibid- page 19.
3. Amelia- page 1.

Fielding had learned to put some of the philosophical observations into the mouths of his characters, but- even so- those that are Fielding's rather than the character's can be readily detected.

It is not to be thought that Fielding was the only one of his century to offer bits of philosophy gratis to the reader, or that the habit had died out before the nineteenth century. Some of the great satirists of the nineteenth century, and some of the psychoanalysts also, were fond of giving their readers unassimilated pieces of philosophy from their superior fund of knowledge and experience. Thackeray and Dickens were given to long passages of satire, moralizing, or sentimentalizing. Eliot was extremely fond of treating the problems and characteristics of her characters in brief essays. Silas Marner opens with an informal essay on the superstitions of the country folk. Hardy threw out philosophy with generous largeness, particularly in his early books(1), and Meredith is often the philosopher, the familiar essayist, or the moralist.(2). Austen, who is nearer Fielding in time than any of the others, appears (from a study of Pride and Prejudice) to be less liberal with her personal philosophy than any of them. Such sentences as the one opening Pride and Prejudice is not an honest statement of Miss Austen's conviction. "It is a truth universally acknowledged that a single

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1. Hardy is probably most generous with his philosophy in Desperate Remedies. There is a short essay on the theme, "Many of these women who own to no moral code show considerable magnanimity when they see people in trouble." And there is a great number of passages of the sort- "We do not much mind what men think of us, provided that each thinks thereupon in isolation." "Women make confidences and then regret them." etc.

Desperate Remedies, Harper, N.Y. & London, 1896.

2. Aside from conversational intrusions, there are at least thirty passages in Rhoda Fleming that are definitely the remarks of Meredith, not of any of his characters.

man in possession of a good fortune must be in want of a wife."(1)

This is, certainly, a satiric statement.

If the essay-like interruptions are brief, we do not particularly dislike them, but, if they are long and delay the narrative, we find them tedious. Fielding apologizes at times for his digressions. After his essay on the division of the human species, he says, "And now, reader, I hope that thou wilt pardon this long digression, which seemed to me necessary to vindicate the great character of Mrs. Slip-slop."(2). He recognizes the fact that he is taking liberties, but he takes them shamelessly. "Reader," he says, "I think proper before we proceed any farther together to acquaint thee that I intend to digress, through this whole history,"(3) often as I see occasion, of which I am a better judge than any pitiful critic whatever."(3). And again, "As this is one of those deep observations which very few readers can be supposed capable of making themselves, I have thought proper to lend my assistance, but this is a favor rarely to be expected in the course of my work."(4). He probably would not have apologized for the digressions had it not been that the apology offered him an other occasion to address the reader familiarly.

Certainly, no author was ever fonder of conversing with his readers than Fielding, or fonder of violating his use of the third person by giving a bit of information in the first person as a biographer might. Dickens and Thackeray are given to chatting with readers, but they do not seem to be so addicted to the habit as Field-

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1. Pride and Prejudice- E.P. Dutton and Co. Publishers, page 1.

2. Joseph Andrews- Bk. II, Chapt. XIII, page 181.

3. Tom Jones- Bk. I, Chapt. II, page 7.

4. Ibid " " V, page 19.

ing. (@). Austen impresses a reader as being much more impersonal than any of these other satirists, (x) and more impersonal even than Meredith, (y) who so far surpassed these earlier writers in the matter of psychologizing that the reader expects him to surpass them also in technique. (#) Eliot drops an occasional "I am speaking now in relation to Raveloe," or "I will add," in Silas Marner, and Hardy sometimes includes the reader cordially in his "we." "We are brought to a day in February," or "we turn our our attention to the left hand." (1) And even the perfect Henry James speaks of Isabel as "our heroine." These last three novelists, as one might expect, considering their place in the history of the novel, do not indulge in such conversational familiarity as Fielding, and there is about them a seriousness often shared by Meredith- that softens the effect of the personal "I!" It is only the strict, twentieth century mind which finds a few asides objectionable. Fielding's conversational levity very often strikes the reader like a wink, or like a poke in the side. That he

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(@). Dickens begins his story of Oliver Twist speaking in the first person and remarks on his omission of what can be "of no possible consequence to the reader."

(x). Raleigh says, Austen "hardly ever, even as a narrator, speaks in her own person." page 264.

(#). Thackeray begins Vanity Fair in the third person, but from time to time he manifests himself by such remarks as, "Let us step into the coach," or "if Rebecca had determined in her heart upon making the conquest of this big beau (Joseph Sedley), I don't know ladies, we have any right to blame her." He speaks also of the novel as "the tune" he is "piping."

(y). For example, in the first chapter of Beauchamp's Career, there are thirty-five pronouns of the first person plural and seventeen of the first person singular. There are seven references to the reader as "you." Meredith says, in the first chapter of Rhoda Fleming, "My story is of two Kentish damsels," and the opening sentence of Sandra Belloni is "We are to make ~~the~~ acquaintance with some serious damsels

(1). Far from the Madding Crowd.

had some notion that he ought not to be too constantly at his reader's elbow seems evident from the fact that he prefixes an introductory chapter, to each of the books of Tom Jones, and introductions to three of the books of Joseph Andrews. "For this, our determination (that is, to include such chapters) we do not hold ourselves strictly bound to assign any reason; it being abundantly sufficient that we have laid it down as a rule necessary to be observed in all prosai-comic-epic writing." (1) But Fielding cannot apparently talk himself out in these resting places. The most casual reader must notice the author's constant use of the personal pronoun and his repetitions of "the reader". In chapter II of Tom Jones, which is no exceptional chapter, the writer appears ~~six~~ eight times as "I". He addresses the reader directly, or uses a pronoun referring to him, ~~twice~~. Again, ~~he~~ suggests to the reader, whom he has led unadvisedly to the top of a high hill, "Let us e'en venture to slide down together." (2) He is always anxious "to deal plainly with the reader", to "warn the reader", or to exhort the reader's imagination. His most naive appearance is in a foot note in Joseph Andrews, in which he tells the reader to imagine his own sweetheart in the place of the heroine.⁽⁴⁾ However entertaining he may find it, the student of the point of view condemns, has bad taste and poor technique, such familiarity. When Fielding says of the "pleasing slumbers--which a heart that hungers after goodness is apt to enjoy when thoroughly satisfied," "as these are possibly sweeter than what are occasioned by any other hearty meal, I should take more pains to display them to the reader, if I knew any air to recommend him to for the procuring such an appetite," (3)

(5)

1. Tom Jones, Book V, page 252.
2. Ibid, page 8.
3. Ibid, page 7.
4. Joseph Andrews, page 241.

it is as if the chef were to appear in the dining room among the guests.

Fielding sometimes so occupies his stage that he reduces his characters to the status of mere puppets for the moment. Thackeray, more frankly than any other of the best known nineteenth century novelists, refers to his characters as puppets. The last paragraph of his Vanity Fair reads, "Ah, Vanitas Vanitum! Which of us is happy in this world? Which of us has his desire? or having it, is satisfied? Come, children, let us shut up the box and the puppets, for our play is played out." Fielding gives a similar impression by ~~his~~ less direct statements. "Not to tire the reader by leading him through every scene of this courtship-"(1), and "we are obliged to bring our hero on the stage in a much more disadvantageous manner than we could wish."(2) The author's personal and mock-heroic apostrophe to Sophia is ill calculated to make the reader accept her as a real person. She had much better have been presented from Tom's point of view. Similarly, Fielding's "poetic and heroic" description of the parson's battle with the hounds gives the reader a laugh, but places the battle among the unreal legends of the mythological. Had at least a part of the description been given from the point of view absolute of Adam's, or of an interested onlooker, the reader might better imagine the reality of the fray.

Having discussed the more obvious mis-usages of the point of view in Fielding (that is, in interpolated stories, essay-like or philosophical digressions, and author's appearances in the first person to give a bit of narrative, or to converse with the reader), we have yet the methods of satire, of characterization, and of story-

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1. Tom Jones, page 39.

2. Ibid, page 53.

telling to consider, each in its relation to the point of view. As most closely related to philosophic observations and personal intrusions, the method of satire should be considered first. The point was made, in connection with the study of Don Quixote, that there are several uses in which perfect impersonality on the part of the author is not to be desired. One of these is a case in which certain characters, or events, lend themselves readily or naturally to satiric treatment. Many of Fielding's characters- among them, Mrs. Slip-slop, Lady Booby, and Miss Bridget- combine the qualities of hypocrisy and affectation that constitute for Fielding the true source of the ridiculous. In all satires, the author can be felt, although he need not be seen.

Authors usually take one of four attitudes toward their characters: a sympathetic, a satiric, a sentimental, or a scientific attitude. The sentimental is, of course, a saturated degree of the sympathetic. Dickens and Thackeray combine the sentimental and the satiric; Dickens being more inclined toward the former attitude; Thackeray, toward the latter. Fielding combines both attitudes in Amelia, with the sentimental in the larger proportion. In his other noted works, the satiric attitude is most evident. In Jonathan Wild, it reaches harshness. In Joseph Andrews and Tom Jones, the satiric is tempered by a sympathetic attitude toward certain characters. The Russians incline toward the scientific attitude, and- for that reason- seem cold to us. The writer who, having chosen representative characters, restrains sympathy from approaching sentimentalism, and who tempers his attitude judiciously with scientific interest, approaches most nearly to the attitude of the normal reader. Therefore, in reading a book by such a writer, we are not so conscious of the

author if he does not intrude personally, and we usually call such an author "an impersonal writer." We feel Dickens and Thackeray and Fielding (in Amelia) in the sentimental tone, because that is not, generally speaking, the tone of thinking people of our day. The authors mentioned might consider us cold, and- in another generation- the tone of the Russians may be looked upon as sympathetic. Except when one of them makes a brief public appearance, we are not so aware that Eliot, Hardy, Meredith, or James (particularly the latter), is just behind the scenes, because theirs is usually the normal, modern attitude. They are among the writers we generally speak of as being impersonal. We are aware of Eliot when she is in a moralizing mood- an attitude that combines the worst qualities of the scientific and the sentimental; and we are aware of Meredith, when he is satiric.

The satiric tone is one that man (intelligent man, at least) has probably never failed and probably never will fail to recognize. There are a great many people who can be sarcastic upon occasion, usually over trivial and personal matters, but there are very few people in the world, comparatively speaking, who can be delicately or wittily satiric. Perhaps it will be easiest to explain what is meant by 'feeling the author in a satiric novel' by discussing a statement that Raleigh makes concerning Jane Austen. He says that her initial sentence in Mansfield Park, "There are certainly not so many men of large fortune in the world as there are pretty women to deserve them;" is not Miss Austen's serious opinion; it is the opinion of the Ward family, and Miss Austen is "Putting herself" at their point of view.⁽¹⁾ On the preceding page, Raleigh had written that the authoress never identified herself with her characters. The two statements create a

1. Raleigh, page 264.

slight ambiguity. We can agree with all that Raleigh says except that she is "putting herself" at the point of view of the family." If she does not entirely identify herself with a character, she cannot offer the remark absolutely from his point of view. The statement opening Pride and Prejudice(1) expressed Mrs. Bennett's idea (as the statement just quoted expresses the Ward family's idea), but it is not in her terms. She could neither think nor express herself so epigrammatically. She would think, "There's a nice young man living in the big house now. He has plenty of money and servants. He has everything that a man needs to make him happy except a good wife. I imagine he must be lonely in that big house with no kith nor kin." We would read it without a smile and think there was probably something in it.

So when Fielding writes of Bridget Allworthy, "She was so far from regretting want of beauty, that she never mentioned that perfection, if it can be called one, without contempt, and would often thank God she was not so handsome as Miss Such-a-one, whom beauty had led into errors which she might have otherwise avoided,"⁽²⁾ we see Bridget and feel Fielding. The remark approximates what she might have said, but not what she would have thought, and is not therefore from her point of view. On the other hand, the author says of the doctor what he would never have remarked publicly, but probably thought, although it is not expressed in his terms of thinking. "The doctor began to lament-- his marriage with another woman, who was not only still alive, but what was worse, known to be so by Mr. Allworthy."⁽³⁾

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1. Quoted on page 49.
2. Tom Jones, page 6.
3. Ibid page 45.

In such passages, Fielding is as impersonal as satire will permit; but he is not always so reticent. He says of Bridget, "I would attempt to draw her picture, but that is already done by a more able master, Mr. Hogarth,-- in his print of a winter's morning." (1). He must constantly bring his "I" into satiric passages and point out to the reader such absurdities as the "great character of Mrs. Slipslop." It is not surprising that Jane Austen, who wrote fifty years after Fielding, should have realized more nearly-- in fact, almost completely-- the twentieth century ideal of so-called 'impersonal' satire, although it is perhaps surprising that she should have so exceeded Dickens and Thackeray. Her lack of sentimentality probably explains the situation somewhat, but that is not a matter to be decided here. Hers was a dry, subtle satire, and she was a modest sort of person, who had no more desire to appear as author in her satire than to be known publically as a writer of novels. Fielding loved to hold the center of his stage. If he realized that he was technically improper, he would have denied that he was inartistic, and he made his own laws. He refused to do as the historian, who sets down various reports and leaves it to "your own conjecture." (2). All of this discussion of satire has to do with Fielding's inability to present the point of view absolute of a character, but let us first consider his method of characterization.

Fielding's characters are presented in character sketches, biography, and in action; that is, in essay, historical narrative, and in drama. This method of characterization has persisted even unto Henry James. Eliot, Hardy, and Meredith added the method of making a character intimately known by giving long excursions into his mind.

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1. Tom Jones, page 50.
2. Jonathan Wild, page 23.

James used this method more than any other, and he eventually discarded the character sketch and the historical, or biographical survey. But Fielding knew nothing of such mental excursions. He describes his Adams, his Tom, his Sophia, tells what sort of person each was, gives incidents of the earlier life of each, as a biographer might (he begins with Tom as a baby), and finally presents them dramatically. In all this he appears personally and discusses the character with the reader. It is surprising that he did not give less biography, for he says, "An incident will set the characters of these two lads (Tom and Blifil) more fairly before the discerning reader than is in the power of the longest dissertation." (1). In the ^{case of} Sophia, he does refuse to tell too much about her lest it be a "kind of tacit affront to our reader's understanding, and may rob him also of that pleasure which he will receive in forming his own judgment of her character." (2) He gives less in one piece than Hardy does, and we might consider his forbearance artistic were it not for his constant "tips" to the reader, as the character appears from time to time.

Since he was first a dramatist, then a novelist, it is not strange that Fielding presented characters dramatically. He is the first of the writers we have discussed who was influenced more by drama and epic than by biography or journal. Cross records that a French reader discovered in Tom Jones fifty scenes suitable for the stage. (3). Cross has said enough of dramatic scenes, in his History of Henry Fielding, ^{so} that we need not discuss them here.

Fielding is the first of the so-called 'omniscient' writers; but this is what I should call dramatic, rather than psychological omnis-

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1. Tom Jones, page 123.

2. Ibid page 176.

3. Cross- History of Henry Fielding, Vol. I, page 144.

science; that is, he sees everything, he knows almost everything, but his is not the all-permeating omniscience of a Meredith or a Henry James. He does not actually get into the mind and consciousness of a character.

His restraint is not due to a desire to appear authentic. He sometimes speaks of himself as a biographer, but even Henry James calls himself Isabel's biographer. Fielding sometimes says he must leave something to the "reader's own conjecture," or he denies knowledge of some fact, as of the actuality of Dr. Blifil's religion, but these are not serious limitations of omniscience. The reader knows Blifil for a hypocrite as well as if Fielding had given him a sly wink. Such protestations of incomplete knowledge as that relating to Mr. Allworthy's "very particular" business in London, of which Fielding says, "I know not what it was, but judge of its importance by its having detained him so long from home," (1) are a part of his occasional pretense to authentic biography. He often uses the biographical or historical device of explaining the source of portions of his information. He claims to have had all of Joseph's speech on Charity "which I could get him to recollect." (2). He says he learned of the jokes played upon Adams, "who was too good-natured to know that they were jokes," from a servant. (3). Such explanations are a mere humorous pretense, probably thrown out a little to satisfy the anticipated questions of readers, "How does he know?" (#). It would seem that he might have gathered much of his information for Tom Jones through the Allworthy

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1. Tom Jones, page 9.
2. Joseph Andrews, page 253.
3. Ibid page 264.

(#). Esenwein says (p.115), "When the narrator keeps absolutely out of sight, we refrain from asking, 'how do you know?'"

household, but he does not explain how he knew what passed in Molly Seagrim's house, when none of the Allworthys were present, nor what occurred in Lady Booby's room, nor in Lady Bellaston's chambers, or in Sophia's boudoir, nor in a thousand other places, and he usually claims to know everything. In each of his four chief works of fiction, one may find phrases to the effect that he could satisfy the reader's curiosity if he would, or that "we will lock up a scene which we do not think proper to expose."(1).

Fielding did not care whether his novels passed for the very truth or not. We know that some of his characters, such as Adams,(2) Amelia, and Thwackum, are taken from life, but Fielding does not claim in his prefaces that his stories are true histories. One would naturally expect that, in burlesquing Pamela, Fielding would have used the letter form, but he probably thought it too confining. Since he did not expect his novels to be received as true stories, he saw no reason to limit himself to what one, or even three or four characters, might know. He intended to tell whatever he wished and to tell it whenever he wished. He sometimes holds up a bit of knowledge. He says in introducing Molly, "We have hitherto dropt no hint of anyone likely to be a rival to Sophia."(3). Such a device is awkward enough in the third person; it would be more artificial were Jones telling the story. However, had Jones been the narrator, there would certainly have been greater unity in the use of the point of view throughout the book.

Fielding does not limit his omniscience in the sense of limiting it to one, or a few, characters, but his is, nevertheless, a limited. It is the omniscience of the eye of the motion picture camera-

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1. Amelia, page 219.

2. Fielding announces that he is to present the life of a good man, for the benefit of "those who have not had the happiness of knowing the original." - Joseph Andrews, page 2.

3. Tom Jones, page 200.

not the omniscience of the Gods. He is the invisible, discerning observer on every scene, from Allworthy's private court to Miss Mathew's parlor. We are told that suspicion lodged in Mrs. Partridge's mind, that Allworthy received his first bad impression of Tom from Blifil, that Booth fell into a melancholy. Fielding even declares, at one point, that he will tell "what passed in the mind of Sophia," but the observation, "she now first perceived the weakness of which she had been guilty,"(1) is not in Sophia's terms of thought, and is not a thousandth part of what the poor girl must have been thinking after discovering Tom's weakness. Similarly, when the author records that "Joseph and Fanny felt perhaps a little less anxiety than Oedipus himself when his fate was revealing,"(2) he is very obviously not writing in their terms. He promises that "there are no perfections of the mind which do not discover themselves in that perfect intimacy to which we intend to introduce our reader with this charming young creature."(3) But a reader is never really allowed to identify himself with Sophia, to live in her consciousness, and one is moved to remark facetiously that perhaps Fielding considered the "Outside of Sophia," or her "beautiful frame," too lovely to be "disgraced by an inhabitant unworthy of it."

He suggests by minute physical detail what a character is thinking or feeling. For example, the flutterings and blushes of Sophia indicate her love for Tom, and the reader is openly encouraged to guess the secret. Again and again, Fielding invokes the imagina-

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1. Tom Jones, page 235.
2. Joseph Andrews, page 376.
3. Tom Jones, page 176.

tion of the reader to discover secret emotion. "Oh, reader, conceive if thou canst the joy which filled the breasts of these lovers on this meeting; and if thine own heart doth not sympathetically assist thee--- I pity thee sincerely from mine own."(1).

Fielding evidently had what he considers an aesthetic dislike of delving deep into some minds, as well as a technical inability to realize perfectly the point of view absolute of a character. He says of Master Blifil, "As he did not, however, outwardly express any such disgust, it would be an ill office in me to pay a visit to the inmost recesses of his mind, as some scandalous people search into the most secret affairs of their friends, and often pry into their closets and cupboards, only to discover their poverty and meanness to the world."(2). The latter part of the statement is a key to Fielding's method of introspection. He fails to realize the point of view absolute because his visits into the mind of a character are not those of perfect omniscience, but the sort of searchings (colored by his own personality) that a ~~man~~ might make into the mind of a friend, or an enemy either, provided he knows the enemy well.

Satire blocks the way to perfect omniscience with most authors. It is not to be expected that an author will, or can, completely identify himself- at any time- with a character he is satirizing, and for that reason- the reader in turn cannot identify himself with the character. Meredith almost identifies himself with Sir Willoughby in certain passages, but the memory of his delicately satiric tone lingers in the reader's ears so that he cannot completely accept Willoughby's vision at any time, though he can see the workings of the

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1. Joseph Andrews, page 293.

2. Tom Jones, page 181.

Egoist's mind. Clara Middleton's point of view absolute he gives to perfection, but he never satirizes her, and then Meredith is much better known to the world as a psycho-analyst than as a satirist. Fielding's omniscience is like that of most of the satirists. Raleigh says of Jane Austen, "Sympathy with her characters she frequently has, identity never. Not in the high-souled Elizabeth Bennett--- not even in Anne Elliot of Persuasion is the real Jane Austen to be found." (1) So Fielding never takes completely the point of view of a character. He might, it seems, have identified himself with one of the characters with whom he sympathized. E.F. Benson, of the twentieth century, has given a dual performance in An Autumn Sowing. A large part of the story is presented from the point of view absolute of Mr. Keeling, and a little of it from that of Alice, Keeling's daughter. The latter is such a simple soul that more of the author's "commentary" is necessary than in the case of her father. When Mrs. Keeling is presented by the author, rather than from the point of view of either of the others, she is treated satirically. Here is a masterpiece in the artistic use of the point of view. But Fielding is not capable of any such dexterous sleight of hand; he can juggle an enormous number of balls, but he must do it all openly and talking all the while. Dramatic representation probably appealed very strongly to Fielding, and he very likely had not the power of a psycho-analyst latent in him, had he desired to develop such a power even.

In the use of the point of view relative, Fielding does not limit himself. He skips from Allworthy to Tom, to Molly, to Mrs. Partridge, to Bridget, to Blifil, to Jenny, and so on. So, also, satirists, such as Austen, Dickens, and Thackeray shifted from one character to another, or from one group to another. Thackeray even

moved from one monde to another. In Pride and Prejudice, Austen shifts from Elizabeth to Darcy in one sentence. "Occupied in observing Mr. Bingley's attentions to her sister, Elizabeth was far from suspecting that she was herself becoming an object of interest to his friend." (It would perhaps be more accurate to say that this is no shift at all; it is from Jane Austen's point of view.) Such shifts are not so disturbing in these satiric writers as they are later in Eliot and Hardy and Meredith, where one is let into the consciousness of almost every character. (#). Adams and Joseph are, of course, on the stage most of the time in Joseph Andrews. Tom, Allworthy, and Sophia are the chief actors in Tom Jones. Jonathan Wild holds the stage like an old picaresque hero, and Booth and Amelia are the chief figures on the scene in Amelia.

Besides the indications that Fielding knew that he ought not to appear so often (a bit of knowledge that he apparently had no respect for), there is one slight indication that he had some notion of a use of the point of view. In the Preface to Joseph Andrews, he says of the vices he means to introduce, "they are never the principal figure on the scene at the time." (1). To prevent vice from being the "principal figure on the scene," he usually has such a scene introduced from the point of view relative of a character who is, for the moment at least, virtuous. For instance, Tom discovers Sharp with Molly; Mr. Waters discovers his wife with Tom; Joseph's is the

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(#) In his early novels, Hardy does not realize the point of view absolute, but he attempts it, and in The Return of the Native and in Tess of the D'Urbervilles, he succeeds very well.

1. Joseph Andrews, Preface, page xliii.

point of view relative when Diaper offers a rudeness to Fanny, and, in another scene of this sort, Fanny's is the point of view relative, and she is ever a virtuous creature. When there is no virtuous creature on the scene, and none to enter, as in the scene between Miss Matthews and Booth(1), Fielding "locks up" the worst and is himself an intruder to comment upon vice and to plead every excuse he can think of for his hero.

Fielding, then, lacks the unity in the use of the point of view which Richardson, Smollett, and Sterne secured to a considerable degree in the first person. Richardson presents several points of view in the letter form, but shifts are not abrupt, for one turns naturally from one letter to another and so from one point of view to another. Pamela could have been more delicately presented in the third person than from her own point of view, but Richardson showed a consciousness of an artistic possibility of the point of view by presenting Sir Charles very largely from Miss Byron's point of view. Smollett, in Humphrey Clinker, and Sterne, in A Sentimental Journey, achieved the point of view absolute to a higher degree than Richardson, because they were less concerned with story than he. Smollett was conscious of the possibilities of the letter form as a means of expressing contrasting points of view. Sterne took the journal form as a means of telling a slight narrative and of giving moods and psychologic reactions. His point of view is so absolute that the reader can see nothing, except as Sterne, or Yorick, sees it. The influence of the actual autobiography, biography, journal, and letter and of the readers' desire for a true story is to be felt, in a gradually

declining degree, in the consistency shown in the use of the point of view by these three writers, and in the choice of the first person.

Fielding did not care to make a claim to truth and was more influenced by the drama than by the biography or journal. Naturally, he was less careful to keep his story within the consciousness of a few given characters. His was dramatic rather than psychological omniscience. Like air, he permeated ~~into~~ all space, but seldom ~~into~~ the mind of man. Like most satirists, he fails to give the point of view absolute. He shows a slight consciousness of the possibilities of the point of view in his presentation of a vicious scene from the point of view relative of a virtuous person. We have, in his novels, a "diffuse picture of life," but we do not know to any extent how the parts of the picture seem to the characters in the story. The general use Fielding makes of the point of view is inartistic. Had one of the characters, in each novel, been the narrator, there would certainly have been greater unity in the use of the point of view, but one should take into consideration that Fielding was ~~the~~ the pioneer novelist to write real novels in the third person, and that we owe him something for ^{his} having broken away from the tradition of the first person that was used almost exclusively by his contemporaries.

Chapter IV.

A complete consciousness of the artistic possibilities in the use of the point of view, found in the theory and works of Henry James.

In Henry James, one may retrace many of the steps in the development of the satiric possibilities of the point of view. Mr. Beach has treated Henry James almost exhaustively in his Methods of Henry James, but there remain some few observations and comparisons that may be made.

Henry James used the first person, in his early days, in certain short stories. In My Friend Bingham, one of his earliest, the story is told in the first person, by an interested observer, but here the observer fails to be sufficiently interested. (1). In Master Eustace, the principal character tells the story, but, according to Mr. Beach, "he^(James) simply transfers to the person who tells the story, his own editorial omniscience." (2). James even wrote a tale in diary form, A Light Man. None of these stories are much read (#), and James ~~re~~ repudiated them. When he really found himself, his method involved the use of the third person.

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1. Beach, page 177.

2. Ibid page 179.

(#) James attempted a few stories for the events' sake rather than for the characters' sake, but these were not picaresque tales, but stories of the supernatural. If we were to pick a prototype in the eighteenth century, it would be not Smollett, or his like- but Walpole, author of the Castle of Otranto. In such a tale, we accept no one's point of view but our own.

At this sort of story, James tried his hand in The Romance of Certain Old Clothes, DeGray; a Roamnce, The Ghostly Rental. These very titles suggest the eighteenth century Gothic Romance. In a later story, Mr. Beach tells us that James succeeds in giving us the story from the point of view of a character in whom the events arouse a "moral terror as well as a thrill of the nerves," which the character in turn transmits to the reader. (Beach- page 185.)

Eliot, the great character-dissector, and Meredith the psycho-analyst, were guilty of many shifts in point of view. We follow one character a distance, then another. In The Egoist, Meredith approaches most nearly to the Method of Henry James. The novel is told chiefly from the points of view of Sir Willoughby (the Egoist) and of Clara Middleton, his fiancée. Where there are two such diversified points of view, it would be a pity not to have both.

That James became thoroughly conscious of his development of the use of the point of view as an art is quite evident from his discussions in his prefaces, particularly in that of The Ambassadors, in which he gives his great "'compositional law'" as "'that of employing but one center and keeping it all within my hero's consciousness,'" (1) and in that to the Wings of the Dove, in which he says, "'There is no economy of treatment without an adopted, a related point of view.'" (2) Let us see how well he keeps to his system.

One of the things that the modern reader has come to object to, as a rule, in the eighteenth and nineteenth century novels, is the intrusion of the author as "I", the showman addressing his audience and revealing his position behind his puppets.

James, too, is guilty of intrusion, though to a lesser degree than his predecessors. There are none of his novels in which he does not appear at odd, long-distanced intervals as "I", or "we" (magnanimously including the reader with himself). Even in his masterpiece, The Ambassadors, he writes, ~~in~~ discussing Strether's

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1. Methods of Henry James--Beach--Vol. XXI, page XV
2. " " " " -- " -- " XIX, page XVI

attitude towards meeting Weymarsh, on the very first page, of "the principle I have just mentioned as operating". In Portrait of A Lady, he speaks repeatedly of "our heroine", to "the reader". In the American, it is "Our Hero", "the reader", and "our story". Even in The Awkward Age, where--if anywhere--he should have recognized his place behind the scenes, he asks "the reader" again and again to imagine an "invisible observer". These intrusions are not very frequent, but they are unnecessary. The "I's" and "we's" could always be dispensed with, and an intelligent reader can perfectly well realize that he is seeing what an "invisible observer" might without the author's telling him so. It is not until the ^{twentieth}~~20th~~ century, in such writers as E. F. Benson, that we find an artistic use of the point of view without any intrusion of the author as "I".

James also intrudes as the biographer, philosopher, or chronicler, in his early novels. We are given pages and pages concerning Rowland Mallet's origin, all in a lump. The nearest approach to a "story within a story", that bane of Fielding and other eighteenth century writers, that we find in James, is the Countess's long-winded account of the life of Christina Light to Rowland, in Roderick Hudson. In the American, we have some summarized stories, such as that of Newsome's life, which he relates to Tristram, and the author condenses for his public. James speaks of himself as Isabel's biographer, in The Portrait, and introduces unnecessary lengths of her early history. This is a fault that disappears in James as he progresses. Indeed, it is little enough that we are told about Strether or Chad or Nanda Brookenham or "old Van" that we do not "make out" from their reactions at the moment, or that is not "brought out" in the conversation, and it is this

same "making out" things that is half the charm of the mature James.

Our author never uses the show-man trick of some nineteenth century novelists in ending a book, such as Thackeray displays at the end of Vanity Fair. At the end of Oliver Twist, Dickens says, "I would fain linger yet with a few of those among whom I have so long moved, and share their happiness by endeavoring to depict it." Meredith is not on such "chummy" terms with his reader or his characters, nor is he so much a show man as Thackeray; yet he approaches the latter's trick, at the end of the Egoist when he reverts to the point of view of the Comic Muse who "compresses her lips". At the conclusion of the Amazing Marriage, he speaks as the serious psychologist, analyzing character with a purpose. He speaks of the reading public as an infant--utterly deserting the point of view of his characters--and says, "I pray their patience here while that philosophy and exposure of character block the course along a road inviting to traffic of the most animated kind."

James leaves his endings in the hands of his characters, At the end of The Portrait, the last words are "Just you wait, Mr. Goodwood", uttered by Henrietta Stackpole. "'And there we are,' said Strether", is the last line of The Ambassadors. Others of his novels end in a similar fashion.

Before going more deeply into James' use of the interpretative third person, it would be well to consider the use of the dramatic third person. The materials of the drama, as we have seen, were the most useful materials of the satirists. Hardy was founder of dramatic representation, than Meredith and James. It is not that Meredith and James are not capable of drama, but that their predecessors, with the exception of Eliot, were not so able to "interpret" life through a given character as to present it objectively,

in motion, speech, and "manners". We are allowed in all of James' works to "make out" a certain amount from dialogue and outward expression; especially is this true of The Ambassadors. But he prefers interpretation through a given character. However, he attempted two entirely dramatic novels, The Awkward Age and The Outcry. In The Awkward Age, we have only a very tiny bit from almost everyone's point of view and precious little from anyone's. There are eight books, each named after a different character, each with a definite locality--usually one room--sometimes a house and the surrounding grounds, and a limited time--from an hour or so to two or three days to a book. Almost the entire story consists in dialogue. Trivial movements are described, and arrangement of persons on the scene. There is no description of momentous actions, no one robbed, murdered, or vamped. The method is dramatic, but not theatrical. He is never guilty of anything approaching melodrama.

At the opening of Book VI, we start with Vanderbank, who "is struck afresh with all that Mrs. Brook could take in". Occasionally we have such a vague moment in someone's consciousness. The author sometimes summarizes, as he does at the beginning of Book VI, past conversations and conclusions of the group concerning characters. The character who has come on first may be thinking of this conversation, or it may be merely the author's contribution; at any rate, it is brief. The author calls himself Van's "chronicler" (1), but as such he dares only put a question at rare intervals as to just what the young man may be thinking, or "taking in". We really have no "tips". We do not see Nanda through Van's eyes, or Van through hers. In fact, no one serves as interpreter. There are two great difficulties with this drama. The conversation is

1. The Awkward Age, Page 176. (70)

too subtle. We cannot, like Mrs. Brook, "float over"; like Cashmore, we "too heavily follow". And then, even for drama there should be a "Point of View Relative". There should be some main character that is usually on the stage. We feel from the beginning that Nanda is our heroine, but she does not appear until the one hundred and eighth page, and Mrs. Brook, Van, Longdon, Mitchy, and the Duchess all have their turns at holding the spotlight. The Awkward Age is an interesting book and an interesting experiment, but decidedly it "is not all that it should be". We have Professor Beach's authority that James succeeds better in the Outcry.

Shifts in point of view are not confined to The Awkward Age, but they are no where so frequent. Before proceeding to the works in which James attained a high degree of perfection, let us consider The American and The Portrait of a Lady, books that embody some of his early faults and many of his late excellent qualities. James, of course, never indulged in such extended shifts in point of view as Fielding, or Dickens, or Hardy, or Meredith, but he indulged in some unnecessary ones.

In the American, the author tells more about Valentin than the hero knew. "He had been known to say, within the limits of the family, that, light-headed as he was, the honor of the name was safer in his hands than in those of some others of its members."

(1) Again, we have a bit of Mrs. Tristram's point of view, and the results of her scrutiny of Newman. On the next page, the author speculates on her disinterestedness in Newman's love affair. Did she want him herself? Later, the singing of the Carmelite

1. The American, page 122-3. (71)

2. Ibid, page 163

nuns sounds to Newman like a dirge. The author intruded, in parentheses here to avoid confusion, to explain when Newman thinks he hears Claire's voice. "(We are obliged to believe that he was wrong, inasmuch as she had obviously not yet had time to become a member of the invisible sisterhood.)" (1) A few such intrusions as this do not detract from the intensity of our interest in the central character, from whose point of view the story is very largely told, but there is really no need for them. Newman "interprets" the story to a considerable extent. Certainly, he is always on the scene, but occasionally an acute reader "gets" more than Newman did, and now and then the author puts before the reader, or the "invisible observer", something that passed Newman. Although it is scarcely necessary to call our attention to these passages, and although such comments are outside the chosen "center of consciousness", which is Newman's, they are not utterly illegitimate. Where a character is simple, or naive, the author has a right to show his hand subtly and adroitly. This point I will bring up later in connection with "What Maisie Knew".

In The Portrait, strangely enough, there are more shifts in point of view than in the American and there are also more intrusions as the philosopher. Here is a novel interesting to dissect. The author opens the book with the setting, or scene--the old English home--tea on the lawn. The method of the first chapter is dramatic except for one passage. "It was a secret neither for his son nor for his visitor that his own (Mr. Touchetts's) experiment in matrimony had not been a happy one." (2) The pronoun "I" is encountered seven times in this chapter; "you", referring

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1. The American, page 421.
2. The Portrait of a Lady, page 8.

to the reader, three times; "we", including author and reader, once. There is, throughout the book, a sprinkling of the pronouns that mark the intrusion of the author as biographer. The biographical tone is also very apparent in such phrases as, "It may be affirmed without delay that Isabel was--liable to--self-esteem."⁽¹⁾ "Her errors were such as a biographer--must shrink from specifying." Comments such as, "It was an awkward beginning for a clever man,"⁽²⁾ "poor Ralph",⁽³⁾ "poor Isabel"⁽⁴⁾, reveal the authors sympathies. When we encounter the phrase "poor Lord Warburton"⁽⁵⁾, this is an exclamation from Isabel's consciousness, not James'. James writes of "our Heroine" with as loving biographical fidelity as Boswell recorded the life of Johnson. As such a writer, he describes the effects of travel upon people in general and upon Isabel in particular. Descriptions of new characters come partly through Isabel's eyes, partly from the author. Now and again, he confides in the reader. Sometimes he gives examples to prove his statements about a character, as about Mme. Merle's. Her conversation, he says, "it will be perceived, was enriched with bold, free touches of criticism."⁽⁶⁾

A mere biographer, however, could not know the intimate workings of Isabel's mind, nor trace the subtle workings of her unexpressed moods, as James does. Nor does James confine himself to the biographer's, the observer's nor Isabel's point of view. There

(73)

1. The Portrait of a Lady, page 41.
2. Ibid, page 4.
3. Ibid, page 51.
4. Ibid, page 74.
5. Ibid, page 98.
6. Ibid, page 101.

are forty-six pages (not compact, of course, but scattered) from Ralph Touchett's point of view; twelve from Henrietta's; nine or ten, partly dramatic, from Mme. Merle's; ten or eleven from Caspar Goodwood's; eight from the Countess Gemini's; five or six from Osmond's; three from Lord Warburton's; seventeen from little Rosier's; and perhaps one from Mrs. Touchett's.

There are besides these portions, definitely from one point of view, several dramatic scenes in which Isabel does not appear. There is such a scene between Lord W. and Mrs. T.(1); a conversation between Isabel's sister and brother-in-law, (2); one and one-half pages between Henrietta and Mrs. T.; two pages between Henrietta and Lord W.; one page of conversation only between Hen^{rietta} and Bantling; sixteen pages between Osmond, the sisters, and Pansy, and finally Mme. Merle, at his home; two pages, in the dramatic method, between Mme. Merle and Osmond, at one place, three pages at another, four and one half at another, and four between Ralph and Lord W. in Rome. Scenes in which Osmond and Mme. Merle hold the boards alone are dramatic rather than introspective because the author does not wish to give away too much. There is something artificial in these interpolated scenes. True, they give the reader a "tip", but is such an obvious "tip"--(I use 'obvious' only in relation to Henry James; such a "tip" would not be considered obvious from another author.)--is such a "tip" necessary? Isabel finally suspects the truth. Why not let the reader find it with her?

1. Portrait of a Lady, Page 11. (74)

21. Ibid, " 24.

It is evident that James considered the material that he delivered outside the consciousness of Isabel expedient, or at least salutary for his reader. He says, "--Mme. Merle,--it must be observed, parenthetically, did not deliver herself all at once of these reflections, which are presented in a cluster for the convenience of the reader."(1) This sentence constitutes an inartistic exposure of technique. In another place, he says, "we must glance a little backward."(2) He offers forewarning, as he would never have offered it in a later work, in the sentence, "--those who judge her severely" (for planning to refuse Lord W.) " may have the satisfaction of finding that, later, she became consistently wise only at the cost of an amount of folly which will constitute almost a direct appeal to charity."(3) (And this is an appeal that the proud Isabel would have disliked her biographer to offer.)

The scene in which Ralph persuades his father to leave Isabel a very substantial sum of money is harder to dispose of. It is a beautifully done scene; there is no one to tell Isabel, until the end, and so put it through her consciousness to the reader; the knowledge adds a grim irony to Isabel's mistake and to Ralph's suffering over her. But this is not Ralph's story, and I feel confident that had The Portrait followed The Ambassadors, rather than preceded it, James would have hit upon some scheme to suggest through Isabel's surprise ^{through} ~~at~~ Mme. Merle's subtly revealed suspicion at the heroine's endowment, through Ralph's behavior (which should at length have suggested the truth to Isabel)--the manner in which

1. Portrait of a Lady, page 172⁽²⁵⁾
2. Ibid, " 450
3. Ibid, " 38

Mr. Touchette was brought to leave her such a legacy. Similarly, there is no need for scenes actually revealing Mme. Merle's match-making schemes which she discusses with Osmond. Mrs. Touchette accuses her of her duplicity, and such is the mystery about her that we are ready to believe this of her, and the old lady also apprises her niece of her suspicions. The author's little ironic comment, "But Mme. Merle suffered in silence;" (the so-called persecutions of Mrs. Touchette) "there was always something exquisite in her dignity," (2) is a very sufficient "tip" for the discerning reader.

There are any number of passages in which the author presents something to the reader neither through Isabel's conscious^{ness} ~~not~~ through that of another character. An invisible observer might be responsible for these passages. "Poor Ralph appeared to have presented himself to her as an irritating problem." (2) "Miss Stackpole appeared to shrink from no trouble." (3) "She evidently thought--" (4) "She (Mrs. Touchette) took, it will be observed, not the sentimental, but the political view of matrimony--a view which has always had much to recommend it." (5) The latter part of this statement is a bit of philosophy direct from the author.

For some shifts in point of view, we can find no excuse but the author's desire to go into the character's consciousness a little way and give the reader a hasty peep. He says, "If we look at her (Pansy) through his (Rosier's) eyes--" (6) Pansy herself he does not psychologize. She is too simple for introspection to

- (76)
1. Portrait of a Lady, page 306.
 2. Ibid, " 74.
 3. Ibid, " 75.
 4. Ibid, " 82.
 5. Ibid, " 239.
 6. Ibid, " 322.

appeal. Henrietta Stackpole interests James, but he refrains from following her very far. "Her argument. (concerning divorce), however, does not concern this history, which has too many other threads to unwind." (1)

There is no doubt that he is intensely interested in Ralph Touchet and he interests the reader also. With forty-six pages of introspective treatment, interspersed a little with conversation, and with a great many appearances and participations in conversation and plot, Ralph becomes an important figure, and one with whom the reader feels somewhat intimate. I should hate to lose any of him, and yet--would the James of the Ambassadors have included him? The author uses an analysis Ralph makes to himself of Isabel, in the place of an analysis of his own in one chapter. "I give this little sketch of its articles (the articles of Ralph's creed) for what they are worth." (2) Of Ralph, himself, he says, "The reader already knows more about him than Isabel was ever to know." Should we know more about him than Isabel? Should not a little of even so pleasant an intimacy be sacrificed for art--the art of the use of the point of view?

But this is, undoubtedly, hair-splitting. The novel, quite aside from being thoroughly delightful and absorbingly interesting, is a contribution in the direction of improvement in the use of the point of view. My impression of the story, as I recollected it from a reading three years ago, was of a single point of view, the point of view absolute of Isabel Archer. It was only upon a recent re-reading that I became aware of the discrepancies, or shifts. We do see to a considerable degree through Isabel's eyes,

- (77)
1. Portrait of a Lady, page 439.
 2. Ibid, " 345.

and though we are not so dependant upon her for our seeing as we are later on Strether, we are almost constantly with her. James reminds one of Meredith in his psycho-analysis in this book. He tells what the heroine thought and why she thought it. "It was the more easy for her to believe this (that Ralph was angry) because she thought but little about it." (1) He says again, "It is a singular, but characteristic fact that Isabel---had broken silence by the soft exclamation, 'Poor Mme. Merle.'" (2) The last sixty-five pages are entirely from Isabel's point of view, and the story moves within her mind--her consciousness--with marvelous speed. Only the last half page of conversation between Henrietta and Caspar Goodwood, after Isabel has gone back to her fate, comes like the inscription on the curtain after it has gone down.

With the exploitation of Isabel Archer's consciousness, James had found his "gait". In his late books, there are six of particular importance with reference to the point of view--four told from the points of view of the leading characters, and two from the point of view of a minor character and "interpreter",--all in the third person, of course.

The Spoils of Poynton is the first of these. Fleda Vetch is a person of such "mental capacity" and "fineness of feeling" that she is an excellent medium for this story of which she is the most important character. Here the point of view is very limited, but--of course--the story is nearer a short-story than a novel in comparison with the two volume Portrait of a Lady. Neither the

- (78)
1. Portrait of a Lady, page 306.
 2. Ibid, " 436.

Golden Bowl nor The Wings of the Dove are presented from one point of view. They are both of considerable length, and it is possible for us to become intimately acquainted with each of the leading characters to whose consciousness the introspection is limited. There is no peeking into the minds here and there of any interesting character that comes along. By the Golden Bowl, we are reminded of Meredith's Egoist. Meredith does not cling so closely to his two chosen points of view, and he does not present the first half of the book from his hero's point of view and the second half from the heroine's as James does in the Golden Bowl; he alternates points of view, and this is not a bad plan. We are reminded also of Thackeray's Vanity Fair and of E. F. Benson's An Autumn Sowing. But in Vanity Fair, (in which, of course, Thackeray does not limit himself to two or three points of view) he deals with two different families, two different "mondes", even, which are related, which impinge, but which are--after all--quite separate. This book reminds us more of The Tragic Muse than of The Golden Bowl. Benson deals with two different sorts of characters, members of the two sets from the same family and house.

In The Golden Bowl, as in Meredith's Egoist, the two characters from whose points of view the novel is given, are very closely related and are the center of one plot. In Wings of the Dove, three distinct consciousnesses are exploited at considerable length--Kate's, Merton's, and Milly's. The first part of the book is from Kate's point of view and puts the reader quite in sympathy with her. It was my experience, on first looking into this book, to be forced to return it after completing only the first quarter. At the last moment, I tried, desperately, to skim over the high spots here and there, and I read--as people do under such circum-

stances--the last chapter. But the last chapter is never particularly illuminating in James, and when I arrived at Merton's offer to marry Kate, "just as they were", and read her cryptic, "We shall never be the same again", I suspected Milly of having intruded and having spoiled a perfectly good love affair, so thoroughly were my sympathies with Kate from the first part of the book. Was it a good idea, I wonder, for the reader to be allowed to see through Kate's eyes first? There is possible such complete identification with the character that we are at a loss when Milly appears whether we are to care for her or not. To go back to my illustration of a quarrel between friends of mine--the one who gets to me first has the best chance to make a good impression upon me, and if everyone concerned--and perhaps an onlooker besides--tells me his version of the occurrence, I am left bewildered, at a loss just what to think. So a novel told from several points of view--however consistent these may be, and however completely each one is confined to a particular portion of the book--leaves a confused impression.

It is in the novels in which James uses a minor character or an observer as an interpreter that he is at once ~~most~~ unique and most successful in his use of the point of view. From Mrs. Aphra Behn to Kipling, we have stories told more or less realistically and convincingly by a minor character or observer, but--always in the first person. It remained for James to put the form into the third person.

What Maisie Knew is such an adventure in technique. After a sort of satiric prologue in which the author gives the lurid circumstances of the granting of a divorce and the disposal of the young child of the couple--alternating possession--six months a

year to each of the pair, one of whom seems to be as bad as the other,--James puts himself almost completely into the child's consciousness. In the first chapter, the author is still talking about her rather than through her. He says, "It was to be the fate of this patient little girl to see much more than she at first understood." (1) From this point, he confines himself to what she saw. We see nothing that she did not see; we know nothing that she did not know--as far as mere external facts about the characters go; we even identify ourselves with her sufficiently to feel something of the wonder that she feels at the ways of grown-ups. But, of course, il va sans dire, we comprehend more. Occasionally, Maisie's experience is emphasized by the author. He says, "Maisie's terms accordingly play their part--since her simple conclusions quite depend upon them; but our own commentary constantly attends and amplifies--the difference here is but of a shade: it is her relation, her activity of spirit, that determines all our own concern--we simply take advantage of these things better than she herself." (2)

It cannot be said that James wished to tell a story of a divorced pair and seized upon a child's consciousness as a new means of getting a sordid tale across. His first idea was of Maisie. He explains in the Preface that the accidental mention had been made to him "of the manner in which the situation of some luckless child of a divorced couple was affected---by the remarriage of one of its parents." (3) But the child is scarcely a part of the plot. She is woven in as a "center and pretext

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1. What Maisie Knew, page 9. (81)
 2. Ibid, Preface, " X.
 3. Ibid, " " V & VII

for a fresh system of misbehavior." If, as we have said, James did not first have a story and afterward pick his interpreter, he at least would never have told such a story without such an interpreter. We shudder to think what the tale would have come to in the hands of Fielding! We should have had every point of view, and we should have been spared nothing. But there is an even wider difference in taste between these two authors that in artistic conception of the point of view.

Similar to Maisie is The Pupil, which is built about an actual little boy who travelled for his health. James did not first build the story and then find his interpreter, but he probably would have had no story, The Pupil, if the little boy had not appealed to him as an interpreter. "The matter comes back again," James says, "I fear, but to the author's irrepresible and insatiable, his extravagant and immoral interest in personal character and in the 'nature' of a mind." (1)

His "own commentary" we accept without protest. When a character is simple to the point of dulness, like Charlotte Soper, or unaware of his exact circumstances, like Newman, or childishly innocent and naïve, like Maisie, the author must take some means of convincing his readers that there is really a story. And Henry James no more completely identifies himself with Maisie than Tarkington identifies himself with Penrod, or Seventeen. Identification is sufficient to delight, but not to bore.

In the Ambassadors, we find in Strether a man of such perception, such acuteness of mind, such fineness of feeling, and with such an unflinching sense of humor that no commentary nor "amplifications" are needed. The author may lose himself in Strether.

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1. What Maisie Knew, Preface, page XX.

We should not accept Isabel Archer's story told in such a manner, even if given through the consciousness of the interesting Ralph; nor Newman's story, even if given through Valentin; nor would we accept the story of Chad and Mme. de Vionnet if the story were not already over. James tried such an experiment in Roderick Hudson. The point of view is not so artistically maintained as in The Ambassadors, but that is not the great difficulty. Roderick is more interesting than Rowland; he is doing something. We had rather be with Roderick in the mountains than waiting with Rowland in Rome. In The Ambassadors, Strether is not playing a star role in any great drama. The curtain has gone down on the drama; we are concerned with the epilogue. If the issues of the play involving Chad and Mme. de Vionnet were still unsettled, we should doubtless demand to be closer to the scene. The story would have to be told from Chad's or from Mme. de Vionnet's point of view. But James would not be interested in such a story merely for itself. The interpretation of the developed attitude is what he wishes to give us through Strether.

If it is not so far a cry from Sterne to James in the matter of colored vision, it is a great leap in the matter of technique. What Sterne and Goldsmith and Stevenson did for the first person, James did for the third. How could anyone identify oneself more thoroughly with any character than with Strether? We see and feel Paris as completely through him as we do through Sterne's, or Yorick's, in the Sentimental Journey. Strether, of course, is no such sentimentalist. We learn the exact truth about Chad as Strether learns it. When Strether meets Maria in London, we do not so much see Strether and Maria at the table together; we are Strether, sitting across the table from Maria Gostry. If at times, we have some notion of what Strether looks like, it is like catching a glimpse of our own fea-

tures, slightly distorted perhaps, in the glass.

We have seen, then, the beginnings of the early development of a consciousness of the artistic possibilities in the use of the point of view, and we have found the culmination of that development, a complete consciousness, in Henry James. In the day of biographical and autobiographical influences, writers attained to some perfection in the use of the first person, and the point of view absolute reached its highest point in Sterne. In the use of the third person, a great distance appears between Fielding and James. The intervening space has been covered sketchily, in comparisons. Perhaps enough has been said of nineteenth century writers to show that there was no definite theory of the point of view in the third person until Henry James. Meredith approached the Jamesian use in The Egoist, but he did not reveal complete consciousness of the possibilities of the point of view. Little glimmerings, over a great period, became a light in Henry James. He reached his highest point of perfection in acting as guardian angel to one of his characters, rather than as God to all of them.