LAURENCE STERNE'S TRISTRAM SHANDY

AND

THE AESTHETIC THEORY AND PRACTISE

OF

WILLIAM HOGARTH

BY

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ABSTRACT

Laurence Sterne's Tristram Shandy in many ways follows the same aesthetic principles that English painter William Hogarth displays in his work and discusses in his treatise The Analysis of Beauty. The affinities between Hogarth's and Sterne's aesthetic methodologies have been noted--but not subjected to close examination--by modern scholars. This thesis explores some of the similarities between the two men: their rejection of neoclassical convention, their attempts to transcend the boundaries of their respective mediums, their ultimate recognition of the intrinsic differences between literature and art and of the limitations and advantages peculiar to each, and their espousal of rococo values: Hogarth in his moral progresses and in his Analysis of Beauty, and Sterne in the narrative structure of Tristram Shandy. Sterne acquired from Hogarth illustrations to Tristram Shandy, confesses his admiration for the painter's method of characterization, and commended and borrowed freely from his Analysis. This evidence strongly suggests (but cannot conclusively prove) that Hogarth influenced Sterne's narrative methodology in Tristram Shandy. Even if Sterne did not consciously and deliberately incorporate Hogarth's aesthetic principles into his novel, the many analogies between the techniques used by the two men reveal much about the general aesthetic movement taking place in the eighteenth-century; a movement in which they played an important part. It is hoped that this thesis will raise further questions regarding the relationship between Sterne's Tristram Shandy and William Hogarth, a relationship which might be more significant than previously supposed.

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

Written between 1760-1767, Laurence Sterne's Tristram Shandy reflects in a variety of ways the shifting aesthetic principles underlying not only the literature but also the visual arts of the time. The aesthetic development of the eighteenth-century is also mirrored in the work and writing of William Hogarth, whom Sterne held in high esteem, appealing to him for an illustration for Tristram Shandy and borrowing liberally from the painter's Analysis of Beauty (1753). Many striking analogies between Sterne and Hogarth can be drawn, leading one to question the degree of influence that Hogarth's work, and especially his Analysis, exercised on Sterne in his conception of the novel. At most, Sterne's debt to Hogarth has yet to be fully acknowledged; at the very least, the two drink from a common intellectual and aesthetic well.

Like Hogarth, Sterne demonstrates a contempt for neoclassical criticism and doctrines and a defiant attitude towards traditional methods of composition. Among these traditions, Sterne scrutinizes (largely through parody) the practise of pictorialism, in which writers attempt to create visual images through language. Less obvious than this rejection of neoclassical conventions and ridicule of pictorialism, but as important, is the way in which Sterne's whimsical narrative methodology corresponds to certain concurrent trends in painting. Similar to the digressive nature of Tristram Shandy's structure are the rococo principles of variety, intricacy, and asymmetry that Hogarth preaches in The Analysis of Beauty and practises in his moral cycles, particularly in Marriage à-la-Mode (1745). The incomplete aspects of Sterne's novel, such as its use of aposiopesis and lack of closure, stem from the growing dependence, most prevalent in the latter half of the century, on the ability of

the audience to bridge, in their imagination, these gaps, and the appreciation of the suggestive capabilities of art that is unfinished or ill-defined. Edmund Burke sanctions the incomplete and obscure in literature and painting in his Philosophical Enquiry into...the Sublime and Beautiful (1757). Hogarth's later paintings show the same lack of finish that Burke recommends and that Sterne demonstrates in Tristram Shandy.

By mid eighteenth-century the arts in England were in a state of transition; neoclassical values of elegant simplicity, harmony, unity, proportion and clarity were gradually yielding to an aesthetic tending towards complexity, asymmetry, diffusion, and obscurity. Writers and painters alike cried out against critics who continued to judge literature and fine art according to out-moded neoclassical standards. A preference for classical and Italian Renaissance sculpture and painting over contemporary English works among the prejudiced and often ill-informed art "connoisseurs" infuriated artists as diverse as Hogarth and Reynolds. In literature also, neoclassical "rules" of composition were questionned. Samuel Johnson, the most conservative but also the most commanding critical voice of the latter eighteenth-century, felt that certain neoclassical "rules", such as the unities of time and place, could safely be dispensed with.[1]

One detects throughout Tristram Shandy a similar impatience with and hostility towards current artistic taste and conventions. In brilliant displays of satirical wit, Sterne lashes out indiscriminately against decrepit critics of art, drama, and literature who content themselves with petty fault-finding, insist upon "regularity" of form, and conceal their incompetence and insensitivity behind a wall of jargon. Readers are warned by Tristram that in writing his "Life and Opinions" he will not be a slave to precedent: ancient or contemporary. In his rebelliousness and originality Sterne thus most resembles Hogarth, the century's most vocal and persistent critic of the neoclassical prejudices that dominated the appreciation of painting in England. Like Hogarth, Sterne chose to disregard conventions he found constrained rather than encouraged his creative impulses, and in doing so produced a

highly individualistic, lively, and challenging work.

What initially strikes readers of Tristram Shandy is its visual qualities: the typographical oddities, graphic signs, vivid physical descriptions. A painterly vocabulary, painting metaphors and imagery, and references, implicit and explicit , to popular artists and theories of art further heighten the visual orientation of the novel, and have been widely noted and discussed by reviewers and scholars of the eighteenth-century as well as our own.

From 1680-1750 literature and painting were closely allied; Horace's precept *ut pictura poesis* (as in painting so in poetry) was adopted by both poets and painters.[2] John Dryden, in the preface to his translation of Charles Du Fresnoy's *De Arte Graphica*, speaks of the "wonderful affinity" between the two arts: "there is," he says, "betwixt them a common imagination" (299). The task of the writer is to "paint" with language while the painter strives to "speak" through line, colour, and form. Hogarth, in his moral progresses, takes the painter's effort to make his picture "speak" as far as the medium will allow him. He fills his canvas with a wealth of visual signs which are meant to be deciphered or "read" as one reads the words on the page of a book. Fundamental to the tradition of *ut pictura poesis* that dominated literature in the early eighteenth-century is the assumption that the written word can create in the mind of a reader a clear and accurate image of the object it refers to. A critic of the period asserts in the Literary Magazine II that the writer "who is most picturesque and clearest in his imagery is ever stiled the best poet, because from such a one we see things clearer, and of course we feel more intensely" (Burke 170 n. 5).

The doctrine of *ut pictura poesis*, so strong at the turn of the century, eventually

made its way into the novel as what has been variously termed "literary pictorialism" (Holtz), "literary pantomime" (Sypher), and "novelistic literalism" (Watt). What these terms refer to is the passages we find in the novels of Samuel Richardson and Henry Fielding in which the physical attitudes, movements, and appearance of characters are laboriously and precisely rendered in an attempt to implant clear visual images in the mind of the reader. But as the eighteenth-century progressed the differences, not the similarities, between the "sister arts" came to be emphasized, most notably in England by Edmund Burke.[3] In the final section of his influential Enquiry, Burke repudiates the pictorial method advocated in the Literary Magazine:

> Indeed so little does poetry depend for its effect of the power of raising sensible images, that I am convinced it would lose a very considerable part of its energy, if this were the necessary result of all description. (170)

To Burke, painting must be, simply by virtue of its visual nature, a more imitative and less expressive medium than language. His observation that "poetry and rhetoric do not succeed in exact description so well as painting does" (172) is confirmed by Sterne in Tristram Shandy. Try as he may to "paint" images with words, Tristram must ultimately concede that the pictorial tradition has its limitations. Those passages in which he gives scrupulously exact descriptions travesty, rather than follow, the example of earlier novelists such as Richardson and Fielding. Taking his cue from Locke (as Burke does also), Sterne understands that language cannot satisfactorily represent reality in an absolute sense, it can only point to or suggest *a* reality; a single word can possess a variety of meanings and the same word may not necessarily conjure up the same image for all readers, or indeed, any image at all.

The gradual recognition of the differences separating literature and painting and the limitations and advantages peculiar to each is reflected in Hogarth's career which, when examined as a whole, reveals a development from the "readable" narrative histories of the 1730s and '40s to the expressive and experimental portraits of the '50s. Leaving behind the overt didacticism and literariness of his moral cycles, Hogarth explored, in his later years,

the aesthetic effects and expressive possibilities inherent in the essential elements of his chosen medium: line, light, shade, and colour.

The heroic couplet practised by early eighteenth-century poets such as Dryden and Pope insisted upon closure--it was a complete, self-sufficient unit or "product" to be passively consumed by the reader. Joseph Warton, in his Essay on Pope defined the aesthetic criteria for literary excellence this way:

> The use, the force, and the excellence of language certainly consists in raising *clear*, *complete*, and *circumstantial* images, and in turning *readers* into *spectators*. (qtd. in Holtz II)

This same set of values was followed by painters such as Wright of Derby who painted out to the corners of the canvas, leaving little to the imagination of the viewer. The task of poets and painters was primarily an imitative one. But an increasing interest in the associational school of psychology, stemming from the ideas Locke put forth in his Essay Concerning Human Understanding (1689-90)[4], together with the advancement of a theory of the sublime opened the way to an aesthetic, governing both literature and painting, based not upon mimetic clarity and completeness, but upon the expressive capabilities latent in the obscure, the ill-defined, and unfinished. Northrop Frye has described the shift in aesthetic climate in the eighteenth-century in terms of a split between Aristotelian and Longinian values; between art as finished "product" which precludes its audience and art as creative "process", reliant upon its audience's imaginative responses.[5] Certainly, Tristram Shandy belongs to the latter aesthetic milieu: it is literature of "process" pushed to its limit as the book's narrator and fictional creator repeatedly recounts his writing difficulties, and demands that his readers assist him in his project. The preoccupation with the way in which a work of art and its audience interact dominates the thought of all artists and theorists of importance in England after mid-century and led to the development and critical appreciation of art forms in both literature and painting that contradict the neoclassical emphasis on clarity and completeness.

The unfinished aspects of Tristram Shandy (such as its use of aposiopesis and lack of

closure) correspond to a growing recognition of the suggestive power of works which strive for expressiveness rather than photographic likeness, and testify to the new-found fascination with the way that the human imagination operates on even the most obscure verbal and visual hints. Hogarth's canon bears witness to this general aesthetic trend. In paintings such as The Country Dance, which accompanies the text to his Analysis, and Heads of Servants, Hogarth demonstrates the evocative potentiality of the incomplete that Burke defends in his Enquiry and Sterne comically exploits in Tristram Shandy.

The poets and painters of the early eighteenth-century strove for balance and symmetry, harmony and unity in their work. The heroic couplet, exemplified best by Pope's verses, was the dominant form because it compelled the poet to express himself in a restrained, orderly, precise way. Within the couplet form, rhetorical devices such as chiasmus and zeugma allowed the poet to create well-balanced, symmetrical patterns, neat oppositions and reversals. In the latter part of the century, however, the heroic couplet gave way to other less exacting forms, more suited to the introspective and meditative tone poets now sounded. Thomson's Seasons and Cowper's The Task, for instance, are composed in blank verse, and Gray and Collins use a lyrical form in their odes and elegies. A similar shift affected the visual arts. The Augustans favoured the classical harmony and simplicity of Raphael over the erratic and eccentric art of Michelangelo. But after mid-century, owing largely to Sir Joshua Reynolds' unorthodox praise of his rough but affecting technique, Michelangelo's reputation as a great artist was firmly established (Sypher 254)[6]. The supposed superiority of the classical school of painting, with its attendant emphases on symmetry and simplicity, was challenged in France by Antoine Watteau and in England by Hogarth in a style known now as "rococo".

The aesthetic movement in all the arts away from neoclassical regularity and coherence and towards formal irregularity and discontinuity underlies the capricious quality of Tristram Shandy's narrative structure. Like the elaborate twisting and turning lines

characteristic of the rococo style of painting, the plot line of Tristram Shandy follows an uneven path, leading the reader helter-skelter over a fragmented narrative course barbed with digressions on practically any subject that springs to Tristram's wandering mind. The experience of reading Sterne's novel can be compared to that of viewing a Hogarth painting or print where the eye is kept in constant motion, unable to pause long on any one object, ceaselessly diverted to other areas of the canvas. Sterne builds his book on a structural framework not unlike the rococo principles which Hogarth recommends in his Analysis of Beauty, especially in those chapters that concern "Variety", "Uniformity, Regularity, or Symmetry", and "Intricacy". Central to both men's rejection of the straight line is their association of the straight and regular with the inanimate and sterile, and the less predictable but more interesting irregular line with the organic, vital--and the beautiful.

The correlation between the aesthetic principles underlying Tristram Shandy and those governing painting in the eighteenth-century may in part be explained by Sterne's personal, lifelong interest in the visual arts. In the opening volume of the novel, Tristram asserts that a man's character can best be understood through his "hobby-horse" (I.33); James Boswell, meeting Sterne in London shortly after reading the first two volumes of Tristram Shandy, seems to have heeded Tristram's advice when he wrote these verses about the book's author:

> He had of Books a chosen few,
> He read as Humour bid him do;
> If Metaphisics seem'd too dark,
> Shifted from Gay to Dr Clark;
> If in the least it hurt his eye,
> He instantaneously would rise,

Take up his violin and play--
His Pencil next, then sketch away.
Here goes a flow'r! extreamly neat... (qtd. in Cash 196-7)

Sterne himself reveals a dual interest in music and painting in Tristram's admission " to be both fiddler and painter, according as the fly stings..." (1.8). It comes as no surprise, then, that metaphors culled from music and painting, as well as numerous allusions to these arts, pervade the novel. Painting and sketching were lifelong hobbies for Sterne: as a school-boy he drew on the covers of his exercise books and as late as 1768 he can be found giving a Mrs. James drawing lessons (Cash 209; Curtis 412). He particularly enjoyed copying portraits, and attempted to draw caricatures after the manner of Hogarth, whom he had admired from an early age, and evidently continued to admire, as in Tristram Shandy he invokes Hogarth's talent for the quick-sketch and recommends The Analysis of Beauty to his readers who are unfamiliar with it. Sterne's own drawings were somewhat awkward and amateurish. A caricature purported to be by Sterne of his wife Elizabeth Lumley has split modern critics as to its authenticity. Cross (117), Quennell (146), and Holtz (81), for instance, attribute this rather crude and cruel portrait to the novelist, but Sterne's most recent and reliable biographer, Arthur Cash, disputes this, doubting that the artist is Sterne and that the woman portrayed is his wife (212). There exists at least one work, however, that can positively be attributed to Sterne. This is an engraving of a painting (now lost) he made in the 1740s with a fellow wit, Thomas Bridges. In this picture, each humourist has painted the other. Bridges painted Sterne in a clown's costume, while Sterne portrayed Bridges as a quack doctor. They titled their picture, appropriately enough, The Mountebank and his Macaroni (Fig. 1). Despite its deficiencies, Sterne apparently remained quite fond of the picture throughout his life (Cash 210).

During his lifetime, Sterne would come to meet, befriend, and have his portrait painted by some of the most prominent artists of the eighteenth-century. In 1756 he sat for portraitist Christopher Steele, and over the course of a year continued to associate, and may have studied with, the well-known painter and his (at that time) little known assistant George

Romney at their joint studio on York. At some point in his career Romney painted several scenes from Tristram Shandy, including one of Dr. Slop plastered in mud after his collision with Obadiah. Romney reportedly painted Sterne's portrait, also, but unfortunately all of these works have been lost (Cross 118; Cash 212).

While in London after the enormous success of the opening volumes of Tristram Shandy, Sterne had his portrait done by Joshua Reynolds. At least eight sittings were required, and three portraits were produced (Cash 214). The first and most famous of these graced the frontispiece of Sterne's Sermons of Yorick which, taking advantage of Tristram's enormous success, he had published in May 1760. Although Sterne preferred the "lower" comic manner of Hogarth to Reynolds' "grand style", he nonetheless respected Reynolds' opinions and talent, referring to him in Tristram Shandy as "Apollo" and the "son of Apollo" (3.12; 7.9), and borrowing (almost verbatim) from his essay in Idler 76.

Hogarth is also referred to, implicitly and explicitly, in Tristram Shandy. But despite Sterne's admiration, and the great number of allusions he makes to him, it remains uncertain if the two ever met. Sterne's London sojourn came at a time when Hogarth was growing old and in poor health (he died in 1764). In one study of Tristram Shandy's relationship to the visual arts, William V. Holtz speculates that Sterne and Hogarth likely met at one time or another (5), but no conclusive evidence exists to support this. Sterne asked Hogarth for an illustration to his novel by letter, and through a third party (Richard Berenger) who was close to the painter. Naturally, Hogarth must have been pleased by Sterne's generous praise of his (unjustly) abused Analysis; he graciously complied, without charge, to the fledgling novelist's request for an illustration to the scene in which Corporal Trim reads the sermon to Uncle Toby, Walter Shandy, and Dr. Slop. Whether or not the two men in fact met makes little difference to the significance of Hogarth's work and theory to the novel. Although many are alluded to, it is important to remember that the Analysis remains the only treatise on art to which Sterne refers by name, and its characteristic terminology and

controversial ideas inform, as we shall see, the whole of Tristram Shandy.

The last painter of note with whom Sterne was to have contact was Thomas Gainsborough. Sometime in 1764-65, Sterne sat for Gainsborough at his studio in Bath, but unfortunately the portrait that survives, though attributed definitely to Gainsborough, has not positively been identified as that of Sterne (Cross 361). Gainsborough was in many ways a loner. He preferred Bath to London, the picturesque countryside to the bustle of the city, ordinary, untitled people to the land-owning gentry. He was not one for reading; unlike his contemporary Reynolds and predecessor Hogarth, he generally avoided the company of learned literary men. Yet he had read and apparently enjoyed Tristram Shandy and, curiously enough, his own writing style, as seen in his letters, possessed the same sort of idiosyncrasies as Sterne's (Waterhouse 12).

As different in temperament and technique as Hogarth, Reynolds, and Gainsborough were, all appealed to Sterne. Perhaps in each painter he detected the same strong sense of individuality and disdain for certain arbitrary conventions that he himself felt and tried to express in Tristram Shandy.

The conceptual framework of the novel suggests that of these painters Sterne's greatest affinity lies with Hogarth. In the following chapters the relationship between the work and theory of Hogarth and Sterne's Tristram Shandy will be examined to an extent not yet undertaken in available critical literature. It shall be shown that the novel exudes a rebelliousness characteristic of Hogarth; that it stretches the pictorial possibilities of language past its breaking point, just as Hogarth attempts, in his moral progresses, to take painting past the confines of pictorial space; that both men acknowledge and depend upon the imaginative interaction that takes place between an audience and a work; and that Tristram Shandy embodies many of the rococo principles found in the painter's fictional histories, such as Marriage à-la-Mode, and expounded upon in his Analysis of Beauty.

CHAPTER TWO

Sterne, Hogarth, and the New Pictorial Aesthetic

Of the major eighteenth-century painters, Hogarth was the most outwardly defiant, rebelling throughout his career, in both his work and theory, against conventional standards. Outspoken in his views about art, he was particularly critical of the way in which painting was practised and evaluated in England in his time. He felt that the traditional, and undue, reliance upon classical and Renaissance models to provide artists with subject matter, methods, and rules of composition only served to oppress, rather than elevate, English art. Hogarth resented what he considered an arrogant, aristocratic approach to painting: the notion that it ought to "improve" nature and portray noble or historical figures, or heroic actions. In an attempt to counter this trend, he began working towards a mode of painting that could be understood by the lower and middle classes, not only the learned or wealthy. The publication of his prints--especially his moral progresses--enabled Hogarth to achieve his goal: the prints embraced topical, contemporary subjects, avoided allusions to classical motifs and the "old masters" (except to provide satirical comment; never to elevate his subject, as Reynolds' did), and were inexpensive to purchase. Hogarth's innovation proved truly revolutionary. Not only did these shilling prints tap a market that was traditionally disregarded, but their popularity enabled Hogarth to become probably the first English painter to practise successfully his art without having to rely upon a system of patronage, making him free to pursue subjects that did not appeal exclusively to the upper classes.

The extreme anti-academicism and anti-classicism that characterized Hogarth's work blatantly challenged the *status quo*, thus it quickly gained the attention of eighteenth-century viewers. The originality and individuality of his paintings continue to attract us

to-day: Hogarth's work cannot be viewed passively; it aggressively confronts its spectator, demanding a response. The effect is, of course, a deliberate one. Hogarth intended to provoke and perplex his audience, rouse their curiosity, urge them to think about, and discuss the work before them.

Although best known for his didactic narrative histories such as A Harlot's and A Rake's Progress, a good deal of Hogarth's work, particularly his output towards the end of his career, is not moral in purpose or narrative in structure; many paintings produced in the years after 1750 (and some before), such as The Country Dance and Heads of Servants, have no lesson to teach or moral wisdom to impart, indicating that the painter chose to subordinate the neoclassical notion that art (and literature) ought to instruct as well as please to the purely formal aspects of art that intrigued him more and more.

In The Analysis of Beauty, Hogarth concentrates solely on formal problems in art, making this document unique among art treatises of the time. He defies the neoclassical habit, as evidenced by Shaftesbury and Hutcheson, to equate beauty with virtue, to attach moral significance to outward appearance.[1] Instead, Hogarth focusses his attention on aesthetic issues; for instance, what sort of line is most beautiful--that is, most pleases the eye? Unfortunately, the aesthetician in Hogarth, complains one modern scholar, has too often been ignored (Hipple 55).

The Analysis of Beauty was an unusual document in many respects, not least because it failed to follow the English habit of turning to the French for guidance in matters concerning both literature and art. Much to Hogarth's dismay, English painting and theory were heavily influenced by the French Academy, especially the theorists Roger de Piles and Charles du Fresnoy, whose ideas were widely disseminated in England and on the Continent. John Dryden was the first Englishman to translate du Fresnoy's *De Arte Graphica* (1668) (four more English translations soon followed (Lipking 46-47)), and Jonathan Richardson recommended de Piles' theories and methods (which had been translated into English in 1743) in An Essay

on the Art of Criticism[2]. This unchecked profusion of ideas from French neoclassicists gave Hogarth an incentive to publish his Analysis. In it, he rebels not only against the classical orientation of art that theorists of the time advocated, but also departs from the whole conceptual framework of their approach, ignoring completely the different "genres" of painting and ancient or Renaissance precedent. The conventional way painting was discussed was to treat it according to genre, from "highest" to "lowest": history or epic, portraiture, still life, landscape. But Hogarth structures his treatise according to considerations such as line, form, proportion, light and shade, variety, symmetry--in short, upon the basic elements and issues of painting. Moreover, he advances his aesthetic concepts on the basis of empirical observation rather than ancient authority, and discourages the practice (followed in the French and later in the English Academy) of copying from classical and Renaissance masters simply because of their antiquity. Instead of spending time "copying objects", Hogarth preferred to "read the Language of them (and if possible find a grammar to it)..." Only through direct "Observation" has he acquired his artistic abilities (185). In his "Autobiographical Notes" the painter acknowledges that his insistence on observation over copying has been misunderstood by some as an indication that he does not sufficiently appreciate the masters. "I grew so profane", Hogarth remarks, with more than a hint of sarcasm, "as to admire Nature beyond [the finest] Pictures and I confess sometimes objected to the devinity of even Raphael Urbin Corregio and Michael Angelo for which I have been severly treated" (209).

Hogarth's interest in the expressive possibilities of painting's essential elements--line, form, colour--that he articulates in the Analysis reveals itself in several later works. Towards mid-century, he departs from the well-defined, profusely detailed narrative histories and begins to produce less polished, sketchy paintings. Industry and Idleness (1747), according to Hogarth scholar Ronald Paulson[3], represents a pivotal point in the painter's development; though the series of twelve prints maintains a moral purpose, it

dispenses with the high finishing and complex visual clues such as that found in Marriage à-la-Mode. Hogarth is willing here to compromise technical competence for expressive power. Conceding the poor quality of the engravings, he points out that

> the purpose for which they were intended, such as action and expression...are carefully attended to, as the most delicate strokes of the graver would have given, sometimes more; for often expression, the first quality in pictures, suffers in this point, for fear the beauty of the stroke should be spoiled; while the rude and hasty touch, when the fancy is warm, gives a spirit not to be equalled by high finishing. (qtd. in Denvir 238)

A change in Hogarth's methodology may be seen in his Heads of Servants and The Shrimp Girl, both painted in the 1750's. Unlike his earlier moral cycles, he does not paint out to the corners of the canvas, the backgrounds are indistinct, and the brush strokes are broad and bold, reminiscent of his Self-Portrait with Pug. Hogarth's strategy in these portraits looks ahead to Gainsborough: both employ a sketchy technique that depends upon a viewer's willingness to reconstruct, in his imagination, the entire figure. He realized, as did Gainsborough, that it was the lack of closure, and not attention to clarity and completeness that infused a work with energy and created an interaction between it and its audience. These later portraits, and The Country Dance, display a free, painterly approach where expression through line and colour, rather than imitative precision, is paramount. Hogarth's movement away from overt didacticism and his subsequent explorative forays into the formal elements of his medium are part of a larger aesthetic trend, beginning half-way through the century, towards a self-reflexivity, a treatment of art as a subject in itself rather than as a vehicle for moral enlightenment (Hogarth 303).

Even more dangerous to the state of the arts in England than French-inspired neoclassicism, thought Hogarth, was the peculiar breed of English art collector or "connoisseur". The way in which British collectors (and painters) acquiesced to the dictates of the French Academy and sheepishly followed a "cult of the antique" (Lee 207) outraged him. Connoisseurship was not easily battled as many collectors were monied, powerful, and

influential.[4] Jonathan Richardson's smug approval of their tastes and methods of judgement in his essay Science of a Connoisseur further strengthened their cause. Hogarth was angered by the way in which art of his own time and country was being passed over by collectors for the supposed superiority of the "old masters". Many collectors, ignorant about painting but eager to possess a Renaissance work, were frequently taken advantage of by unscrupulous foreign art dealers. Hogarth publicly vented his frustration with the art connoisseur in a letter published in The St. James Post in 1737, where he accuses these opportunistic "picture-jobbers" who

> depreciate every English work, as hurtful to their trade, of continually importing shiploads of dead Christs, holy families, Madonnas, and other dismal, dark subjects...on which they score the terrible cramped names of some Italian masters, and fix on us poor Englishmen the character of *universal dupes*. If a man, naturally a judge of Painting, not bigoted to those empirics, should cast his eye on one of their sham virtuoso-pieces, he would be very apt to say 'Mr. *Bubbleman*, that grand *Venus*, as you are pleased to call it, has not beauty enough for the character of an English cook-maid'.--Upon which the quack answers, with a confident air 'Sir, I find that you are no *connoisseur*; the picture, I assure you, is in Alesso Baldminetto's second and best manner, boldly painted, and truly sublime: the contour gracious: the air of the head in the high Greek taste...A man should have this picture a twelvemonth in his collection before he can discover half its beauties!' (qtd. in de S. Pinto 272; Hogarth xxiii)

Hogarth's vehement opposition to connoisseurship fostered the unfortunate belief that he disliked anything except his own work.[5] But this mistaken view did not seem to worry the painter who retorted:

> Because I hate *them*, they think I hate *Titian*--and let them! (xxiii)

It was not classical and Italian Renaissance art in itself that irritated Hogarth (he praises many pieces in the Analysis) but rather the assumption that contemporary English artists could not surpass their predecessors.[6] Sparked by Addison's claim in the Spectator 83 that the ancients were greater than the moderns in painting as well as poetry, Hogarth produced Time Smoking a Picture (1761), a satirical reply to the undiscriminating "cult of the antique". Here, Hogarth ridicules the craze for the dark, heavily varnished canvasses of

dubious "old masters" by portraying an old man (Time) darkening a painting with the smoke from his pipe.

English painting was dominated by a variety of conventions and prejudices, many originating with the ancients and expounded upon and re-established in da Vinci's Treatise on Painting and later taken up by the French Academy. (In England da Vinci was admired less for his paintings than for his writings, which were readily available in translation (The Sister Arts 163)). Even though he risked being accused of indecorum and impropriety, Hogarth subverted these time-honoured traditions whenever possible in his work. For example, Roger de Piles insists in The Principles of Painting that the "hero" and major figures in a painting be positioned in "conspicuous" places; the subject of the painting should be made immediately clear. If we look at the first painting of Hogarth's Marriage à-la-Mode (Fig. 5) series, we notice at once that he does not follow de Piles' precept, nor does he heed de Piles' advice that the "whole" ought not to consist of "several unities" but must be of one unified, harmonious piece (59,64). Hogarth's fictional narratives typically contain what Ronald Paulson calls a "multiple gestalt". In Marriage à-la-Mode, there exists no clear central focus of interest; figure groups are dispersed across the breadth of the canvas, each commanding an equal amount of attention. It is not entirely certain, at least initially, just who the major character or characters are--all seem equally important to the meaning of the picture.

Hogarth's approach to painting clearly opposed the style popularized earlier in England by Sir Godfrey Kneller. Unlike Kneller's portraits, Hogarth's are not meant to flatter or elevate the person they represent; absent in his portrayals of the noble and powerful are

the oval face, long thin nose and narrow eyes characteristic of Kneller's school (Hogarth 195).[7] Hogarth peoples his paintings not with idealized figures involved in epic events, but with men as fallen creatures struggling against domestic, personal tragedies.

In the illustration he produced for Sterne's Tristram Shandy of Trim reading the sermon (Fig. 6), Hogarth shows his disdain for rules of composition based upon archaic principles of decorum and propriety. He rejects, by parodying, long established strategems, thus complementing the attacks against blindly accepted literary conventions that Sterne makes throughout the novel. The engraving turns upside-down many of the precepts laid out in da Vinci's venerated Treatise on Painting. "Observe decorum", Leonardo commands,

> ...and respect the high or low rank of that which you represent...Common people should be shown unadorned, disarrayed and abject...

and when depicting someone speaking to a group of people make certain his "face [shows] excitement, and be turned toward the people" (147,156-7). In Hogarth's print, Trim, though of a "lower" rung on the social ladder, dominates the picture, serving as the focus of attention for the others, even though they occupy a "higher" social station. If anyone is slovenly or "abject", it is Dr. Slop; Trim normally takes great care and pride in his appearance and certainly seems neatly attired and self-assured here. While Trim assumes the classical oratorial position, his back is to the spectator, making his face hidden from our view--a blatant rejection of the frontalism that da Vinci recommends.

Early in the novel Tristram warns his readers that his book is unique and can therefore not be judged--or read--by the same set of rules as less innovative, more conventional books. He boldly spurns all classical models, announcing that he "shall confine [him]self neither to [Horace's] rules, nor to any man's rules that ever lived" (1.4). Tristram intends his work to be more than simply a pale imitation of an ancient; as an autobiography he wants it to reflect his particular personality, his "Life and Opinions"--however disorderly or indecorous they may be. Like Hogarth, Tristram allows no

idealized characters into his world; and although he is the "hero" of the novel, he is hardly engaged in any epic quest, nor does he accomplish any heroic or noble deeds. Tristram Shandy is not a "comic epic in prose"; it is an attempt to convey a sense of an inner reality, a sense of being.

Sterne deliberately set out, as did Hogarth, to subvert the expectations of his audience. Because the novel diverges so radically from others of the time, it demands more from its readers: it is something they must grapple with, wrestle down--it cannot be approached passively. Tristram's refusal to follow formal (and formulaic) rules necessitates the re-education of his audience, who he finds ill-equipped to read a work that does not proceed according to convention, that lacks a sequentially ordered plot line based upon cause and effect. Tristram complains of the "vicious taste" that has infected current readers

> --of reading straight forwards, more in quest of the adventures, than of the deep erudition and knowledge which a book of this cast, if read over as it should be, would infallibly impart with them... (1.20)

The formulas of the popular picaresque and romance genres have ruined the reading habits of eighteenth-century readers, just as the preconceptions of what a painting should be has made it difficult for original English artists to gain recognition.

Another way that Sterne shatters the expectations of his readers may be found in the novel's mock Dedication, which he presents not after the title-page, but where it suits him--buried in chapters eight and nine of the first volume. The Dedication proves to be a generic one, suitable for any "Duke, Marquis, Earl, Viscount, or Baron...who stands in need"; Sterne will part with it for the bargain price of "fifty guineas;---...twenty guineas less than it ought to be." The superficiality of such tributes is emphasized by Sterne's choice of metaphor: the "painter's scale" of de Piles' Treatise on Painting (1708). De Piles' famous scale rated, out of a total score of twenty, a painter's ability in various categories: design, composition, colour, and so on. This scale was taken seriously by some. Jonathan Richardson, for example, recommended its use to would-be critics and collectors in his Argument on

Behalf of the Science of a Connoisseur (183). To demonstrate the arbitrariness of such systems of evaluation, Tristram proceeds to judge his book, or "to measure my piece" as he puts it, according to "the painter's scale"--and promptly awards himself a score of nineteen for its design--a score higher than de Piles awarded to any artist (1.9)[8]. In this way Tristram not only mocks scientific and systematic methods of appraisal, he implies that the praise that typically inflates the literary dedication is as hollow and meaningless as de Piles' scale. No doubt, Sterne's independence from a patron, like Hogarth's, enabled him to avoid perfunctory flattery, to freely ridicule conventions he found unnecessary and to experiment with certain formal elements.

Sterne's delight in playing with the elements of his medium recalls Hogarth's exploration of formal values in his Analysis and the venturesome paintings of his later years. For instance, Sterne toys with punctuation--especially the dash. In Tristram Shandy the traditional "humble handmaiden" role of punctuation is promoted to the part of "unpredictable prima donna" (Moss 184). Although the dash was frequently used in place of quotation marks, which were not yet mandatory (Watt "Introduction" **xliv**), it serves many other, not so common purposes: its varying lengths create a distinct rhythm in the prose, and indicates to the reader changes of tone, volume, and voice; it marks parentheses (though does not guarantee that the sentence that is interrupted will be resumed); and it can represent duration of time when, for instance, Toby hums over the letter containing news of Bobby's death (5.2), or later when Tristram reads over the "*Par Le Roy*" that has been delivered to him:

> ---- ------'Tis a pithy prolegomenon, quoth I--and so read on
> -- --- --- --- --- --- --- --- --- --- --- --- ---
> -- --- --- --- --- --- --- --- --- --- --- --- ---
> -- --- --- --- --- --- --- --- --- --- --- --- ---
> -- --- --- --- --- --- --- --- --- --- --- --- ---
> (7.35)

The eccentric use of the dash jars the reader into an awareness of the disjunction between how it is normally used and how it is put to quite different uses here, and reminds him of the

presence of the author who manipulates it; thus we are called "back from the show [product] to the showman [process]" (Watt "Comic Syntax" 323).

Ian Watt calls Tristram Shandy "not so much a novel as a parody of a novel" because it self-consciously defies, rather than follows, "many of the narrative methods which the genre had so lately developed" (The Rise of the Novel 331). Fielding, in his "Preface" to Joseph Andrews (1742), formulated the tectonics of the comic novel, attempting to legitimatize the genre of comic prose fiction by finding for it an ancient precedent (Homer's lost comic epic Margites). Fielding's Joseph Andrews and Tom Jones tell of journeys full of action. Joseph Andrews, for instance, embodies a physical and spiritual journey that unfolds sequentially in time and space, possessing a clearly defined beginning, middle, and end. But in Tristram Shandy, plot (if one is discernible at all) is unimportant, and events are recounted not according to a chronological order but as they occur to Tristram. A coherent time-scheme does exist for the novel[9], but Sterne deliberately scrambles it, producing, to borrow Wayne C. Booth's words, an "exploded comic plot" (Rhetoric 229). Sterne makes a mockery of the Aristotelian notion of plot, with its distinct protagonist and antagonist, its suspense, climax, turning point and resolution, taking these elements and twisting them for comic--and satiric--effect.

Tristram anticipates the criticism his fractured plot may provoke. Sterne's antipathy towards literary critics who tout neoclassical rules resembles Hogarth's dislike of art connoisseurs whose prejudices prohibit them from properly judging a work's merit. Addressing himself to "the hypercritick" only too eager to pounce on him for committing a "breach in the unity...of time", Tristram reminds him of Locke's theory of duration, which posits that subjective and objective measurements of time are not necessarily identical; the way man perceives time depends upon "the train and succession of our ideas" (2.8). In Tristram Shandy, Sterne exploits and experiments with this recognition of concurrent time schemes, upsetting the neoclassical insistence on the unity of time.

Among the complaints levied against Tristram Shandy, besides the fact that it lacked an orthodox design, was that it failed to communicate a moral premise and instruct its readers. For many eighteenth-century reviewers this constituted a breach of the classical doctrine that art should instruct as well as delight. A critic of the time states the case against Sterne:

> The drift of all Authors is, or ought to be, either to usefully instruct, or innocently amuse...

Tristram Shandy achieves neither, therefore it yields "no serviceable light" (Howes 67). The operative phrase in the above criticism is "innocently amuse". Much of the humour in the novel depends upon sexual innuendo, something that readers of Sterne's time, and later, found unacceptable. In 1772 Sterne was accused of promoting licentiousness, as this satirical critique (written, interestingly enough, in a style that mimics Tristram Shandy) shows:

> ...he preaches BAWDRY so genteely--nay, elegantly! ...--but such BAWDRY as Tristram's...--'Tis surely, the most delicious BAWDRY in the world! --for it makes you laugh at OBSCENITY, without blushing--there's the sweet of it! (Howes 231)

In the nineteenth-century, Coleridge worried about the effect such a suggestive novel may have upon the chaste sensibility of women:

> Sterne's morals are bad, but I don't think they can do much harm to anyone...Besides, the oddity and erudite grimaces under which much of his dirt is hidden take away the effect for the most part; although to be sure, the book is scarcely readable by women. (qtd. in Howes 358)

While quick to point out Sterne's impropriety, most reviewers forget that the indecencies in Tristram Shandy reside less in the actual text than in the reader's own mind. Explicit bawdiness is normally resisted: sexual meanings are implied, either through aposiopesis or innuendo. The reader, caught within the momentum of Sterne's language, finds himself forced to complete in his own mind passages which are sexually suggestive. In this way, the burden of guilt is transferred from the author to his audience, who must confront the carnality that society teaches them to repress or deny. There is, of course, a morality present in Tristram Shandy, but it operates on a covert, not overt level. Sterne lamented in his Sermons that the

novel was "a moral work more read than understood" (qtd. in McKillop 186); too many readers expect all meaning to be clear and explicit, and therefore remain oblivious to the moral code that emerges in the behaviour of the brothers Shandy towards one another, in Trim's silent but eloquent gestures, in the *minutae* of daily life.

Hogarth's profound distaste for criticism that relies solely and unthinkingly on classical precepts is shared by Sterne. Throughout the novel, Tristram remains on his guard, prepared to defend himself against critics who censure the "irregularity" of his book. He often anticipates these attacks and immediately launches into a defense of his methods. In Volume Three, this sort of anticipation leads him into a spirited diatribe against critics in general; "the whole set of 'em", cries Tristram, "are stuck so full of rules and compasses...that a work of genius had better go to the devil at once, than stand to be prick'd and tortured to death by 'em" (3.12). He goes on to ridicule in turn the critic of literature and drama, before turning his attention to the art connoisseur, whose meaningless platitudes represent the "bobs and trinkets", the empty "cant of criticism" that has infected all the arts:

> --And did you step in, to take a look at the grand picture, in your way back? ----'Tis a melancholy daub! my Lord; not one principle of the *pyramid* in any one group! ---and what a price! ---for there is nothing of the colouring of *Titian*,---the expression of *Rubens*,--the grace of *Raphael*,---the purity of *Dominichino*,--the *corregiescity* of *Corregio*,--the learning of *Poussin*,--the airs of *Guido*,--the taste of *Carrachi's*,--or the grand contour of *Angelo* ----Grant me patience, just heaven! ---Of all the cants which are canted in this canting world,---though the cant of hypocrites may be the worst,--the cant of criticism is the most tormenting! (3.12)

This passage, reminiscent of Hogarth's letter in The St. James Post twenty years previously, was lifted by Sterne (almost word for word) from Reynolds' essay in the Idler in 1759.[10] The "war" against connoisseurship, and by extension, incompetent and outmoded literary criticism, was waged by artists as diverse as Hogarth and Reynolds, and later taken up by Sterne.

The notion of formal rules that predominated the aesthetic thought of the earlier

eighteenth-century, and continued to influence critical thought until the latter years of the century, provides Sterne with an opportunity to indulge in some word-play, and with it, to satirize this preoccupation. The chaotic surface appearance of the novel, in its departure from a straight, "ruled" narrative line, neglects to follow the formal "rules" of composition:

> And what of this new book the whole world makes such a rout about?--Oh! 'tis out of all plumb, my Lord,----quite an irregular thing! --not one of the angles at the four corners was a right angle. --I had my rule and compasses, &c. my Lord, in my pocket. -----Excellent critic! (3.12)

If there exists any consistency at all in the novel, it is Tristram's habit of doing "all things out of rule" (4.10). He realizes that his scrambled time-scheme and fragmented narrative technique will incur the disapproval of critics, noting that "[t]here is nothing so foolish as to order things so badly, as let your criticks and gentry of refined taste run it down..." (2.2). Like Hogarth, critical opposition does not frighten him; in fact, he looks forward to such disapprobation--it is, after all, what makes him and his book famous, and it is for fame, not food, that Tristram writes (Curtis 90). The adverse publicity his novel attracted seemed to please Sterne. "There is a shilling pamphlet wrote against Tristram", quips Sterne in a letter to a friend, "--I wish they would write a hundred such" (Curtis 107)[11].

It was appropriate that Sterne should have asked Hogarth to illustrate Tristram Shandy for him, as the artist's defiant attitude towards the neoclassical conventions that governed his profession nicely complements Tristram's openly rebellious approach in the creation of his book. Both Hogarth and Sterne held the backward looking critics of the time in contempt, regarding the concept of formal rules based solely on classical authority as something that retarded rather than advanced the quality of the arts in England. While in many ways the products of their age, both men managed to take the extra steps necessary to break with the traditions they were a part of, and in the process produced innovative and highly individualistic work.

CHAPTER THREE

Sterne, Hogarth, and Literary Pictorialism

Literature and painting enjoyed, as we have seen, a close alliance in the early eighteenth-century, partly in an attempt to fulfill Horace's maxim *ut pictura poesis*, but also because the personal familiarity poets and painters had with one another fostered a great deal of intellectual exchange. Jonathan Richardson, whose treatises on art were among the most widely read of the time, believed that a painter "must possess all the good qualities requisite to an Historian" as well as "the Talents requisite to a good Poet; the Rules for the Conduct of a Picture being much the same with those to be observ'd in writing a Poem" (qtd. in Hogarth 116). While painters strove to infuse their works with a literary quality and poets to create images with words, novelists just emerging in England attempted also to transform their verbal medium into a visual experience. In his "Dedication" to Ferdinand Count Fathom (1753), for example, Tobias Smollett defined the novel as "a large diffused picture, comprehending the characters of life...exhibited in various attitudes..." (qtd. in Brissenden 108).

The most "verbal" painter of the century was, without question, Hogarth. One contemporary critic places Hogarth alongside the foremost Augustan poets and prose writers: Defoe, Swift, Pope, Gay, Fielding (de S. Pinto 271). This assessment of Hogarth as a vital part of the literary scene is borne out by the variety of epithets the painter garnered among his peers: he was the "Shakespeare of painting" (Hogarth 116), a "writer of comedy", a "dramatic and epic painter", a "visual biographer", and a "graphic" journalist (Cowley 1). In his periodical The Champion (1740) Hogarth's friend Henry Fielding referred to the painter as a "satirist" as "useful" to the cause of public morality as "any age hath produced"

(Antal 8). His Self-Portrait with Pug (1745)(Fig. 3) attests to this strong literary bias as it features volumes by Shakespeare, Milton, and Swift. In the 1730s and '40s, when he painted his moral progresses, Hogarth liked to describe his work in terms of the theatre--each canvas in a cycle representing a different act or scene. He once compared his narrative prints, which he "designed in a series", to a book, as they possessed "something of that kind of connection which the pages of a book have" (Hogarth 229).

The painter's main source of income in the 1720s came through book illustrations. The illustrations he produced for Samuel Butler's satiric poem Hudibras represented Hogarth's first successful translation of a verbal work into a visual medium. Two sets of pictures were created for the project, one of which was sold without an accompanying text (Cowley 4); Hogarth obviously intended the narrative behind his images to be understood solely by the visual clues he gave. His next major project was a series of six paintings showing different scenes from the stage presentation of Gay's popular Beggar's Opera. Executed between 1728-31, these paintings displayed Hogarth's unique gift for "reporterage", for capturing the details and nuances of human life and character. But it was the moral progresses that finally brought the artist fame. A Harlot's Progress (1730), A Rake's Progress (1733-4), and Marriage à-la-Mode (1742) represented fictional histories that were meant to be "read" as opposed to merely viewed. In these "pictured morals" Hogarth lends the spatial medium of painting a temporal dimension: each canvas in the cycle can be read, from left to right, like the pages of a book, and the cycle as a whole, also viewed left to right, approximates a narrative unfolding in time.

Hogarth's narrative talent, together with his exceptional ability to capture the personality of an individual, earned him the respect of many novelists and poets of the century, who frequently approached him with commissions for book illustrations and invoked his name when attempting to delineate character. Citing the painter's ability "to teach pictures to speak and to think" (qtd. in Hogarth 225), Samuel Richardson asked him to illustrate Pamela

(1740)[1]. Fielding echoes Richardson's assessment in his "Preface" to Joseph Andrews, where he notes that Hogarth not only makes his "figures *seem to breathe*", but also "*appear to think*" (Fielding 10). Hogarth's proficiency at characterization caused poets and novelists alike to invoke his talent: Smollett, Fielding, and Sterne all called on him by name when faced with the difficult task of describing character, and Swift, in The Legion Club (1736), proposed a joint venture between the painter and himself:

> How I want thee, humorous Hogarth
> Thou, I hear, a pleasant rogue art.
> Were but you and I acquainted,
> Every monster should be painted....
> Draw the beasts as I describe them;
> Form their features, while I give them....
> Draw them so that we may trace
> All the soul in every face. (qtd. in Antal 129)

Even as his career drew to a close, Hogarth's popularity among the literati persisted, as Sterne's eagerness to acquire from him an illustration for Tristram Shandy clearly indicates.

Hogarth's method of characterization, for which he was acclaimed, is associated with the belief that certain facial expressions and physical gestures, uniform among mankind, reveal specific emotions and types of personality. Physiognomy, or the "art of painting the passions", enjoys a long tradition, extending back to the ancients. Over the centuries its techniques became systematized and were elaborated upon in a plethora of handbooks. These handbooks were originally conceived for use by painters, but by the eighteenth-century the various formulas of expression and gesture they advanced were assimilated by all artists concerned with portraying character: dramatists, actors, poets, and novelists.

Leonardo da Vinci discussed at length the methods of painting the human passions, and his ideas were further developed by Lomazzo into a coherent system of expression he published as a comprehensive handbook in 1585. Lomazzo's book was followed, in 1586, by della Porta's *De Humana Physiognomonia*, a manual known in England by Hogarth, as well as Addison and Gay (Antal 132). The prospect of systematizing human emotion appealed to the French Academy. Inspired by the example of Lomazzo and della Porta, the Academy's director, Charles

Le Brun, published his own manual on physiognomy, *Traité sur le Passions* (1698); an English translation was available as early as 1701 and the book remained popular throughout the century.[2] Le Brun's science of expression was readily adopted by actors. At the turn of the century, Thomas Betterton, renowned for his gifts of intonation and subtle gesturing, wrote an essay in which he stressed the importance of hand, foot, and eye movements. The unfinished essay, together with other items on stage acting, appeared in 1741 in The History of the English Stage. Physiognomy made its way into other acting handbooks of the time such as Aaron Hill's Essay on the Art of Acting (1753), in which particular attention is paid to the proper placement of the hands, and Wilke's A General View of the Stage (1759), in which would-be actors are advised to study the paintings of Hogarth as a way to develop their skills of characterization. The leading actor of the latter eighteenth-century, David Garrick (whom Hogarth and Sterne both knew; Hogarth painting a lively portrait of Garrick and his wife in 1757 and Sterne mentioning the actor several times by name in Tristram Shandy) was adept at expressing emotion and character through the nuances of gesture (Rogerson 77-8). Eventually, the "art of painting the passions" made its way into literature. In 1742 Fielding, interested in the art of physiognomy, wrote an "Essay on the Knowledge of the Characters of Men", and in Joseph Andrews asserts "that nature generally imprints such a portraiture of the mind in the countenance, that a skilful physiognomist will rarely be deceived" (155). The novels of Smollett, Richardson, Fielding, and Sterne often feature passages in which close attention to the bodily gestures and facial expressions of characters is paid in accord with the belief that emotion and personality is manifested in the outward appearance of an individual. In addition, such precise verbal descriptions represent an attempt to satisfy the Horatian doctrine that literature ought to "paint" a picture, create a clear visual image, in the mind of the reader.

Hogarth recommended Le Brun's treatise to student artists in his Analysis of Beauty; in it, he said, "the passions of the mind, from tranquillity to extreme despair" may be found

(Hogarth 138). He himself often relied upon this systematical method of characterization, but he recognized that there were limitations to its application. Physical appearance does not always, nor should it, reflect the true nature or emotions of an individual. Man is too complex a creature to allow his nature to be consistently discerned solely from his facial expressions and physical gestures. The visual artist, then, encounters a problem that the writer can easily overcome. The "character of an hypocrite", for example, lies "entirely out of the power of the pencil" (Hogarth 137); the novelist or dramatist, on the other hand, whose respective mediums enable them to reveal an indivudal's innermost thoughts, can more successfully depict such psychologically ambiguous and deceptive characters. There exists a danger, too, in formulas of expression becoming ineffective and objects of parody through overuse. Hogarth points an accusing finger at actors who have hackneyed certain techniques due to their reluctance to pursue other strategies of characterization. Stage acting, he says, is "often confin'd to certain sets and numbers, which being repeated, and growing stale to the audience, become at last subject to mimickry and ridicule." If actors studied "all the movements that the body is capable of" rather than restricting themselves to a set, limited repertoire, their performances would prove more realistic and credible (Hogarth 162).

Hogarth's talent for expressing the different passions and characters of men and women earned him a reputation as a caricaturist, an appellation he disdained after Fielding compared "*Caricatures*..in painting" to "Burlesque in writing". Likening himself to a "comic writer" as opposed to a mere writer of burlesque, Fielding goes on to explain that the burlesque in literature, like its counterpart the caricature in painting,portrays "monsters, not men...all distortions and exaggerations whatever are within its proper province " (10). Claiming to portray men realistically as characters, rather than as "monsters", Fielding views himself as no more a burlesque writer than Hogarth is a caricaturist. In spite of Fielding's protests to the contrary, the characters of Joseph Andrews (the novel to which the above remarks are prefixed) are closer to the art of caricature than to the psychological

realism of, for instance, Richardson's Clarissa: they are for the most part types; universal characters created by exaggerating a single aspect of personality, not far removed from the idea of the ruling passion such as that found in Ben Jonson's comedies. Fanny and Joseph are cardboard representations of virtue, Lady Booby embodies lust, and Beau Didapper is the quintessential rake, headed perhaps, in the same sad direction as Mr. Wilson, or Hogarth's Tom Rakewell.

Similarly, many of Hogarth's figures fit the broad definition of caricature: the grotesque representation of a person by distortion or exaggeration of characteristic traits (O.E.D.). Any book chronicling the development of caricature places Hogarth firmly within its tradition[3]; his capacity for the genre is amply demonstrated in works such as The Laughing Audience (1733)[4] (Fig. 7) and The Undertaker's Arms (1736). Before Fielding's distinction between character drawing and caricature, Hogarth did not distinguish between the two, at least not overtly in any of his written or painted works. Not until Characters and Caricaturas (1743)(Fig. 8), in which he illustrates Fielding's definitions, does he make any formal separation between the two classifications (Antal 133)[5]. Caricature, however, hinges upon exaggeration and the grotesque, techniques Hogarth consistently employs in his endeavour to express character. The brevity involved in caricature corresponds to Hogarth's reduction of the human figure to essential lines as a way to ensure full expression of character; exact physical resemblance is not his aim--only through suggestive and expressive form can emotion and personality be conveyed. In his attempt to make his work expressionistic, Hogarth sometimes enters the realm of caricature. But the line dividing realism from caricature is a fine one; and many of Hogarth's works find themselves squarely on it.

Associating men with grotesque or nonhuman things is one of Hogarth's favourite comic--and satiric--techniques. In Industry and Idleness VII, for instance, the distinguished aldermen and officials of the city who sit feasting on a huge meal resemble pigs at a feed trough, and in Self-Portrait with Pug (Fig. 3), Hogarth bears a startling likeness to his dog.

Indeed, dogs and other animals are often used by Hogarth to reflect or comment upon the characters in his paintings. The unhappy bride-to-be in Marriage à-la-Mode I (Fig. 5) resembles the dog lying down on the floor next to the prospective groom, and the two dogs chained together staring off in different directions emphasizes the unnatural alliance between their human counterparts.

Caricature offers a shorthand method in which the essence of character can be powerfully and succinctly expressed. It enables the artist, as Jean Hagstrum has put it, "to grasp the truth beneath the surface through superficial distortion" ("Verbal and Visual Caricature" 191). Hogarth disdained the label of caricaturist, but it was precisely this talent for locating the essence of character within a minimum of selected, expressive lines that drew the admiration of a generation of writers.

As the eighteenth-century progressed, Hogarth abandonned his "pictured morals" for an art less didactic, less literary, and more expressive. This fundamental change in Hogarth from the narrative and literary to an interest in pure form parallels the general aesthetic tendency in England after mid-century, when the differences--rather than similarities --between literature and painting were being stressed. Like his contemporary Burke, Reynolds did not think that the two arts were interchangeable. "What is done by Painting," noted Reynolds, "must be done at one blow"; it cannot, like a poem, lead "the mind on, till attention is totally engaged". In Discourse XIII he goes on to assert "that no art can be engrafted with success on another art...each has its own peculiar modes both of imitating nature, and deviating from it, each for the accomplishment of its own particular purpose" (146, 240).

Tristram Shandy was obviously produced at a time when the relationship between literature and painting was being questionned; in some ways, therefore, the novel belongs to a pictorial tradition, but in other ways it ridicules the conventions from which it emerged, as it recognizes the limitations of each medium. Literary pictorialism, then, is a convention Sterne at once follows and scrutinizes. He tries to make Tristram Shandy as visual an experience as possible, but understands the difficulty of achieving this through written language. His solution to the problem is to abandon language altogether and take pictorialism to its comic extreme by simply substituting graphic images for words. The attempts of the pictorial tradition to accurately describe the physical gestures and expressions of characters, following the formulas of the "art of painting the passions", are duly ridiculed by Sterne whose own fastidious descriptive passages go beyond rendering a clear visual image to outright absurdity. While in general he parodies the physiognomic method of characterization, Sterne does owe a significant debt to Hogarth's technique of figure drawing in his conception of Trim reading the sermon (where he follows Hogarth's prescribed "line of beauty"), and especially in his satirical depiction of Dr. Slop.

The value of the sense of sight over all others was stressed by Addison in his seminal Spectator essays, The Pleasures of the Imagination. Here, he points out the unique ability of visual stimuli to activate the imagination:

> Our sense of sight is the most perfect and most delightful of all our senses...It is this sense which furnishes the imagination with its ideas; so that by the pleasure of the imagination or fancy...I here mean such as arise from visible objects, either when we have them actually in our view, or when we call up their ideas into our minds by paintings, statues, descriptions, or any the like occasion. (288)

Addison's argument is demonstrated in Tristram Shandy when Trim tells Toby of his idea to build miniature fortifications, based upon ones already in existence, and suddenly the bowling green behind the Shandy residence "became curiously painted, all at once, upon the retina of

my uncle *Toby's* fancy", as he envisioned these fortifications constructed there (2.5). The common eighteenth-century notion that the sense of sight was most keen in man helps to explain why Sterne, like other novelists of the time, tried so hard to make his work as visual an experience as possible, and to stimulate, through physical description, clear visual images in the minds of his readers.

In Tristram Shandy Sterne achieves a strong visual orientation in a variety of ways. Most obvious is the novel's unusual graphic effects. Very particular about how his novel actually looked, Sterne claimed that if necessary, he "shall correct every proof myself, it shall go perfect into the world..." (qtd. in Moss 182). His concern for the book's physical appearance suggests that he was not writing a novel so much as he was making one. The marbled page in Volume Three, for instance, because it occupies only the text area, required the numbering of that page to be hand-stamped. He paid five shillings for the woodcut of Trim's flourish in Volume Nine (Moss 183), and drew and etched on his own, the plot diagrams found in Volume Six.

In addition to actual graphic images, Sterne creates a visual effect through his attention to details like colour. We are told that Le Fever's sermon is written on "blue paper" (6.11), that Trim's coveted Montrero cap is "scarlet...except about four inches in the front, which was faced with a light blue" (6.24), and that Tristram, "clad in black, had the honour to be driven into Paris at nine o'clock at night, by a postilion in a tawny yellow jerkin turned up with red calamanco" (7.17). In the novel's final volume we find Tristram sitting writing "in a purple jerkin and a yellow pair of slippers" (9.1). Modulation in colour is as important to Sterne as it is to a painter, but Sterne must describe in words only, the various hues and tints of the artist's palette.

Sterne habitually uses language and metaphors associated with painting, which earned him the reputation of possessing "the art of painting with his *pen*..he exhibits on paper the talents of Carlo Dolce, Vandyke, Teniers and Hogarth..." (Howes 350). To cite all the

instances of painting metaphors found in Tristram Shandy would be impossible; they permeate the entire work. Some examples might include Tristram's depiction of flickering candle-light in terms of "lights and shades" and "tints" (7.18) and the way he perceives life as a huge "canvas" on which events--"vexations" and fortunes alike--are painted (7.16). Sometimes scenes are composed like a painting: Tristram reveals what figure occupies the "foreground" of his "picture" (3.20) and later asks his readers to allow him to "stop and give you a picture of the corporal's apparatus" (6.25). Mrs. Shandy, perched outside the door as she eavesdrops on Walter and Toby's conversation, resembles "--the listening slave, with the Goddess of Silence at his back," whose pose "could not have given a finer thought for an intaglio" (5.5).

Sterne's personal enthusiasm for painting, his familiarity with important artists of the time, and his knowledge of the techniques they employ account for his affinity for language and metaphors derived from the visual arts, as well as his practice of providing detailed descriptions of his characters' gestures and attitudes. Although his reason for this is to render Tristram Shandy a more visual experience for his readers, Sterne nonetheless questions the validity of this sort of "painting" with words, occasionally stretching the technique of literary pictorialism past its breaking point, transgressing into the realm of graphic images, leaving the inadequacies of language far behind. A sense of freedom and well-being were never better articulated, for instance, than in the flourish that Trim draws in the air with his walking stick (9.4). Sterne's impatience with trying to squeeze clear visual images from words sometimes reveals itself as burlesque. When attempting, for example, to capture precisely the colour of Walter's face as he flushes with frustration at Toby's incessant talk of military strategy, Tristram tells us that his father's complexion "redden'd, pictorially and scientintically speaking, six whole tints and a half...above his natural colour" (3.5). In creating "pictures" of his characters' physical movements through minutely detailed verbal accounts, Sterne wields a double-edged sword: as much as he strives to evoke precise visual

images, he must ultimately concede the intrinsic inefficacy of pictorial description to convincingly represent reality. Tristram admits he "was almost ashamed of" the "minute description" he gave "of the rood and the half of ground which lay at the bottom of my uncle *Toby's* kitchen garden", adding that if "the reader has not a clear conception" of it, "the fault lies not in me,--but in his imagination..." (6.21). Offering the reader precise accounts of scenes and characters does not guarantee comprehension. An audience understands better when presented with suggestion rather than definition. Through sheer repetition alone, long and laborious descriptions of physical gestures and poses (such as Walter reaching for his handkerchief (3.2,3), falling asleep in the posture of the philosopher (3.20), or Trim making himself comfortable in order to tell his story of the King of Bohemia (8.19)) are made comic and a trifle absurd, effects that Sterne was no doubt aware of and most likely intended.

In his essay "Sterne and Painting", R. F. Brissenden quite rightly observes that in Sterne's pictorial passages, he treats his characters more like inanimate objects than human beings; but when it comes time to portray personality he dispenses with precise details and allows character to emerge in oblique ways: through individual "hobby horses" and responses to situations (95). While Sterne does show an interest in physiognomy, he does not wholly trust the tradition as an accurate index of emotion and character. His method of expressing human nature through suggestion constitutes, according to a modern scholar, "one of his great gifts to the novel" (Jefferson 323).

With the simultaneous rise of the novel and development of portraiture in England, together with a bustling theatrical community, writers and painters sought ways to effectively portray personality. Sterne uses a painting metaphor when "drawing" character, but does not resort to pictorial precision. Trying to convey Toby's character, Tristram laments the inadequacy of "mechanical" means such as those the "Pentagraphic Brethren of the brush have shewn in taking copies", which, while accurately duplicating physical appearance, fail to express emotion or personality. "I am determin'd", asserts Tristram, "to draw [Toby's]

character by no mechanical helps whatever...in a word, I will draw my uncle *Toby's* character from his HOBBY-HORSE" (1.23). Sterne prefers not to directly inform us what sort of person Toby is; we are to deduce his nature from the suggestions made by his behaviour, his responses, and gestures. Toby's character emerges through his insistence on pity, his modest blushes, his naivety, and his inevitable whistling, "the usual channel thro' which his passions got vent...especially when anything, which he deem'd very absurd, was offer'd" (1.21). Tristram decides to present us not with the complete "picture" of Toby, but with the essential lines, thus enabling us to finish the sketch, and comprehend his character, ourselves. During the story of "Aunt Dinah and the coachman" Tristram reveals that

> the drawing of my uncle *Toby's* character went on gently all the time;--not the great contours of it,--...but some familiar strokes and faint designations of it, were here and there touch'd in...so you are much better acquainted with my uncle *Toby* now than you was before. (1.22)

Occasionally, Sterne allows concrete physical descriptions of a character's movements and postures to reveal his or her personality. "A Man's body and his mind", says Tristram, are like "a jerkin, and a jerkin's lining;--rumple the one--you rumple the other" (3.4). Special attention is given to the expressive power of hands and fingers. Walter's pedantry, for example, is emphasized by the way he half shuts his book to argue a point, "nodding his head and laying his finger upon the side of his nose" (5.31), and Trim's nervousness as he confesses to Toby his part in the incident of the window-sash is made apparent through the positioning of his hands and body:

> *Trim*, by the help of his forefinger, laid flat upon the table, and the edge of his hand striking a-cross it at right angles, made a shift to tell his story. (5.20)

In Tristram Shandy, even the minutest gestures can speak volumes. Walter, in one of his few moments of wisdom, declares that "[t]here are a thousand unnoticed openings...which let a penetrating eye at once into a man's soul...a man of sense does not lay down his hat coming into a room,--or take it up in going out of it, but something escapes, which discovers him" (6.5). As testimony to this, Sterne juxtaposes Walter's and Trim's responses to the news of Bobby's

death. Walter attempts to reason out death's suddeness and permanence through the rhetoric of philosophy; Trim, "falling instantly into the same attitude in which he read the sermon", simply drops his hat on the floor--its "descent...as if a heavy lump of clay had been kneaded into the crown of it" (5.7). The gesture affected Trim's audience, as it affects readers, much more profoundly than Walter's reasoning. Like the flourish he makes with his stick in Volume Nine, Trim's dramatic toss of his hat is worth a "thousand of [Walter's] most subtle syllogisms..." (9.4).

Sterne exploits the current interest in physiognomy as a way to express character and create strong visual effects, but more often than not, his intent is comic or satiric. He parodies the "art of painting the passions" in his depiction of Trim, who, preparing to read the sermon aloud, assumes a classical oratorial posture such as might be recommended in one of the many actor's or painter's handbooks in circulation at the time:[6]

> He stood before them with his body swayed, and bent forwards just so far, as to make an angle of 85 degrees...----which sound orators, to whom I address this, know very well, to be the true persuasive angle of incidence...
>
> He stood,----for I repeat it, to take the picture of him in at one view, with his body sway'd, and somewhat bent forwards,--his right leg firm under him...--the foot of his left leg...not laterally, nor forwards, but in a line betwixt them;--his knee bent, but that not violently,--but so as to fall within the limits of the line of beauty...
>
> ☞ This I recommend to painters;--need I add,--to orators?... (2.17)

Sterne is sincere in his commendation of Hogarth's "line of beauty" but is facetious when he remarks on the way that Trim's position exemplifies the way that "the arts and sciences mutually befriend each other" (2.17) in systematizing and correlating gesture and meaning. The art (and science) of physical gesturing can, Sterne realizes, provide an effective way to communicate, but it can equally supply him with a target for satire. In the following account of Walter preparing to lecture to Toby, Sterne manages not only to poke fun at pictorialism, but also to parody the same cultural arrogance that Hogarth detests:

> My father instantly exchanged the attitude he was in, for that in which

> *Socrates* is so finely painted by *Raffael* in his school of *Athens*; which your connoisseurship knows is so exquisitely imagined, that even the particular manner of the reasoning of *Socrates* is expressed by it--for he holds the forefinger of his left-hand between the forefinger and the thumb of his right...as if he was saying....
>
> So stood my father...--O *Garrick*! what a rich scene of this would thy exquisite powers make! (4.7)

Unlike his contemporaries, Sterne does not always match outward expression with inner emotion. In Fielding's novels, the inner and outer are congruous; an individual's character or feelings can be discerned according to his physiognomy. He asserts in Joseph Andrews that "nature generally imprints such a portraiture of the mind in the countenance, that a skilful physiognomist will rarely be deceived" (155). But Sterne, though he often does correlate expression and character, allows his characters to act periodically in unexpected ways in order to prevent them from becoming static or two-dimensional. In this respect, he recalls Hogarth's view that the technique of recording human passions according to a system has limitations--character cannot always be disclosed through physical movements and appearance. Upon Walter's discovery that Tristram has been misnamed, the reader expects from the harried father a violent, angry response. He reacts, however, not in the way "a common reader would imagine"; instead, he spoke "in the sweetest modulation" and "took down his hat with the gentlest motion" (4.16). In the Shandean world, humans are unpredictable, and what is shown on the outside does not necessarily reflect what is felt on the inside. Human personality is ultimately unfathomable, like the marbled page--that "motly emblem" of Sterne's work. The utmost reason cannot solve the world's "riddles and mysteries--the most obvious things, which come in our way, have dark sides which the quickest sight cannot penetrate..." (4.17). Sterne does not want his reader to be able to predict or expect certain responses to certain situations. However "many pictures", for instance, that "have been given of my father", says Tristram, "how like him soever in different airs and attitudes,--not one or all of them, can ever help the reader to any kind of preconception of how my father would think, speak, or act, upon any untried occasion or occurrence of life" (5.24). Moreover, the

same response may mean or express a variety of things. Toby's blush after he hears Trim's proposal to build miniature fortifications could have been "a blush of guilt,--of modesty,--or of anger"-- but "it was a blush of joy" (2.5), and Walter's calculated serenity when he discovers Tristram has been misnamed only masks his despair.

Formulaic methods of expressing emotion and character, then, such as those used by painters and actors, are alternately endorsed and derided in Tristram Shandy. Like Hogarth, Sterne understands that physiognomy can be useful in expressing character, but when overused the tradition degenerates into hackneyed clichés that tell us nothing about the human spirit.

Because Hogarth was considered a master of expression, novelists in the eighteenth-century invariably invoked his name whenever they set out to describe the character and appearance of an individual. Hogarth's talent for caricature and the quick-sketch is cited in Tristram Shandy when Sterne portrays Dr. Slop. Except for Didius, Slop represents the only character in the novel based entirely upon an actual person, and the only one to be so maliciously satirized (Baker 251).[7] Slop is rendered like a caricature--in only a few "lines" that exaggerate and distort certain features in order to communicate character; the result is a brief but vivid portrait:

> Imagine to yourself a little, squat, uncourtly figure..of about four feet and a half perpendicular height, with a breadth of back, and a sesquipedality of belly, which might have done honour to a Serjeant in the Horse-Guards. (2.9)

As previously mentioned, Sterne was hopeful of obtaining an illustration for Tristram Shandy from Hogarth. To this end, he wrote to a friend who was acquainted with the painter, asking him to intercede on his behalf:

> You bid me tell You all my Wants--...I would give both my Ears...for no more than ten Strokes of *Howgarth's* witty Chissel, to clap at the front of my next Edition of *Shandy*:--...The loosest Sketch in Nature, of Trim's reading the Sermon to my Father &c; w^{d} do the Business--& it w^{d} mutually illustrate his System & mine... (Curtis 99)

Even though the passage that Sterne would like illustrated is one of excessive and minute detail, Hogarth can render it in only a few skilful strokes. Language, when it tries to create precise visual images, proves to be an inefficient medium: what Sterne describes in three pages, Hogarth can accomplish in one. It is this ability to capture the essence of character through suggestive and expressive form that Sterne praises in Hogarth and likens to his own "System" of characterization in which personality must be deduced by the reader from the suggestive clues provided. The "System" Sterne compliments in this letter refers not, as one critic (Holtz) believes, to the pictorial technique[8] (that the Trim passage parodies), but rather to Hogarth's method, which he explains in his Analysis, of reducing human figures (and inanimate objects) to their essential forms. In his depiction of Slop, Sterne attempts to follow Hogarth's example and portray the man in a minimum of highly suggestive and expressive "lines":

> Such were the out-lines of Dr. *Slop's* figure, which,--if you have read *Hogarth's* analysis of beauty, and if you have not, I wish you would;--you must know, may as certainly be caracatur'd, and convey'd to the mind by three strokes as three hundred. (2.9)

We are given only the "out-lines" of Slop's physical appearance, in the same way that we were earlier provided with only the "out-line" of uncle Toby's character (1.22). According to Sterne and Hogarth, the most effective way of communicating, in both verbal and visual art, is through avoiding clear, complete description, thus forcing the reader or viewer to finish the "picture", based on the hints he has been given, in his own imagination.

As is often the case in caricature, Dr. Slop is associated with an animal--here, a fat duck or goose. We see him "waddling through the dirt" in Volume Two and he later "waddled" into the midst of Trim's discourse on "radical heat" and "radical moisture" (5.39). Tristram's perennial enemy, the critics, are also caricatured, collectively, as we find them "braying" together like asses while they are lead over the hills and through the dales of the story (6.1). The central characters of Tristram Shandy, however, are more fully developed and psychologically credible than Dr. Slop. They are not, like Fielding's characters in Joseph

Andrews, representative types, but individuals with specific peculiarities and eccentricities. Fielding aims to portray "not men, but manners; not an individual, but a species" (159). Nearly all of his characters follow the tradition of caricature and are associated with animals. Slipslop, the archetypal superannuated beauty, resembles an old cow (25), Mrs. Tow-wouse has the features of a rodent (50-1), and Beau Didapper, the universal lecher, is like a dandified rabbit, whose "gait might be more properly called hopping than walking" (277). In Tristram Shandy, only Dr. Slop is a two-dimension cartoon figure meant to satirize not only a particular doctor, but an entire profession. In Joseph Andrews, on the other hand, most of its characters are intended satirically, as they are drawn from actual persons[9], and are therefore like caricature. Despite Fielding's objections, his technique is in many ways closer to burlesque than to realism.

As an amateur painter with a keen interest in the visual arts, it comes as no surprise that Sterne should infuse his novel with so many metaphors related to painting and take such care with the book's outward appearance. His visual imagination would naturally be attracted to the possibilities pictorialism offered, thus Tristram Shandy belongs, in one sense, to that tradition. But Sterne also recognized the serious limitations of his medium: words cannot always clearly delineate; they can only suggest. Having read Burke's Enquiry[10], he would agree with his observation that "[i]t is one thing to make an idea clear, and another to make it *affecting* to the imagination" (60), and with the distinction he makes between the mediums of language and painting: the latter allows a more exact image to be achieved; the former is less precise, but more evocative.

Similarly, Sterne finds himself attracted to the physiognomic tradition in which feelings and character are revealed through a limited, formulaic repertoire of physical gestures. However, Sterne realizes, as Hogarth does, that there exist problems with any systematization of human personality; it must be applied with discretion, as a tool to give insight into character, and not as a way to avoid the complexity of human emotion and

disposition.

Finally, Sterne shares with Hogarth a gift for caricature, as witnessed by his vivid, satirical depiction of Dr. Slop. He openly commends the artist's ability to express character in only a few essential lines which stimulate the imagination of his viewer and enable him to form an idea of the whole person. This sort of "shorthand" that Hogarth practises in his characterizations is what Sterne tries to attain when describing, not bodily appearance, so much as personality. Toby, he hopes, can be comprehended by the reader without Sterne having to define him completely: the essential "lines" of Toby's character--his blushes and responses--should express enough that the reader can infer from them what kind of a person he is.

CHAPTER FOUR

Sterne, Hogarth, and the Rococo

A growing dissatisfaction with the rigid classical standards that dominated painting in the eighteenth-century led to the development of a style known as 'rococo'. Originating in France in the 1720s, the rococo (from the French *rocaille*) enjoyed immense popularity and soon spread throughout Europe and England, affecting not only painting, but also architecture, interior and decorative design, and landscape gardening. In England, Hogarth best represented the rococo, particularly in his conversation pieces and moral progresses of the 1730s and '40s, and finally articulated its basic aesthetic principles--variety, intricacy, asymmetry--in his Analysis of Beauty in 1753. The general vogue for rococo art in England, together with its application and defense by Hogarth, helps to account for the extension of rococo techniques into Sterne's narrative method. Sterne admired Hogarth's work and had read and endorsed the painter's Analysis; he could have, quite consciously, incorporated into his novel those aspects of the rococo--such as complexity and irregularity--that Hogarth both practised and preached.

The rococo emerged from, and is closely related to, the baroque. Its primary difference from baroque art, according to the art historian Frederick Antal, is one of degree: the rococo is generally lighter, more diffuse, and elaborate (23). But it differs radically in subject matter and intent, avoiding the 'high seriousness' of Renaissance masters and opting instead for 'lower', domestic subjects that would appeal to a rapidly growing middle-class. The style originated in France as a gesture of protest against the classicism and formality dictated by the French Academy. When elected to the Academy in 1699, Roger de Piles challenged the institution's unquestionning acceptance of classical axioms and attacked its

foremost painter, Nicolas Poussin. Despite the drollness of his much maligned "painter's scale", de Piles did make a positive contribution to the arts in France in his wish to free artists from the restrictions of the Roman school (Levey 17)[1]. Italian and French painters alike turned away from the serious, ideal, and heroic in favour of the light-hearted, whimsical, and erotic. Rococo paintings are characterized by a high degree of playfulness: busy, mostly curvilinear lines keep the viewer's eye from resting on one place very long, forcing it to roam over the entire surface of the canvas. These paintings are highly animated; they exude a sense of spontaneity and carefree abandon. So contrary is the rococo to the neoclassical tradition it challenges that it has been referred to as an "anti-style" (Levey) because of its deliberate subversion of the seriousness, restraint, and idealism that paintings were conventionally meant to convey.

The rococo reached Britain in the 1720s and remained popular there throughout the 1730s, and '40s. Its influence was so great that by the '50s, a virtual "cult of asymmetry" emerged in all the arts (Brissenden 107). In landscape gardening, for instance, a movement away from careful order and formality and towards a casual irregularity was initiated by "Capability" Brown, and aristocrats and wealthy members of the middle-class hired baroque and rococo Italian and French painters and artisans to decorate their homes (Antal 32). But the excesses of the rococo came under attack after mid-century, and was thereafter practised with considerable moderation in both France and England. This tempering of the rococo love of complexity and playfulness can be seen in Hogarth, whose work after 1750, as already demonstrated, differs markedly from the elaborateness of his early conversation pieces and moral progresses.

Jean-Antoine Watteau was the best known and most influential of the French rococo artists. His popularity was especially great in England, where his work was admired by Hogarth, Reynolds, and Gainsborough (Levey 56). Described as the "first real English imitator of Watteau", Hogarth owned several of the artist's engravings and likely viewed

first-hand original Watteau paintings possessed by his close friend Dr. Mead (Antal 35). Hogarth's conversation pieces, such as The Fountaine Family (c. 1730) reveal the influence of Watteau's *fête galante*: the picture features a fluid, energetic brush stroke to complement the informality of the subject. Hogarth divides the canvas in a way that recalls Watteau's *L'Enseigne de Gersaint* (1720-21) in which two distinct areas of the canvas compete for the viewer's attention. A similar lack of a central focus characterizes The Fontaine Family: Hogarth organizes the canvas into several distinct figure groups joined only by a web of rococo lines and bright patches of colour. Each group is "compartmentalized" (Paulson, Emblem 126), compelling the viewer's eye to pause momentarily before being hurried along to the other groups. The painting does not focus on one central object or figure; each member of the family demands an equal amount of attention from the spectator.

Hogarth's practise of separating his canvas into several figure groups produces what Ronald Paulson has called an art of "multiple gestalts" (Emblem 56). A viewer's initial impression of one of Hogarth's rococo paintings is usually confusion, as there does not seem to be any single, stable centre of interest on which one can focus. Because of the tension Hogarth creates between the horizontal and vertical lines of his compositions, the viewer's eye must constantly move between them. As the horizontal lines lead the eye comfortably left to right across the canvas, strong vertical lines intercede to disrupt the flow and lead the eye to other parts of the painting (Emblem 44-5). Any attempt to view one of Hogarth's rococo-inspired paintings as a unified, coherent whole is inevitably frustrated by this opposition between horizontal and vertical lines. Such oppositions prevent centrifugal movement, creating in its place a diffuse effect.

Hogarth's conversation pieces, which gained him recognition, his moral progresses, which made him famous, and his masterpiece Marriage à-la-Mode reveal a considerable debt to Watteau and to rococo principles in general. His art of "multiple gestalts" and his interpretation of rococo complexity is perhaps best demonstrated in his Marriage à-la-Mode

series, which, according to Robert R. Wark, is "among the rather select number of masterpieces of rococo produced in England" (162). In the first painting of the series, "The Marriage Settlement" (Fig. 5), the relationship between the figures and the nature of the events that are unfolding are not as easily discerned as they are in the more "readable" prints because the image is reversed so that the figures of the fathers of the bride and groom occupy the right hand side in the painting, while in the engraving they are on the left, indicating that the "narrative" begins with them but concerns the young couple on the far right hand side of the canvas, who will dominate the rest of the series. Following the rococo practise, Hogarth's canvas is extremely animated and bright. As is the situation in the print, locating one central focal point proves impossible; the elaborateness of the lines and liveliness of the colours (the canvas creates a "sparkling" effect) divert the eye to all parts of the painting at once, thus frustrating the viewer who attempts to draw the different parts of the picture into a harmonious totality. The seeming disorder of the design perplexes the first-time viewer as the meaning of the painting is not readily apparent. The viewer soon learns that he must actively search out, based on the visual clues Hogarth provides, the meaning of the painting, the relationship between the figures, and the nature of the drama they are involved in. It remains the responsibility of the viewer to join the disparate parts of the painting into some sort of meaningful totality--Hogarth will not do it for him.

To be understood, Marriage à-la-Mode I requires a concerted effort on the part of its audience. Within its pictorial space resides a narration, a "plot" that unfolds linearly in time and space. An attentive viewer discovers within the simultaneity of the painting an historical past and foreboding of the future. The family tree to which the Earl points, for example, indicates his concern for the survival of the family name. The family history of the Earl is cleverly related by Hogarth through the tree that "grows" out of William the Conqueror's body. The Earl expresses his pride in his heritage by gesturing with his right hand, which he places on his chest. But this impressive blood-line is diminished by the

patriarch's eroded physical condition: the bandaged foot and the crutches point to gout, which with venereal disease was considered in the eighteenth-century to be symptomatic of sexual and personal over-indulgence. The excesses of the Earl have been passed on to his son, positioned at the opposite extreme of the canvas. A large "plaster" on the side of the son's neck suggests scrofula, a disease affecting the lymph glands, usually caused by drinking infected breast milk[2]. The presence of disease in both father and son emphasizes the corruption and excesses (moral and physical) of the family. The lawyer who addresses the reluctant bride proves to be the same man who boldly courts her in plate IV of the series. Hogarth leaves it up to his audience to form connections between the different paintings of the series, so most viewers find themselves reviewing or "re-reading" the paintings several times before the story can be understood. Besides alluding to the past, the first canvas also contains clues to the future. What the future holds for the young couple, for instance, is portended by the two dogs at the groom's feet who assume contrasting positions, stare off in opposite directions, yet are held together by a heavy chain.

The Country Dance (Fig. 4), also painted in the 1740s, employs the same rococo techniques found in Marriage à-la-Mode, except it is not part of a readable, narrative series. Complementing the gaiety of the subject matter are the energetic, curving lines of the dancers. The eye is led horizontally across the picture by the parallel floor boards, and the lines running across the ceiling and walls, but is hindered along the way by the busyness of the individual dancers who force the viewer to pause before them before continuing his perusal of the painting. The intricacy of each figure seduces the eye to explore it, thus diverting it from its horizontal course. An engraving of this painting provided Hogarth with one of two illustrations which accompanied his Analysis of Beauty, in which the compositional principles of the rococo are discussed and defended.

Hogarth's Analysis of Beauty, besides representing an entire lifetime of work and thought, also constitutes, according to its modern editor, Joseph Burke, a "brilliant

rationalization of observed rococo principles" (Hogarth **xlvii**). The treatise openly questions the traditional reliance upon classical and Renaissance authority, and their doctrines of symmetry, frontalism, uniformity, and proportion. Central to the aesthetic that Hogarth proposes is the concept of variety. On the frontispiece to the work Hogarth reduces his theory to a simple graphic emblem: a three-dimensional triangle (pyramid) enclosing a serpentine line sitting atop a block labelled "VARIETY", and he introduces his treatise with this quotation from Milton:

> So vary'd he, and of his torture train
> Curl'd many a wanton wreath, in sight of Eve,
> To lure her eye...

Beauty--broadly defined as that which pleases the eye--depends upon variety according to Hogarth, and not mathematical proportions. Variety in composition is accomplished through asymmetry, intricacy, irregularity, such as that found in curving and twisting lines. In his assertion that only variety pleases and stimulates the spectator, Hogarth anticipates Edmund Burke's notion of beauty in his Philosophical Enquiry. In his discussion of "gradual variation" Burke openly acknowledges his debt to "the very ingenious Hogarth". Like the painter, Burke finds that only in "the varied line...is complete beauty found" (114-15).

Hogarth's insistence on variety distinguishes the Analysis from other treatises popular at the time. Instead of turning to precedent for a formulation of the beautiful, Hogarth turns to the direct observation of nature. In the natural world "shapes and colours...seem of little other intended use, than that of entertaining the eye with the pleasures of variety" (34). From his observations of the world around him, Hogarth concludes that the "waving line" rather than a straight or uniform line "is a line more productive of beauty...as in flowers..." (55). Yet to his annoyance, Hogarth discovers that the prejudiced notion that beauty results from the mathematical symmetry of an object's parts continued to persist:

> If any one should ask, what is it that constitutes a fine-proportioned human figure? how ready and seemingly decisive is the common answer: *a just symmetry and harmony of parts in respect to the whole*

Such a "vague answer", according to Hogarth, "took its rise from doctrines not belonging to form"; that is, from the direct, empirical observation of the human figure (82). The variety found in nature is antithetical to the balanced, the symmetrical, and the tectonic of man-made, inanimate or idealized objects. The "Mathematical road", wrote Hogarth in one of his drafts for the Analysis, "is quite out of the way of this Enquiry" (169). Beauty arises not from "any greater degree of exactness in the *proportions* of its parts, but merely to the more *pleasing turns*, and *intertwistings of the lines*, which compose its external form..." (74). Hogarth associates the irregular, waving line with the organic, and the straight and geometrical with the inanimate or ideal. The assumption on the part of many artists of the time that symmetry and uniformity causes beauty (or aesthetic pleasure) stems, says Hogarth, from the practise of observing precedent rather than nature. Hogarth opposes the neoclassical dictum that art ought to "improve" upon or "methodize" nature; rather it should express nature as she is found: various, complex, and disorderly.

Hogarth's enthusiasm for the undulating serpentine line in both his work and the Analysis exposed him to criticism and ridicule. Joshua Reynolds, for instance, in a letter to James Beattie, complained of the painter's seeming "aversion" to the straight line. Reynolds himself preferred a balance of straight and curved lines in a painting, reasoning that "that which partakes equally of each is the medium or average of all lines and therefore is more beautiful than any other line...[Hogarth's] pictures therefore want that line of firmness and stability which is produced by straight lines" (Hilles 72-3). What Reynolds (and some modern critics)[3] fail to realize in Hogarth's rejection of straight, uniform lines and advocacy of irregular, winding lines, is his concern to create vitality and energy in a work. The Analysis not only codifies rococo principles, it pleads for an art that reflects life as we find it: not as it ought to be, heroic and dignified, but as it is, homely and transitory. The "curious difference between the fitness of nature's machines (one of which is man) and those made by mortal hands" (86), suggests Hogarth, is that objects in nature are imperfect and irregular

in form; only inanimate, man-made structures such as buildings consist of perfect parallels, balances, and proportions. Hogarth notes that "forms of the most grace", such as flowers, "have least of the straight line in them" (55), and in the human body "[t]here is scarce a straight bone" to be found (71). The regularity and uniformity of a building, even "with all its equalities and parallelism", is not aesthetically interesting. Thus, an artist, when painting a building, "generally breaks" its monotonous perfection "by throwing a tree before it...that may answer the same purpose of adding variety" (37).

For Hogarth, variety of line is essential to the composition of a painting, or for that matter any form of art, because it is what creates the interest and energy in a work, lending it a pulse or rhythm that saves it from stagnation and lifelessness. Variation in design is analogous to the importance of rhythm in music. Just as "[t]he ear is...offended with one even continued note", so is "the eye" if "fixed to a point" (35). The great variety of lines comprising The Country Dance (Fig. 4) nicely illustrates Hogarth's theory that the more irregular and intricate a design is, the more it delights the eye. The whimsical, undulating lines underlying the structure of the painting and composing the figures within it give rise to a visual rhythm appropriate to the spirit of the dance. The appeal, "the beauty of this kind of mystic dancing", says Hogarth, "depends upon moving in a composed variety of lines, chiefly serpentine, govern'd by the principles of intricacy, &c." (160). The variation in the lines, together with their intricacy "make a delightful play upon the eye", causing it to move with the dancers, unable to remain long with any one figure. Uniform lines cannot engage the spectator in this way; only the "vast variety of changing circumstances" is able to keep "the eye and the mind in constant play, in following the numberless turns of expression [such variety] is capable of" (53). The principle of variety, then, supplies a work with a rhythmical vitality and evokes a sense of spontaneity and surprise that gives pleasure to its viewer because it captures and stimulates his imagination.

Closely related to the governing principle of variety is the concept of intricacy which

Hogarth demonstrates in his rococo-inspired paintings. When he speaks of intricacy, Hogarth is thinking of the "beauty" caused by "contriving, winding shapes" (45). Such shapes produce a sense of movement and encourage the viewer to "pursue" them. The aesthetic delight in such movement of line and shape resembles the pleasure one feels "at seeing a country dance...particularly when the eye eagerly pursued a favourite dancer, through all the windings of the figure..." (45). Paradoxically, the more complex a work is, the more frustrating it can be for the audience to interpret, but though the audience might find interpretation difficult, it nonetheless enjoys the attempt. The "process" of viewing, then, takes precedence over the "product" under examination. According to Hogarth,

> The active mind is ever bent to be employ'd. Pursuing is the business of our lives... Every arising difficulty, that for awhile attends and interrupts the pursuit, gives a sort of spring to the mind, enhances the pleasure, and makes what would else be toil and labour, become sport and recreation. (41-2)

Thus, the beautiful depends not only on variety but also on intricacy, which Hogarth defines

> to be that peculiarity in the lines, which Compose it, *that leads the eye a wanton kind of chace*, and from the pleasure that gives the mind, intitles it to the name of the beautiful... (42)

The analogy of viewing a work to a sort of intellectual and aesthetic "chace" reveals Hogarth's keen interest in the psychological and perceptual interaction that takes place between art and its audience, and the description of this chase as "wanton" suggests that these lines ought to be playful and express an exuberant spontaneity. Hogarth measures the aesthetic success or "beauty" of a painting not according to its degree of tectonic perfection, but according to its effect on the viewer. Meaning in Hogarth's work cannot be absorbed passively; his paintings are designed in a way that excite and encourage the audience to actively seek out meaning and order for themselves. Even if meaning eludes the viewer, (or there is no meaning in the painting), his "pursuit" has not necessarily been in vain, as he at least experiences an aesthetic pleasure. Implicit--and unique--in Hogarth's conception of intricacy is the notion that art may be appreciated solely on its formal, aesthetic merits, apart from its content or

moral meaning.

Although The Analysis of Beauty originally received positive critical responses, Hogarth's outspoken opposition to the formation of an English Academy of Art based on the French model which was then being promoted, led advocates of the plan to volley hostile, often unjustified criticism against the painter and his treatise (Hogarth **xxiv-xxviii**)[4]. Despite the harsh words the Analysis invited, many of its concepts influenced other painters and theorists of the century. In his second edition of his Enquiry, Burke concurs with Hogarth's estimation that the "varied line" causes beauty (115-16). Reynolds, who earlier chastized Hogarth for his deliberate avoidance of straight uniform lines, thought enough of the Analysis to echo its vocabulary and ideas in his thirteenth Discourse, where he calls for "[v]ariety and intricacy" in all forms of art. In speaking of architecture, Reynolds notes that buildings which "depart from regularity", that make "use of accidents; to follow when they lead", satisfy more than those that "always trust to a regular plan". The charm and appeal of the city of London, he says, is due to the "forms and turnings" of its streets, which "are produced by accident, without any plan or design; but they are not always the less pleasant to the walker or spectator on that account:

> On the contrary, if the city had been built on the regular plan of Sir Christopher Wren, the effect might have been, as we know it is in some new parts of the town, rather unpleasing; the uniformity might have produced weariness and a slight degree of disgust. (243)

Gainsborough adopted Hogarth's "line of beauty" in many of his figure studies; the serpentine line of grace clearly supplies, for instance, the structural framework of his portrait of Mrs. Thicknesse (1760).

The influence of the rococo helped foster a "cult of asymmetry" in its battle against the "cult of the antique", and enabled Hogarth to develop a highly original and expressive form of painting. Rococo principles were assumed not only by painters and aestheticians of the eighteenth-century but also by novelists: in the middle-class, domestic atmosphere of Richardson's Clarissa[5], for instance, or the playful narration and oblique eroticism of Fielding's Joseph Andrews. It is Sterne's Tristram Shandy, however, which most fully reflects the aesthetic of the rococo in its deliberately complex, chaotic, and diffuse narrative structure. Similarities between Hogarth's interpretation of the rococo in his paintings and in his Analysis and the structural premise of Tristram Shandy has been noted by recent scholars such as R. F. Brissenden and Ronald Paulson. Brissenden observes, in passing, that Sterne shares with Hogarth a preoccupation with variety and complexity (106-7) and Paulson, in a discussion of Hogarth's illustration of Corporal Trim, surmises that the painter, "as he drew the picture or as he read Tristram Shandy may have realized how indebted Sterne was throughout to his prints and to the Analysis" (Hogarth 378). A thorough examination of Sterne's indebtedness to Hogarth, however, has not been undertaken. Tristram Shandy bristles with allusions to Hogarth, and the distinctive language of the Analysis can be heard throughout it. No doubt Sterne counted upon his readers' recognition of phrases such as "the precise line" or "line of grace" for comic effect. But beneath the surface parody Sterne incorporates the painter's concepts of beauty and its attendant variety and intricacy, into the narrative framework of his novel.

Tristram Shandy belongs to a novelistic tradition in which digressions, or interpolated tales,were commonly employed.[6] But like the rococo's exaggeration of the curvilinear already present in the baroque, Tristram Shandy fully exploits the possibilities of the digressive method, taking it to an extreme previously unknown. Sterne differs from his predecessors, such as Swift (in Tale of a Tub) and Fielding by not subordinating his digressions to a central, chronologically coherent plot line. Digressions in Joseph Andrews,

for example, are self-sufficient, completed stories that complement or comment upon the novel's main action, to which the narrator always returns his readers. In Tristram Shandy there exists no clearly delineated central plot to resume: deviations from--not illumination of--Tristram's "life" form (if anything does) the structure of the book. The narrator of Joseph Andrews is distanced, omniscient, and fully in control; in Tristram Shandy Tristram can barely manage his task: he proceeds without any apparent forethought or order, writes according to whim, and in his tendency to digress, can become as lost as the reader who he is supposed to be leading. Although the novel seems to have been composed without any premeditated plan underlying it, there is a method to its madness--one that corresponds to the rococo aesthetic present in the work and writings of Hogarth.

The experience of reading Tristram Shandy is not unlike that of viewing a Hogarth painting or print: Sterne's narrative line moves in several directions at once in a manner similar to the way lines wind their way around a Hogarth canvas. Retaining and following all that the book has to offer proves as difficult as deciphering one of Hogarth's moral progresses. So complex is the novel's narrative structure that, according to some critics, it runs the risk of overpowering all other considerations: its "manner", cautions Wayne C. Booth, "begins to rival the matter" (Rhetoric 224); James McKillop likens it to Joyce's Ulysses: both novels are examples of design "carried to excess" (210); another observes that Sterne is more concerned with "methodology than ideology" (Hunter 144).

Such claims are to some extent justified. But the rationale behind Sterne's somewhat obsessive concern for design should not be overlooked. Narrative technique is as much a subject of the book as it is an element of it; Tristram Shandy is as much about the process of composition as it is about Tristram's life and opinions. A fundamental question a writer must answer before beginning work is how he shall select and order his material. Sterne decides against the traditional, picaresque linearity of Fielding in favour of a chronology which follows an intuitive, subjective, and irrational order. His intentional subversion of accepted

narrative practices and of the comic novel, which Fielding enunciated in the "Preface" to Joseph Andrews, frustrates the expectations of many readers, who realize they must attend the narration more closely than customary if they are to understand it. Even when meaning eludes the reader (which it admittedly does, periodically, in Tristram Shandy) the challenge of the "pursuit", the "chase" after a complex and diffuse narrative line, nonetheless affords him an aesthetic and intellectual pleasure.

Heeding Hogarth's maxim that "the art of composing well is the art of varying well" (57), Sterne employs in his novel a narrative method that is at once "progressive" and "digressive" (1.22). Sterne understood that if his novel followed a strictly "progressive", horizontal plot line, the resultant regularity and uniformity would fail to engage the interest and attention of his readers. To relieve the monotony and predictability of a rectilinear, progressive plot, "digressive" anecdotes culled from Tristram's memory are introduced, thus bringing the sort of "variety" that Hogarth recommends into the work. Tristram agrees with Hogarth's belief that deviations from the straight line are necessary to sustain a work's interest and energy:

> Digressions, incontestably, are the sunshine;----they are the life, the soul of reading;--take them out of this book for instance,--you might as well take the book along with them;--one cold eternal winter would reign....[the writer] steps forth like a bridegroom,--bids All hail, brings in variety and forbids the appetite to fail. (1.22)

While the diffusion of digressions can be perplexing, the novel manages to retain a sense of unity through the peculiar and consistent voice of Tristram himself.

Thus, Tristram Shandy is not so much the story of a life as it is a representation of the movement of a mind. For this reason Tristram must employ a narrative technique based not upon causality but upon the irrational dictates of his mind and memory. Tristram finds himself "obliged continually to be going forwards and backwards" because that is the direction that his mind, his consciousness, which has its own conception of 'time', takes him (6.33). The danger in this unorthodox method lies in becoming trapped in a seamless web of memory,

thus obstructing the forward, progressive flow of the narrative altogether. Tristram begins to tell us about "the amour of my uncle *Toby*" early in the novel, but "things have crowded in so thick upon" him that he doesn't finally relate the story until the eighth volume (4.32). His dilemma resembles that of Locke's, who, when he "first put pen to paper" to write his Essay Concerning Human Understanding in 1689, "thought all I should have to say on this matter would have been contained in one sheet of paper", but discovered that the more he wrote, the more there remained to write, until his project "grew insensibly to the bulk it now appears in" (1663). Perhaps Sterne had Locke in mind when he asks if man shall "for ever be adding so much to the *bulk*--so little to the *stock*?" (5.1). Tristram sets out simply enough--to write his autobiography--but he soon realizes that to tell the "how" of his life as well as the "when" involves the relation of a seemingly endless web of contingent events. The complexity of his life, and of life in general, to the point of incomprehension, is what he tries to convey in Tristram Shandy: both resemble the labyrinthine intricacy and obscurity of the marbled page, that "motly emblem" of his work (3.38).

The way in which Sterne ambushes the flow of his novel by means of digressions recalls Hogarth's use of strong verticals to impede the horizontal progress of his paintings. The tension found between the "progressive" and "digressive" in Hogarth's work is reproduced in Tristram Shandy. Corporal Trim's ill-fated attempt in Volume Eight, to tell the tale of the "King of Bohemia and his seven castles" mirrors in miniature the entire narrative structure of the novel. Trim commences his story in 8.19 but does not proceed much past the title before he is interrupted by the exasperating but well-meaning Toby. Trim must begin his story anew at least half a dozen times, and even then, does not manage to bring it to an end. By chapter twenty the story has been forgotten as Trim and Toby embark on a discussion about war wounds, which leads Trim to recount his love affair with a young Beguine nurse. The Widow Wadman, eavesdropping all the while, decides to take advantage of Toby's contemplation of love and proceeds to seduce him by pretending to have something in her eye and asking him

to examine it. Not until the following day (8.28) is the story of the King of Bohemia mentioned again, but by this time, says Trim, the tale was unfortunately "lost...somehow betwixt us" (8.28). Trim's story is never brought to completion, but like Tristram Shandy itself, that does not seem to matter.

The maze of events that hinder the novel's progress resembles the knots in which Obadiah ties Dr. Slop's bag:

> In the case of these *knots* then, and of the several obstructions, which, may it please your reverences, such knots cast in our way in getting through life-----every hasty man can whip out his penknife and cut through them. ----'Tis wrong. Believe me Sirs, the most virtuous way...--is to take our teeth or our fingers to them.---- (3.10)

The difficulty encountered in trying to untie these knots corresponds to that of unravelling the "plot" of Tristram Shandy: not an impossible task (see Baird's essay), but one that requires considerable time, patience, and effort. Unlike the more conventional, chronologically sequenced novel, the plot of Tristram Shandy does not easily unfold; meaning does not become clearer as the narrative continues, it becomes more ambiguous and complex.

The psychological associations that are made between words and things within Tristram's mind and those of his characters , can frequently spawn an entangled chain of digressions. As it winds its way through the diverse thoughts of its eccentric inhabitants, the narrative path of the novel can become incredibly complex. Its meandering design may be compared to that of Hogarth's prints and paintings. In Marriage à-la-Mode I (Fig. 5), for instance, the viewer might first study the figure of the Earl on the left-hand side of the canvas, but his eye is soon led by the twisting and curving lines elsewhere: downward to the family tree perhaps, upward to the canopy that covers the bed, then to the window overlooking a building project and the large portrait on the wall, then down again to the clerk and the bride's father who sit opposite the Earl. Sterne's technique proves just as elaborate. Following the announcement of Bobby's death in Volume Five, Tristram begs his audience's permission to "squeeze in a story" (5.3) and then goes on to lead the unsuspecting reader

through a complex series of tenuously related digressions. The first--the one Tristram originally asked to interrupt with--a journey through the "entire set" of sayings philosophy has to explain death (5.3), is followed, in chapters seven and eight, by a parallel description of death by Corporal Trim. By chaper twelve, we are once again returned to Walter's philosophizing to find Mrs. Shandy perched by the door, eavesdropping on his conversation and misinterpreting what she has heard. Tristram next feels compelled to tell his readers of the "TRISTRA-*paedia*", a journal of Tristram's life that his father endeavoured to write, but like all else in Tristram Shandy, never completed--Tristram getting "forwards at such a rate" while Walter wrote "so very slow" (5.16). Finally, for no other reason than the fact that the memory sprung into his mind, Tristram plunges us in 5.17 into the midst of the infamous incident of the window-sash.

Sterne achieves in Tristram Shandy the same sort of spontaneity and whimsicality central to the rococo and demonstrated in Hogarth's The Country Dance. When Tristram decides in Volume Three to pay a tribute to his Uncle Toby he admits he has no specific reason for doing so at that particular moment in the book; the impulse comes upon him and he must follow it:

> Here----but why here,----rather than in any other part of my story,----I am not able to tell,----but here it is,----...the tribute I owe thy goodness... (3.34)

The obligatory "Preface" to the novel he places in the midst of his work (3.20) rather than before it because that is the most convenient time for him to do so. Unlike Fielding's narrator in Joseph Andrews, Tristram does not appear to be in full control, and he quite unabashedly admits it:

> I begin with writing the first sentence----and trusting to Almighty God for the second. (8.2)

Tristram seems to create more from his heart than head. The order in which events are strung together does not follow any premeditated plan; the whole novel appears to be improvised. But Tristram's flippant attitude towards developing any coherent structure or

theme, and the novel's surface impetuousity have been carefully contrived by Sterne. Tristram may not have control, but Sterne certainly does. The sort of rhythm and movement Hogarth is able to suggest through his undulating lines in The Country Dance is produced by Sterne through the asymmetry of his narrative structure. According to the existing manuscript copies of Tristram Shandy, Sterne took great care to create a lively and distinctive verbal rhythm and cadence; indeed, he refers to music often in the novel[7], and frequently employs musical metaphors (Quennell 153-4). The "harmony", that emerges in the novel, however, is not harmony in the Augustan sense: unified, ordered, symmetrical; it is a harmony of mood and tone. Sterne's novel could be said to be cacophonous, as he deliberately twists the harmony and rhythm of the conventional novel into something quite unique; jarring his readers and forcing them to pay closer attention.

One of the ways Sterne modulates the tempo and tone of his prose is through his widespread and individualistic use of the dash. In the "beds of justice" passage, for instance, dashes help to orchestrate a playful, bantering rhythm in the dialogue between Walter and Mrs. Shandy. Another technique Sterne experiments with is dramatically varying the lengths of chapters, juxtaposing extremely short and long chapters to evoke not only a sense of rhythm, but also a sense of movement.

The alternating short and long chapters are like the valleys and mountains through which Tristram leads his understandably hesitant reader. Since the novel's initial publication, Tristram Shandy's discontinuous and erratic narrative structure has attracted much critical attention--not all of it complementary. Aldous Huxley referred to the book as "an everlasting obstacle course" (qtd. in McKillop 204), Samuel Richardson deplored its "unaccountable wildness" (qtd. in Baker 271), and the Clockmaker's guild of Sterne's own time were puzzled by its convoluted design which turns out to be "a mere wild goose-chace, that tends only to bewilder" (Howes 67). Sterne's eighteenth-century critic has good reason to compare his reading experience to a "chace" after an ever-disappearing narrative line, for

this is precisely the effect Tristram's riotous narrative course is meant to have. "What a rate have I gone at", exclaims Tristram, "curvetting and frisking it away, two up and two down for four volumes together, without looking once...to see whom I trod upon!" (4.20). He likens his story in turn to an overland "journey" (6.40), to a sea voyage:

> ----Come! chear up, my lads; I'll shew you land-----for when we have tugged through that chapter, the book shall not be opened again this twelve-month.--- (5.41)

and to a dangerous trek through uncharted territory:

> ---What a wilderness has it been! and what a mercy that we have not both of been lost, or devoured by the wild beasts in it. (6.1)

The topography through which Tristram conducts his reader is a metaphorical one, signifying a journey across a "mindscape". The journey or pilgrimage motif typical of picaresque-inspired novels popular in the eighteenth-century is transformed in Tristram Shandy into an intellectual and psychological journey.

Sterne's methodology recalls Hogarth's chapter on intricacy in The Analysis of Beauty, in which the painter cites man's inherent "love of pursuit" and the need for a work to demonstrate

> Intricacy in form...that peculiarity in the lines, which... *leads the eye a wanton kind of chace...* (42)

Hogarth's emphasis on the way in which the audience interacts with a painting or a text anticipates Sterne's concern for the relationship between Tristram and his readers. Like Hogarth's moral progresses, Tristram Shandy represents an exercise in reading. Hogarth tests and guides his viewers as they make their way through the visual jokes, puns, hints, and illusions that fill his canvasses; Tristram achieves the same sort of communication through his constant "conversation" with his readers, chastizing their impatience, their expectations, asking them to proceed more carefully. The intricacy of Sterne's novel, like that of Hogarth's paintings and prints, deliberately and aggressively challenges its audience, but it also appeals to an inherent "delight" with the "chace", the "pursuit" after meaning. Even in the absence of

meaning, man continues to pursue, for the pursuit in itself can give an aesthetic pleasure.

Because Tristram Shandy chronicles a different kind of journey from the physical and moral ones found in novels such as Fielding's Joseph Andrews or Tom Jones, it must employ another type of narrative methodology. Sterne rejects a causal, linear plot line. In "Slawkenbergius' Tale" he ridicules the Aristotelian conception of plot with its reversals, crises, and resolutions, that most drama and prose fiction of the time followed:

> Haste we now towards the catastrophe of my tale...the *Catastrophe* and *Percpeita* of a DRAMA...it has its *Protasis*, *Epitasis*, *Catastasis* ...in the order *Aristotle* first planted them... (4. .)

In Tristram Shandy the time-scheme is disordered; the narrator moves freely between past, present, and future, thus creating the same sense of simultaneity found in a picture. Many critics (e.g. Holtz, Paulson) see this as an attempt on Sterne's part to spatialize what is essentially a temporal medium[8]. In this respect, what Sterne is doing is the inverse of what Hogarth attempts to do in progresses like Marriage à-la-Mode where visual clues within the pictorial space disclose, besides the present action, past events, and hint at future ones. As a painter Hogarth manipulates space through colour, line, and form; as a writer Sterne manipulates time through rhetoric.

Hogarth, then, creates in his works a "readable" structure, a story that unfolds in time; Sterne, by "freezing" characters creates pictorial tableaus. In Volume Two, for instance, he arrests the conversation between Toby and Walter in order to "clear something up", proceeds to explain Walter's obsession with names, his strange views on childbirth, and subsequent conclusion (to which Mrs. Shandy's only reply is to "turn as pale as ashes") that caesarian section was the safest method of delivering a baby, then returns, in the next volume, to Toby's remark (3.1), only to again "freeze" the dialogue and action in order to digress on Walter's contorted physical position as he reaches for a handkerchief, finally "unfreezing" poor uncle Toby five chapters later (3.6). In Volume Seven Tristram interpolates two separate voyages to Europe, one taken with and one without his family, blurring the borders

between past and present. That he can exercise such power over time delights Tristram as he notes he has "been getting forward in two different journeys together, and with the same dash of the pen..." (7.7). The irony, of course, is that as an artist he possesses the ability to "freeze" or delay the progress of time and to manipulate it according to impulse, but as a man, he is in fact powerless against its flow and the inevitable physical decay it brings with it.

The novel's narrative eccentricities render it a difficult book to read. Tristram openly acknowledges the problems his work poses, sympathizing with his readers, and at times apologizing for his technique. At the end of Volume Four, for example, he commiserates with his audience who must follow his quick and irregular pace:

> And now that you have just got to the end of these four volumes----the thing I have to *ask* is, how you feel your heads? (4.32)

In the next volume, Tristram perceives that his readers grow "impatient--I must get forwards" (5.35). It is not the digressions themselves that prevent the novel from resuming its onward flow so much as the fact that after digressing Tristram fails to pick up the thread of his story; instead, he goes on to digress even further, weaving a more and more intricate web. Digressions are acceptable "provided he keeps along the line of his story" (5.25) (as Fielding manages to do), but Tristram's inability to resist an opportunity to digress leads him further and further adrift. At times, his tendency to diverge from the rectilinear frustrates him as much as it can the reader struggling to follow him. Thus, he makes promises to reform his ways, and adhere to a strictly regular, linear narrative form. In order to facilitate this he puts himself on "a vegetable diet", certain that then he will be able to continue his tale "in a tolerable straight line" (6.40). He then proceeds to "draw" the plotlines for each of the preceeding five volumes. These graphic representations of the narrative structure typically curve, loop, and zig-zag around a central, straight, horizontal line. His fifth volume, Tristram claims, is his best because it conforms closest to "the precise line", an obvious allusion to Hogarth's "precise line of beauty". Unlike the other four diagrams, this last one

uses letters of the alphabet to indicate where certain events and anecdotes deviate from the central narrative line. In The Analysis of Beauty Hogarth also provides illustrations and diagrams, one of which possesses some striking similarities to Sterne's drawing, especially when turned sideways, as below:

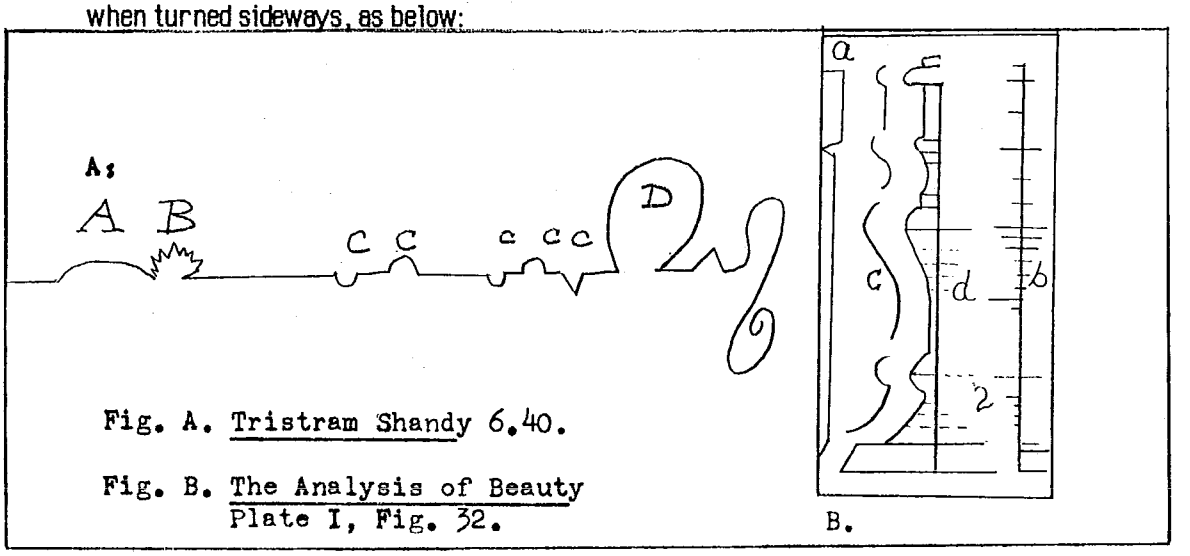

Fig. A. Tristram Shandy 6.40.

Fig. B. The Analysis of Beauty Plate I, Fig. 32.

Whether or not Sterne actually borrowed directly from Hogarth here is a purely speculative question; that he alludes to the Analysis in phrases like "the precise line" is certain. It is interesting that Sterne attempts to illustrate, through diagrams, the structure of his book, just as Hogarth, in the Analysis, breaks objects down into their essential lines in order to reveal their underlying framework.

Despite his determination to follow a conventional, rectilinear plot, Tristram inevitably fails to do so:

> ----let us take the story straight before us; it is so nice and intricate a one...and somehow or other, you have got me thrust almost in the middle of it.-- (8.7)

Like Yorick in A Sentimental Journey there seems to be a "fatality" in Tristram's waywardness--both characters "seldom" arrive at "the place [they] set out for" (ASJ 102). At the end of Volume Seven, Tristram makes one last promise to "go on straight forwards, without digression or parenthesis" with the story of "my uncle *Toby's* amour--" (7.43). But we find Tristram whistling a different tune in the opening chapter of Volume Eight when he

realizes that it goes against his very nature to tell a story in a chronologically coherent way, and vows that he will no longer attempt to do so. He then delivers an impassioned defense of his irregular method on the basis that the straight line lies beyond human capability, for its mathematically precise and uniform straightness exists out of the reach of fallible, imperfect man:

> I defy, notwithstanding all that has been said upon *straight lines* in sundry pages of my book--I defy the best cabbage planter that ever existed...to go on cooly, critically, and canonically, planting his cabbages one by one, in straight lines, and stoical distances, especially if slits in petticoats are unsew'd up--without ever and anon straddling out, or sidling into some bastardly digression----
> (8.1)

The erotic overtones of this passage point to Sterne's tendency to associate lines that deviate from the rectilinear with sexuality, with vitality, and creativity--an association Hogarth also makes in the Analysis.

Ronald Paulson in his book, Emblem and Expression, notes that "it is a principle of the most basic sort that geometrical structures should not finally regulate the vital Lines of Beauty of life" (46). Wilbur Cross, an early biographer of Sterne, concurs with Paulson's interpretation of Hogarth, and applies the painter's association of irregularity with vitality to Tristram Shandy. "Beyond doubt", Cross says, "Sterne had Hogarth's distinction between the statue with its stiff lines and the living man who may conform to the line of beauty" in his description of Trim reading the sermon (116). Sterne, like Hogarth, ridicules the neoclassical taste for mathematical proportion, unity, and uniformity, and agrees that "beauty"--and with it life and sexual potency--can exist only when these characteristics are absent. Upon meeting the inn-keeper's daughter, Janatone, while in France, Tristram chastizes those who would rather admire the mathematical precision and symmetry of a statue or the permanence of a man-made structure such as the Church of Montreuil than the imperfect and irregular, but beautiful dimensions of a living woman:

> ----That nature should have told this creature a word about a statue's thumb[9]--
>
> ...--But your worships chuse rather that I should give you the length, breadth, and perpendicular height of the great parish church, or a drawing of the fascade of the abbey of Saint Austreberte...so your worships and reverences may all measure them at your leisures----but he who measures thee, Janatone, must do it now--thou carriest the principle of change within thy frame... (7.9)

Sterne, like Hogarth, seems to suffer an "aversion" to the straight line, relating it, as the painter does, to the inanimate, permanent, and ideal. The irregular, imperfect line, however, such as that which underlies Tristram Shandy's narrative structure or composes the body of Janatone, represents true "beauty". It is notable that Sterne once again associates deviation from the straight line with sexuality. He infuses his description of Janatone with a faintly erotic suggestion:

> ----may I never draw more...--if I do not draw her in all proportions, and with as determin'd a pencil, as if I had her in the wettest drapery.---- (7.9)

Sterne's preference for the flawed but beautifully vital Janatone over the sterile perfection of the church of Montreuil represents an affirmation of life, however transient, disordered, and imperfect.

The narrative methodology, then, of Tristram Shandy reflects a general taste for rococo art which had been popular in England since the 1720s. In particular, the novel subsumes many of the rococo principles that Hogarth articulated in his Analysis of Beauty. Sterne's debt to Hogarth is a substantial one; not only is Tristram Shandy permeated with allusions to the Analysis, the painter's work and theory may have exerted a greater degree of influence than previously supposed on the novel's unusual narrative conception.

CHAPTER 5

Conclusion

The aesthetic history of eighteenth-century England is far from homogeneous. Although the neoclassical doctrines that dominated literature and painting in the early years of the century were never totally abandonned, many of them were questionned and challenged. One hesitates to say that an aesthetic "revolution" occurred, but certainly, to borrow Samuel Monk's word, a "metamorphosis" (168) affecting the criteria for all of the arts in England took place. Edmund Burke's Philosophical Enquiry into...the Sublime and Beautiful best enunciates the new aesthetic direction in its replacement of the neoclassical concepts of *ut pictura poesis*, mimetic clarity, and completeness with an artistic framework that stresses the intrinsic differences between the arts, and commends the expressive power of the indistinct and incomplete.

The independent spirit of both Hogarth and Sterne heralds this "metamorphosis" of aesthetic values, as they choose to rebel against, rather than conform to, orthodox methods. Preferring not to concentrate on the technical perfection of their work, they instead explore the formal possibilities their respective mediums offer, searching for alternate means of communication, more effective ways to express emotion, ideas, and character. Crucial to their technique is the degree of emphasis they place on the interaction between their work and its audience; the primary aim of Tristram Shandy, as it is of Hogarth's moral cycles, is to turn the audience not into passive "spectators", as Joseph Warton would have them, but into active participants in the creative process.

By tracing the development of Hogarth's art, the aesthetic changes marking the eighteenth-century are revealed. The close relationship between painting and literature in

the century's early years is displayed in the painter's didactic narrative cycles, which viewers are encouraged to "read" as they would a printed book. Full of clearly defined pictorial details, these "pictured morals" are highly polished works, displaying considerable technical ability. But as Hogarth's career progressed, he became less interested in painting as a narrative medium or as a vehicle for moral instruction than in the expressive potential of its component elements. This change of direction reveals itself in The Country Dance and in his portrait group, Heads of Servants, where clarity and completeness is compromised for emotive and expressive power. In Tristram Shandy, Sterne similarly attempts to express feelings and character through the suggestive capabilities of language. Like Burke (and Locke before him), he questions the notion of *ut pictura poesis*, the belief that language can evoke clear images, and investigates other, nonlingual modes of communication. Sterne does not totally reject the pictorial tradition; however, he understands its limitations.

A knowledge of Hogarth's rococo paintings, best exemplified by Marriage à-la-Mode, and of the rococo principles he espouses in his Analysis of Beauty serve as a useful tool for comprehending the aesthetic rationale behind Tristram Shandy's unusual narrative strategy. It is known that Sterne had long admired Hogarth, that he hoped the painter would agree to illustrate his novel, and that in Tristram Shandy he borrows liberally from the Analysis, and advocates the "system" it advances. In light of these facts, the proposition that Sterne consciously and deliberately incorporated Hogarth's rococo practises and precepts into his novel's formal structure is a plausible one, but unfortunately a difficult one to prove.

Robert Moore, in his study Hogarth's Literary Relationships (1948), limits his discussion to the painter's association with Fielding and Smollett, saying that "[a]n understanding of Hogarth can profit us little in reading Richardson or Sterne..." (162). But as some scholars--most notably Ronald Paulson--have noted, a number of analogies between Hogarth and Sterne's Tristram Shandy can be drawn. Since its inception, the novel has puzzled and frustrated critics. There is Johnson's famous dismissal of it as an "oddity" that would not

last long, and the more recent description of it as a "salmagundi of odds and ends recklessly compounded" (Baker 244). A knowledge of Hogarth's canon of paintings and prints and of his Analysis goes a long way to explain the complex formal premises underlying Tristram Shandy, and helps us to see that its so-called "oddities" are really a reflection of the aesthetic milieu of which the novel is a part.

Figure 1. Laurence Sterne and Thomas Bridges, The Montebank and His Macaroni.

Figure 2. William Hogarth, Heads of Servants; mid-1750's.

Figure 3. Hogarth, Self-Portrait with Pug; 1745.

Figure 4. Hogarth, The Country Dance; circa 1745. (engraving)

Figure 5. Hogarth, Marriage à-la-Mode I; 1745.

Figure 6. Hogarth, Frontispiece, Tristram Shandy, Vol. I; 1759.

Figure 7. Hogarth, The Laughing Audience; 1733.

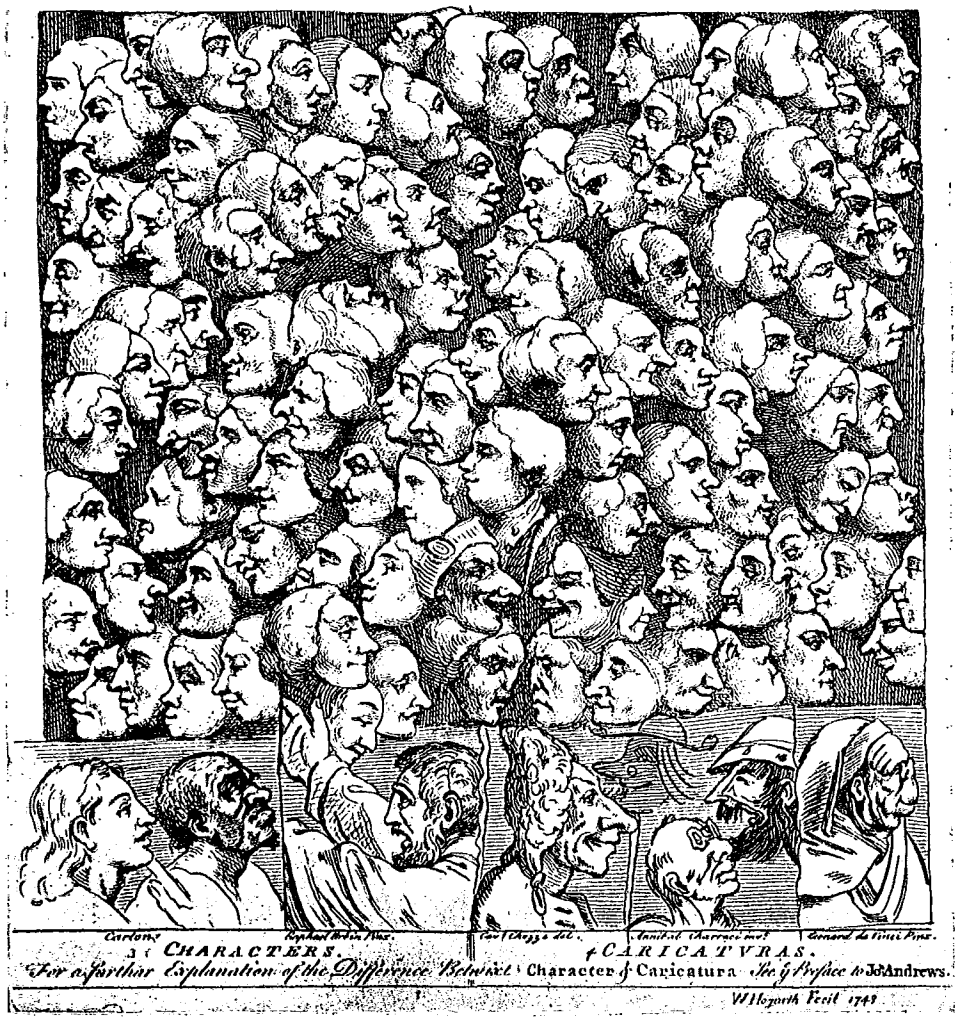

Figure 8. Hogarth, Characters and Caricaturas; April 1743.

ENDNOTES

1. Introduction

[1] Samuel Johnson questions the "necessity of observing the unities of time and place", asserting that "perhaps a nearer view of the principles on which they stand will diminish their value, and withdraw from them the veneration which, from the time of Corneille, they have very generally received..." See his "*Preface* to Shakespeare " (1765), Critical Theory Since Plato, Ed. Hazard Adams, 335.

[2] The tradition of pictorial literature especially as it manifests itself in eighteenth-century poetry is best discussed in Jean H. Hagstrum's study, The Sister Arts. See pp. 151-170 for an account of the ways the doctrine of *ut pictura poesis* was questionned by theorists like Lessing and Burke.

[3] German scholar Gotthold Ephraim Lessing follows Burke's lead and emphasizes the differences between the arts, as well as the limitations peculiar to each, in his work Laocoön (1766), in Critical Theory Since Plato, 349-352.

[4] Between 1690-1790, the number of editions of Locke's Essay Concerning Human Understanding that were printed was surpassed only by the Bible. The decade between 1730-1740 saw the Essay's greatest popularity. Mark Loveridge, Laurence Sterne and the Argument About Design, 130.

[5] See Northrop Frye's influential essay, "Towards Defining An Age of Sensibility" (1956), Eighteenth-Century, 311-318.

[6] The changing status of Michelangelo's reputation in England and France in the eighteenth-century is discussed at length by Samuel H. Monk in his seminal work, The Sublime, 164-202. See also Rensselaer Lee's article "*Ut Pictura Poesis*: The Humanistic Theory of Painting" in The Art Bulletin **XXII** (1940): 197-263.

2. Sterne, Hogarth, and the New Pictorial Aesthetic

[1] Joseph Burke, editor of Hogarth's Analysis, notes that Hogarth originally related beauty to morality, but by the time his book made it to print, he reversed his stand, attacking, in the book's preface, those theorists (like Hutcheson and Shaftesbury) who followed "the broad, and more beaten path of moral beauty" (Hogarth's words). "The Rejected Passages", Analysis of Beauty, 170.

[2] De Piles, says Jonathan Richardson, "has a pretty thought of a scale, whereby he gives an idea in short of the merit of the painters...This, with a little alteration and improvement may be of great use to lovers of art and connoisseurs" (183). Richardson proceeds to rate Vandyke on a scale akin to de Piles' to illustrate this method of systematic evaluation. The Works (1773), 183-190.

[3] Ronald Paulson pinpoints Industry and Idleness (1747) as the pivotal point in Hogarth's development. The series of twelve engravings maintain the didacticism of his earlier cycles, but they dispose of the elaborate detail of progresses like the Harlots's and Rake's, emphasizing instead expressiveness through the manipulation of formal elements. Emblem and Expression, 58-78.

[4] While many connoisseurs were pretentious, ignorant, and uninterested in art except for its monetary value, there were some who truly contributed to the cultural life of England through their impressive purchases of art from the Continent. The Cavendish family, for example, collected enough art from Europe to "stock a national museum". Their collection was mainly the result of the efforts of William Cavendish, 2nd Duke of Devonshire and was distributed among their homes in Chatsworth, London, and Chiswick. Works purchased by the family included paintings by Claude, Poussin, Velasquez, Rembrandt, and drawings by Raphael, Parmigianino, Vandyck, Rubens, and Claude. See Bernard Denvir's "Introduction" to The Eighteenth-Century: Art, Design, and Society, 8-10.

[5] Says Horace Walpole of Hogarth in Anecdotes of Painting in England, "[s]o little had he [Hogarth] eyes to his own deficiencies, that he believed he had discovered the principle of grace" (362). Interestingly Walpole, inspite of his unkind comment, collected Hogarth's oil sketches and unfinished works. Ronald Paulson, Hogarth: His Life, Art, and Times, 83.

[6] The eighteenth-century considered the Italian Renaissance one of four or five "greatest ages in the history of mankind", not likely to be repeated again. Jean H. Hagstrum, The Sister Arts, 162-163. The battle between the quality of "ancient" and "modern" art--literary and visual--was one the century constantly fought. Reynolds felt that the present age was deficient; that the abilities of classical poets and Renaissance artists would never be re-captured. In order to re-establish this "lost taste", Reynolds recommends young artists study Michelangelo, "as he himself did the works of the ancient Sculptors". See "Discourse XV" (1790), Discourses on Art, 278-279.

[7] Hogarth's portrait of Archbishop Herring of York (1745) was not well-received by the clergyman, who thought it exaggerated his features (as in a caricature) and did not suggest benevolence, as he wished a portrait of himself to convey. Clearly, Hogarth's aim was not to flatter the Archbishop by painting what he did not see. See Frederick Antal, Hogarth and His Place in European Art, 40.

[8] A score of twenty on de Piles' scale indicated "sovereign perfection; which no man has fully arrived at....The nineteenth is the highest degree that we know, but which no person has yet gained". The Principles of Painting, 295. On the following page a section of de Piles' scale is reproduced.

NAMES.	Compoſition. Deg.	Deſign. Deg.	Colouring. Deg.	Expreſſion. Deg.
C.				
The *Caracches*	15	17	13	13
Da Caravaggio, Polydore	10	17	0	15
Correggio	13	13	15	12
Da Cortona, Pietro	16	14	12	6
D.				
Diepembeck	11	10	14	6
Dominichino	15	17	9	17
Durer, Albert	8	10	10	8
G.				
Giorgione	8	9	18	4
Gioſeppino	10	10	6	2
Guerchino	18	10	10	4
H.				
Holbein, Hans	9	10	16	13
I.				
Jordano, Luca	13	12	9	6
Jourdaens, James	10	8	16	6
L.				
Lanfranco	14	13	10	5
Van Leyden, Lucas	8	6	6	4
M.				
Michael Angelo Buonarotti	8	17	4	8
Michael Angelo da Caravaggio	6	6	16	0
Mutiano	6	8	15	4
P.				
Palma the elder	5	6	16	0
Palma the younger	12	9	14	6

Par-

Such scales of evaluation presumably enjoyed a popularity in the eighteenth-century. Mrs. Thrale, for instance, employed a similar system as de Piles' for evaluating the personalities of the various men she met. For the attribute of humour, to cite an example, she gave Johnson a score of sixteen, and Garrick nineteen, out of a possible twenty points. Her husband Mr. Thrale, Reynolds, and Burke scored Ø. W. Jackson Bate, Samuel Johnson, (New York, Harcourt, 1975), 482.

[9] See Theodore Baird's article, "The Time-Scheme of Tristram Shandy", PMLA LI (1936): 803-820.

[10] Reynold's attack on connoisseurship appeared--anonymously--in Johnson's Idler 76 (Sept. 1759). Melvyn New conjectures that Reynolds may have given Sterne the essay when the novelist had his portrait painted in March and April 1760. "The Notes", The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gentleman. By Laurence Sterne, 222.

[11] The more vehement the opposition to Tristram Shandy, the more imitations of the novel (mostly poor and many obscene) gained popularity. According to Lewis Perry Curtis, editor of Sterne's letters, at least ninety imitations of the book's style appeared between 1760-1800. Letters of Laurence Sterne, 108.

3. Sterne, Hogarth, and Literary Pictorialism

[1] Illustrations to Richardson's Pamela did not appear until its sixth edition, in 1742, and these were by Gravelot and Hayman. It is not known if Hogarth turned down the opportunity, or if Richardson rejected his effort. Ronald Paulson, Hogarth, 225.

[2] Le Brun's system remained popular into the early nineteenth-century. As late as 1813 there appeared in London a new edition of twenty engravings reproducing Le Brun's physiognomic method (Rogerson 76).

[3] See, for example, E. H. Gombrich's chapter, "The Experiment of Caricature" in Art and Illusion, 330-358, as well as Werner Hofmann, Caricature From Leonardo to Picasso, 78-81.

[4] Robert Moore in Hogarth's Literary Relationships does not classify Hogarth's Laughing Audience as caricature (111). But surely this is the tradition Daumier draws upon for his caricature, The Audience Pleased (1864).

[5] Hogarth's disdain for caricature may be because of its Italian origin. He saw caricature as dependent more upon accident than skill (Cowley 17-18).

[6] According to Sterne's biographer, Arthur H. Cash, Sterne probably took part in amateur theatre productions at York, and may have encountered handbooks of acting techniques first-hand (207).

[7] Didius' character is based upon the lawyer Dr. Topham (Cash 130) while Dr. Slop is a satire of Dr. John Burton, who published an Essay towards a Complete New System of Midwifery in 1751. See Cash 177-178.

[8] William V. Holtz, in his study, Image and Immortality (1970), interprets Sterne's depiction of Trim reading the sermon as a criticism of Hogarth's Analysis. The passage, says Holtz, is "couched in phrases that question the adequacy of Hogarth's theory" (26). He goes on to say that "[i]f Dr. Slop embodies Hogarth's system...Trim embodies Sterne's..." (27). I interpret Sterne's description of Trim not as an indictment of Hogarth (he later praises the Analysis) but rather as a burlesque of the tradition of literary pictorialism, of the attempts of

writers to follow Warton's precept of clarity and precision. Holtz concludes that Sterne was hostile towards the Analysis because he borrows from Reynolds' Idler 76 essay, in which Hogarth is ridiculed. But because he borrows from Reynolds does not necessarily mean that he no longer admired Hogarth.

See Ronald Paulson's review of Holtz's book in the Philosophical Quarterly V (1971): 484-5.

9 Beau Didapper burlesques John Lord Hervey (1696-1743), a favourite of Sir Robert Walpole. See Martin Battestin's "Notes" to Joseph Andrews, 332.

Parson Adams' character is based on Rev. William Young, and the lawyer Peter Pounce corresponds to Peter Walter, who was satirized by Pope and who Hogarth apparently painted in Marriage à-la- Mode I (Baker 101).

10 Melvyn New cites Burke's influence in Tristram's thoughts about love (6.35, 8.22, and 8.25 in Tristram Shandy) (New 437, 517, 519).

4. Sterne, Hogarth, and the Rococo

1 Despite his "*Balance des Peintres*", de Piles' did make positive contributions to art theory in France. The much ridiculed scale is described by a modern scholar as "that regrettable blemish on the excellent record" of de Piles (Denis McMahon, qtd. in Hagstrum, The Sister Arts, 165).

2 Samuel Johnson also suffered from scrofula, which he acquired from the breast milk of his tubercular wet nurse. Little was known about the disease in the eighteenth-century. Robert L. S. Cowley provides a thorough account of the bridegroom's and his father's physical afflictions, and how these might be interpreted by audiences of Hogarth's time (38-40).

3 Holtz sees Sterne as deploring Hogarth's Analysis because it merely tries "to reduce nature to rules" (35). But Hogarth's point in the Analysis, like Sterne's in Tristram Shandy, is that nature--including man--does not follow rules, is not composed of straight lines. Hogarth encourages artists to paint what they observe, to forget about the classical notions of proportion and symmetry, and its rules of decorum. The "line of beauty", like Sterne's narrative line, achieves its vitality because it deviates from, rather than conforms to, the established "rules".

4 Connoisseurs, led by Paul Sandby, used the Analysis as a way to attack Hogarth and diminish his authority because the painter objected to plans of converting the St. Martin's Lane School into a Royal Academy based on the French example. Sandby (among others) published a number of cruel caricatures satirizing Hogarth and his theories. These are documented in Joseph Burke's "Introduction" to the Analysis of Beauty, **xxiv-xxx**.

5 Richardson's Clarissa may be called "rococo" because it does not concern itself with an heroic or epic subject matter. It tells of a domestic tragedy, concentrating on the relationships within a wealthy middle-class family.

[6] Wayne C. Booth outlines the literary history of novels which utilized an intrusive narrator (and with it the technique of digression) before Sterne in "The Self-Conscious Narrator in Comic Fiction before Tristram Shandy", PMLA **LXVII** (1952): 163-185.

[7] Sterne's incorporation of contemporary music theory into his work is examined by William Freedman, Laurence Sterne and the Origins of the Musical Novel. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1978.

[8] Although Holtz's conclusions regarding the relationship between Sterne and Hogarth are questionable, he does offer interesting ideas on the relationship between form and content in the novel. Holtz sees Sterne attempting to stop the flow of linear, chronologically sequential time (which leads ultimately to death) by transforming his book into a spatial, rather than temporal, experience. "Thus we can see Tristram's nontemporal, spatial narrative mode not only as an evasion of the threat of death, the ultimate problem of time, but also...as the assertion of his personality...against this threat" (138). Holtz suggests that "the predominance of the picture over the journey, is intimately connected with Tristram's awareness of his temporal insecurity" (129).

[9] According to New, the "statue's thumb" might be a reference to "the classical notion of the 'model's statue', the *DORYPHORUS* (Boy Carrying a Spear) of Polyclitus, which supposedly established the ideal measures for the human body" (457). Sterne seems to prefer the living body, with its mutability and imperfections to the sterility of classical proportion and permancence.

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