MODELLING THE MIND: CONCEPTUAL BLENDING AND MODERNIST NARRATIVES

by

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ABSTRACT:

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This thesis offers a new approach to mind modelling in modernist narratives. Taking Nietzsche’s work as exemplary of modernist ideas about cognition’s relational basis, I argue that conceptual blending theory, a particularly cogent model of a fundamental cognitive process, has roots in modernism. I read inscriptions of relational cognition in modernist narratives as “conceptual blends” that invite cognitive mobility as a central facet of reader response. These blends, which integrate conceptual domains, invite similarity-seeing and difference-seeing, exposing the reader to new conceptual content and new cognitive styles; she is thus better able to negotiate the reading-related complexities of modernist narrative’s formal innovations and the real-world complexities of modernity’s local and global upheavals.

Chapter One considers blending’s interrelated rhetorical motivations and cognitive effects in Chiang Yee’s Silent Traveller narratives: bringing together English and Chinese domains, Chiang’s blends defamiliarize his readers’ culturally entrenched
assumptions, invite collaborative reading strategies, and thus equip his readers for relating flexibly to a newly globalized world. Moving away from blends in a text’s narration, Chapter Two focuses on blends as textual structuring principles. I read Virginia Woolf’s *The Waves* as a thinking mind with fundamentally relational cognitive processes; I consider the mobile cognitive operations we perform reading about a text’s mind thinking and thinking along with it. Chapters Three and Four cross the nebulous text-peritext border to examine blends in modernist prefaces. Chapter Three focuses on blends in Joseph Conrad’s and Henry James’s prefaces, relating them, through the reading strategies they invite, to the narratives they accompany. Chapter Four considers allographic prefaces to Arthur Morrison’s *Tales of Mean Streets* and two of Chiang’s narratives: blends in these prefaces invite the cognitive mobility necessary for reconceptualizing both allographic preface-text and East-West relations. All four chapters treat the modernist narrative text as a textual system whose blends, often interacting and borderless, signal reciprocal, mutually permeable relations among its textual levels. Dialogic relations also underwrite the interaction between these blends and blends the reader performs when engaging with them. Modernist narratives model (bear inscriptions of) cognition’s relational processes in order to model (shape) the reader’s mind.
In 1936, modernist critic E. B. C. Jones developed guide and jackdaw analogies for two modernist writers’ relations to their readers, the former (E. M. Forster) “commenting, explaining, bridging gaps,” “enlighten[ing] . . . by passages of reflection, analysis or philosophy,” and the latter (Virginia Woolf) “deposit[ing] . . . bright fragments of description, summaries, catalogues, tiny morsels of dialogue, brief flashes of characterization, hints and hieroglyphs” (281). As I reflect on my doctoral studies, I am struck by how aptly these analogies capture the roles my supervisor played. My chief thanks are thus due to Melba Cuddy-Keane, whose ability to supervise like a guide and like a jackdaw, with a knack for discerning which role would best serve me and my project at any given moment, has made her an incomparable intellectual, pedagogical, professional, and personal mentor. I have benefitted—and my work has benefitted—immeasurably from her rigour, thoroughness, insights, engagement, integrity, and encouragement.

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chapter material that, now revised and expanded, I published as an article entitled “Reading in the Blend: Collaborative Conceptual Blending in the Silent Traveller Narratives” in *Narrative* 16.2 (2008): 140-62.

I shared portions of my thesis between 2004 and 2008 at various ACCUTE, Modernist Studies Association, and Narrative conferences, where my audiences asked useful questions and suggested productive lines of inquiry. My ideas about modernism and modernist narrative have also benefitted from meetings of the Modernist Research and Reading Group (MRRG) at the University of Toronto, particularly from collaboration and conversations with Alexandra Peat.

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**INTRODUCTION: CONCEPTUAL BLENDING, COGNITIVE MOBILITY, AND MODERNIST NARRATIVES**

Modernism, Modernist Studies, and Cognitive Science: Bridging the “Two Cultures”

When, in 1959, C. P. Snow¹ coined the phrase “the two cultures,” he launched an influential critique of the relations between science and the humanities that continues, even today, to be the subject of fiercely contested debate. As intellectual historian and literary scholar Stefan Collini observes, the concept of “two cultures” is chiefly concerned with the widening gap between academic disciplines, including this gap’s damaging impact on “questions of educational structure, social attitudes, and government policy-making” (xliii). Snow’s sense of “a [troubling] gulf of mutual incomprehension—sometimes (particularly among the young) hostility and dislike, but most of all lack of understanding” (12)—between literary intellectuals and physical scientists sparked a controversy, a flurry of responses in columns, letters, and essays, prominent among which was literary critic F. R. Leavis’s vicious reply, *Two Cultures? The Significance of C. P. Snow* (1962). Although Leavis intended to discredit Snow’s paradigm, his response’s unveiled antagonism—attacking Snow’s “intelligently . . . undistinguished” status as a novelist and a scientist, his lecture’s “embarrassing vulgarity of style” (which Leavis correlated with a poor quality of thought), and his characterization of literary

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¹ C. P. Snow—novelist, reviewer, high-level administrator in the Civil Service and private industry, and former physicist—subsequently published his 1959 Cambridge Rede lecture as *The Two Cultures and the Scientific Revolution*. 
critics, which reflected ignorance of their function as “a centre of human consciousness”—if anything underscored rather than undermined Snow’s claim to have identified an issue worthy of debate (Leavis 10, 11, 29).  

While the phrase “the two cultures” was coined in 1959, the debate about a gap between science and the humanities in fact has a genealogy extending back into the nineteenth century. Acknowledging that “the germ” of Snow’s argument and “the tone of the lecture can be traced back to much earlier stages of [his] . . . career, and to . . . facets of [his] . . . intellectual development . . . in the 1930s,” Collini also notes that concern about the divide between the two cultures began as a cultural anxiety at the turn of the century, when scientists began to develop a self-conscious professional identity, but scientific education “continued to be stigmatised as a vocational and slightly grubby activity, not altogether suitable for the proper education of a gentleman” (ix, xiii). While “[m]any of the preoccupations which surfaced in the controversy surrounding ‘The Two Cultures and the Scientific Revolution’ now appear to belong distinctively to the late 1950s and early 1960s” (Collini xxii), the Snow-Leavis clash can be situated in a genealogical line featuring other prominent conflicts in the Utilitarian-Romantic and Benthamite-Coleridgean veins, such as naturalist T. H. Huxley and humanist Matthew Arnold’s late nineteenth-century debate on the relation between and merits of literary and scientific education.  

Revisiting the “two cultures” issue in his recent work The Hedgehog, the Fox, and the Magister’s Pox (2003), subtitled “Mending the Gap Between Science and the Humanities,” evolutionary scientist Stephen Jay Gould notes that scholars of the “two

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2 Leavis, Collini notes, championed literary critics’ function as “a centre of human consciousness” in the face of what he believed to be “the cheapening and corrupting of experience,” the “reduction of human experience to the quantifiable, the measurable, the manageable” (Collini xxxii, xxxiii).
cultures” debate typically critique Snow’s position on two grounds: the extremity of his choices for representative literary intellectuals, especially his false equation of “a particular brand of haughty, hidebound, largely upper-class, traditional British literary culture with the much larger and more variegated community of humanists”; and the problem’s idiosyncratic nature—“a local English phenomenon—and largely a snooty Oxbridge parochialism at that—. . . elevated . . . into a fallacious general case” (90).

Gould astutely points out, however, that scholars of the “two cultures” debate often overlook the fact that the debate “stemmed largely from [the] . . . forgotten second section of Snow’s thesis,” the “political argument” about “the disparity between rich and poor nations” (92, 91). Indeed, Snow later claimed that he had “hoped at most to act as a goad to action, first in education and second—. . . the more pressing—in sharpening the concern of rich and privileged societies for those less lucky” (53). Yet Gould himself neglects another central, frequently overlooked facet of Snow’s argument, one that pertains both to the argument’s genealogy and to its sociopolitical orientation: Snow’s caricature of literary intellectuals—upon which his paradigm of two mutually uncomprehending cultures was based—was rooted in a particular (mis)conception of modernism.

In a series of strikingly unsubstantiated substitutions, Snow presented W. B. Yeats, T. S. Eliot, and Wyndham Lewis as representatives not only of all literary intellectuals, but also of literature in general and of traditional (twentieth-century Western) culture. Describing these modernists as “politically wicked” and insisting on their art’s connection with “the most imbecile expressions of anti-social feeling,” snobbery, nostalgia, and pessimism, Snow asked: “how far is it possible to share the
hopes of the scientific revolution, the most difficult hopes for other human lives, and at
the same time participate without qualification in the kind of literature which has just
been defined” (14, 89)? If the “two cultures” coinage was rooted in retrospective
simplifications of and value judgments about a few modernists’ responses to late
nineteenth- and early twentieth-century technological, industrial, social, and intellectual
upheaval, we cannot help but wonder: what role might the recent expansion of modernist
studies—and the concomitant redressing of previous (mis)understandings of modernism
(such as Snow’s)—play in the ongoing debate about the science-humanities relation? The
new modernist studies may help us to understand better the genealogy of the “two
cultures” debate and its sociopolitical orientations from the nineteenth century through
Snow’s articulation to the present day, thus altering the grounds upon which the debate is
perpetuated—through the changing tides of social attitudes, government policy-making,
and academic institutions’ disciplinary hierarchies.

Furthermore, attention to the full range of modernist cultural production and to
modernists’ varied responses to modernity reveals another misconception, this one a
striking paradox, at the heart of Snow’s conception of the “two cultures” gulf:
modernism, the period blamed for exacerbating a gulf between humanists and scientists,
was unprecedentedly interdisciplinary. Interdisciplinary research into modernism’s
interdisciplinarity has burgeoned in the last few years in studies—to name only a few—
such as Craig Gordon’s “Breaking Habits, Building Communities: Virginia Woolf and
the Neuroscientific Body” (2000), Michael Whitworth’s Einstein’s Wake: Relativity,

3 Recent scholarship in modernist studies, attending to a broad range of modernist cultural production, has
remedied many long-held misconceptions about modernism, including the ideas that modernist literature is
exclusively Anglo-American, elitist, difficult, imperialist, nostalgic, solipsistic, apolitical, ahistorical, and
totalizing.

Historical studies of modernist interdisciplinarity thus suggest that the modernist moment was one in which the “two cultures” gap was—in addition to being intensified by anxieties surrounding various technological, industrial, social, and intellectual upheavals—also being bridged.  

These are the fundamental potentialities and paradoxes my thesis considers in framing its central questions with a revisionist reading of the “two cultures” debate in the context of the new modernist studies.

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4 In “Why Modernist Studies and Science Studies Need Each Other” (2002) Mark Morrisson praises Clarke’s and Clarke and Henderson’s work for rectifying older “asymmetrical” relations between science studies and modernist studies, approaches in which science is treated as “a stable and completed given and a background to the creative and shifting modernist cultural responses to it” (Morrisson 675). Clarke’s Energy Forms, Morrisson declares, “shows not only how modernists used concepts from the sciences . . . but also how scientists frequently employed allegorical and analogical thinking to construct scientific facts,” demonstrating that “the structures and processes of allegory have operated and are continuing to operate throughout the modern and postmodern cultural fields to provide formal shape, rhetorical texture, and ideological force to the circulation of scientific and technological discourses” (677).

5 Philosopher and critic Scott Milross Buchanan was one such bridge builder. He promoted the liberal arts in his interdisciplinary research—Poetry and Mathematics (1929) and Symbolic Distance in Relation to Analogy and Fiction (1932), the former a study of the relation between words of poetry and ratios of mathematics, and the latter a study of symbols in literature, mathematics, and measurement—and in his work on universities’ curricula.
Recent interdisciplinary projects that highlight modernism’s interdisciplinarity signal individual scholars’ efforts to bridge the contemporary “two cultures” divide, often uncovering modernist models for that bridge. Yet despite these developments, we cannot help but wonder what many of Snow’s critics, responding to his lecture’s emphasis on jeremiads over remedies, wondered in 1959 and the early 1960s: how might a bridge between the “two cultures” be constructed, maintained, or expanded today? After all, as Stefan Collini notes, the grounds of the “two cultures” debate have changed since Snow’s original formulation, with “ever more specialised sub-disciplines[,] . . . the growth of various forms of inter-disciplinary endeavour,” and broad acceptance of the idea that “different forms of intellectual enquiry quite properly furnish us with a variety of kinds of knowledge and understanding, no one of which constitutes the model to which all the others should seek to conform”; and yet we still need to foster the growth of what Collini calls “the intellectual equivalent of bilingualism” in order to enable “wider cultural conversations,” beyond the promising but often isolated studies produced by individual scholars (xliv, xlvii, lvi). Our bridge needs to be wider, longer, and stronger, with more hands involved in its construction, maintenance, and expansion.

In “Sir Charles Snow’s Rede Lecture” (1962), Michael Yudkin argued that his fellow scientists could bridge Snow’s gulf by reading literature and learning the history of painting, music, and architecture, but that the bridge would only be “one-way”: “For the non-scientist, an understanding of science rests no on the acquisition of scientific knowledge, but on scientific habits of thought and method,” and an education in these habits is “not a practical aim” because what is required is “a piece of scientific research— . . . inferences from experimental data, the building of hypotheses and the planning of
experiments”—for which extensive secondary and undergraduate education is required (Leavis 36-38). Decades later, Edward Slingerland argues, in *What Science Offers the Humanities* (2008), that a two-way bridge between scientists and humanists is not impossible, but that the bridge’s chief hindrance these days is attitudinal. Echoing Snow’s assertion about humanists’ unwillingness to bridge a perceived gap between themselves and scientists, Slingerland argues that today “natural scientists seem much more excited about the prospect of cross-disciplinary collaboration than do humanists, as well as more proactive in initiating contact and dialogue” (299). Yet even Slingerland’s work underscores rather than resolves the central challenge of bridge-building today: how to cultivate institutional and social milieus that encourage research programs in which what science offers the humanities—the focus of Slingerland’s book—is balanced by what the humanities offer science, so that humanists cease to be viewed as the junior partners in or sole beneficiaries of interdisciplinarity.

Isolated studies—like the interdisciplinary studies of modernist interdisciplinarity mentioned above—have achieved this aim here and there, but in recent decades cognitive science has shown a particular aptitude for interdisciplinarity: it has become a hub for connecting groundbreaking insights from science and the humanities about the processes and products of human cognition. Two recent ideas emerging from cognitive science are extraordinarily productive grounds for genuinely interdisciplinary research: the first is the theory that many of our cognitive processes are inherently relational, governed by an

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6 Among the reasons Slingerland cites to defend his claim that humanists need to work harder at cross-disciplinary collaboration are: natural scientists have less “built-in cognitive resistance” to overcome because, as humans, they have “intuitive access to human-level structures of meaning [such as literature and music] and a natural interest in them”; discrepant resource allocation and social prestige have led to humanists’ feelings of “envy, resentment, and hostility” towards scientists; pervasive “High Humanist sanctimony” and the concomitant belief that humanities research need not be subject to “standards of intelligibility set by noninitiates”; humanists’ conception of science’s valuation as “part of some fascist plot to subdue the human spirit, or the latest stage of the capitalist dehumanization of the globe” (299-301).
operation called “conceptual blending”; and the second is the claim that narrative, a product of cognition, is also a process of cognition, a basic cognitive tool. In 1991, cognitive scientist and literary scholar Mark Turner, describing literature as “the highest expression of our commonplace conceptual and linguistic capacities,” called on literary scholars to “refram[e] . . . the study of English so that it comes to be seen as inseparable from the discovery of mind, participating and even leading the way in that discovery, gaining new analytic instruments for its traditional work and developing new concepts of its role” (Reading Minds 4, vii). Modernist studies, as I will demonstrate, is ideally suited to cognitively informed literary scholarship both because of its growing interdisciplinarity and because modernists themselves were engaged in widespread interdisciplinary dialogues about cognition.

The Intersecting Cognitive and Narrative Turns

In The Way We Think: Conceptual Blending and the Mind’s Hidden Complexities (2002), cognitive scientists Gilles Fauconnier and Mark Turner argue that a single cognitive operation may underlie “diverse human accomplishments,” be “responsible for the origins of language, art, religion, science, and other singular human feats,” and be “as indispensable for basic everyday thought as it is for artistic and scientific abilities” (vi).

7 While Turner’s call has not gone unheeded, Slingerland argues that humanists are still in need of a field report on recent developments in cognitive science, since these developments—particularly the finding that cognition is embodied, or that the separation of mind and body is untenable—overthrow the “dualistic model of the human being” according to which much humanities research is still conducted: “opening up the humanities to the demands of vertical integration simply rules out such deeply entrenched dogmas as the ‘blank slate’ theory of human nature, strong versions of social constructivism and linguistic determinism, and the ideal of disembodied reason” (3, 27).

8 In Proust Was a Neuroscientist (2007), Jonah Lehrer argues that modernist artists anticipated many recent neuroscientific discoveries, with contemporary science in fact rediscovering “truths about the human mind—real, tangible truths” that modernists saw when “they looked in the mirror”: “[w]e now know that Proust was right about memory, Cézanne was uncannily accurate about the visual cortex, Stein anticipated Chomsky, and Woolf pierced the mystery of consciousness” (vii, viii, ix).
Beginning with the premise that the mind is comprised of conceptual domains or mental spaces (cognitive structures rooted in the mind’s embodied experience), Fauconnier and Turner posit that this fundamental cognitive operation is a process of domain mapping best understood as “conceptual blending.” 9 In conceptual blending, elements and vital relations from two or more input domains combine in a typically unconscious process to form a new mental space with “emergent meaning” produced by the blend instead of inhering in the inputs. 10 One of Fauconnier and Turner’s first examples, chosen because it makes blending “hard to miss,” is a conceptual blend involving a skiing scenario and a restaurant scenario: a ski instructor teaches a novice how to ski by inviting him to imagine that he is a waiter carrying a tray to a table (xi, 21-22). “The point,” Fauconnier and Turner argue, “is the integration of motion,” not the unidirectional projection of inferences from the domain of waiting on tables onto the domain of skiing, as in analogical reasoning (22, my emphasis). The emergent meaning generated by this conceptual blend results in improved bodily positioning: “[t]he instructor is not suggesting that a good skier moves ‘just like’ a competent waiter. It’s only within the blend—when the novice tries to carry the tray mentally while skiing physically—that the intended structure (the improved bodily position) emerges” (21).


10 Linking their work to neuroscientific theory, Fauconnier and Turner suggest that “mental spaces are sets of activated neuronal assemblies, and the lines between elements correspond to coactivation-bindings of a certain kind” (40).
“[B]lending is particularly appealing to . . . research aimed at the explanation of the mechanisms of creativity, which includes literary analysis, and, more specifically, stylistics and poetics,” Barbara Dancygier observes, because blending theory’s “central assumption” is that “meaning is best described as dynamically constructed in a mental process which is by definition creative and imaginative” (“What Can Blending Do For You?” 6). Literary studies are ideally positioned to take up insights from and contribute to blending theory, largely because relational or figurative thinking has long been considered a function of language and therefore the purview of linguists, rhetoricians, and literary scholars. Nonetheless, engaging with blending theory necessitates reexamining a few long-held literary-critical conceptions of tropes or figures. Literary scholars continue to develop linguistic and related rhetorical analyses of tropes and larger tropological theories of narrative types or modes— influenced, for example, by Roman Jakobson’s, Northrop Frye’s, Hayden White’s, and David Lodge’s pioneering studies— based on linguistic conceptions of metaphor and metonymy, but blending theory suggests that a single cognitive operation underlies these seemingly distinct, seemingly linguistic phenomena.

Literary studies are also ideally positioned to take up insights from and contribute to cognitive approaches to narrative, but engaging with these cognitive approaches also necessitates changes to our assumptions about what constitutes a story. “Story,” cognitive

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narratologist David Herman argues, is a *process* as well as a *product*, “an abstract cognitive structure and the material trace of that structure left in writing . . . or some other representational medium” (Introduction, *NTCS* 19). As a cognitive “instrument for sense-making across many domains of knowledge and types of activity,” narrative is a cognitive artifact—something, like calendars, spreadsheets, proverbs, or mnemonic devices, “used by humans for the purpose of aiding, enhancing, or improving cognition”—that can “be used opportunistically for other purposes, making [it] . . . a domain-general resource for thinking” (Introduction, *NTCS* 17, 19). Because they pertain to areas of inquiry traditionally considered humanists’ purview, theories of blending and narrative as cognitive processes that generate linguistic and material products have immense potential to involve humanists with scientists in a truly reciprocal, mutually enriching research program.

Mark Turner’s combination of these two ideas about relational and narrative thinking further underscores what literary studies can gain from cognitive science and offer to cognitive science. At the intersection of the cognitive and narrative turns12 lies Turner’s theorization of conceptual blending in terms of narrative:13

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12 Gerard Steen coined the phrase “cognitive turn” to describe the movement away from narratives as “self-sufficient products” towards texts as—at least partly—reconstructed in a readerly process; this movement has its roots in Wolfgang Iser’s concept of the implied reader (the mental activities responsible for the construction of meaning and the constraints on meaning production pre-structured by the text), Roland Barthes’s concept of writerly texts, Jonathan Culler’s call for attention not to individual texts but to how we go about making sense of texts (the reader’s mastery of various semiotic conventions), and Stanley Fish’s affective stylistics (how a succession of textual units urges the reader to establish and dismiss attitudes and interpretations) (Jahn 67). Martin Kreiswirth coined the phrase “narrative turn” to capture growing attention to the study not just of individual narratives but of narrative in general: what it is, “where it occurs, how it works, what it does, and for whom” (“Narrative Turn in the Humanities” 378) in the humanities but also in other disciplines including medicine, therapy, media, and science. The narrative turn concerns narrative as it is apparent in all human thought and activity, co-extensive with humanity and the prototypical form of common knowledge (Kreiswirth, “Narrative Turn in the Humanities” 378).

13 This move has a precedent, albeit not a specifically cognitive one, in Paul Ricoeur’s assertion that metaphor and narrative produce the same “meaning-effects,” which “belong to the same basic phenomenon of semantic innovation” (*Time and Narrative* ix).
The human ability . . . to parse the world as consisting of stories is leveraged by two additional mental abilities. The first is the ability to activate simultaneously, without confusion, two or more different stories that conflict resolutely. The second is our amazing creative ability to pluck forbidden mental fruit by blending two conflicting stories into a third story with emergent structure and meaning. (Turner, “Double-scope Stories” 139-40)

Even in his pre-conceptual blending theory work, Turner discusses stories and parable in ways that anticipate their equation with conceptual domains and conceptual blending, respectively: story, Turner argues, “is a basic principle of mind. Most of our experience, our knowledge, and our thinking is organized as stories. The mental scope of story is magnified by projection—one story helps us make sense of another. The projection of one story onto another is parable, a basic cognitive principle that shows up everywhere” (The Literary Mind v). Whether or not stories are in fact the basic units of cognition, conceptual domains; that is, whether or not the cognitive and narrative turns intersect in precisely the way Turner describes, who better to make a contribution to theories of blending and narrative as cognitive processes than literary critics, who have long devoted their attention to the blends we launch and the stories we tell; when, where, why, how, and to whom we do so; and how we respond to them? We find ourselves uniquely qualified to participate in a collaborative and interdisciplinary research program, with the vocabulary and skills for interpreting blends and narrative—and blends in narrative—that could put us at the centre of groundbreaking work on the processes and products of human cognition.
Modernist Interdisciplinarity and Nietzsche’s Model of Embodied, Relational Cognition

Interdisciplinary studies that address modernism’s interdisciplinarity are particularly promising sites for humanists’ broader contributions to cognitive studies because the fundamental idea underwriting the cognitive turn—that cognition is inherently relational—has modernist origins. While the idea that tropes could be something other than linguistic phenomena emerged prior to modernism, the specific association of tropes with perception and cognition owes its formulation to the modernist moment and the convergence of various discourses of analogy, translation, and induction, from fields including physiology, psychology, electrophysics, neurophysiology, and philosophy (Emden 88-123). More than a hundred years before the cognitive turn was explicitly identified, Friedrich Nietzsche—whose work I take as exemplary of modernism’s interdisciplinary ideas about embodied, relational cognition—suggested that perception and cognition, as well as language, are fundamentally metaphorical. In “On Truth and Lying in a Non-Moral Sense” (written in 1873), Nietzsche argued that perception is an act of embodied experience that, through metaphor, is translated into the more abstract “sphere” of the image, and then, again through metaphor, into sound or language:

14 The early eighteenth-century philosopher Giambattista Vico developed a model of civilization’s three ages, the divine, heroic, and human, each of which bears its own political and social characteristics and can be theorized by a different master trope, metaphor, metonymy/synecdoche, and irony, respectively.

15 According to Paul de Man, Nietzsche, particularly in his early work, maintained that “the paradigmatic structure of language is rhetorical rather than representational or expressive of a referential, proper meaning” (de Man 106). Nietzsche thus repositioned the trope as “the linguistic paradigm par excellence,” no longer “a derived, marginal, or aberrant form of language” (de Man 105).

16 Christian Emden argues convincingly that while this essay was not published during Nietzsche’s lifetime, many of its ideas were taken up in Nietzsche’s later, published pieces; thus, Nietzsche’s ideas about relational thinking would have been accessible to the many modernists who read his work.
the ‘thing-in-itself’ (which would be, precisely, pure truth, truth without consequences) is impossible for even the creator of language to grasp, and indeed this is not at all desirable. He designates only the relations of things to human beings, and in order to express them he avails himself of the boldest metaphors. The stimulation of a nerve is first translated into an image: first metaphor! The image is then imitated by a sound: second metaphor! And each time there is a complete leap from one sphere into the heart of another, new sphere. (877)

We are, Nietzsche suggests, in a passage that anticipates cognitive science’s central tenet about embodied cognition, enclosed “within a proud, illusory consciousness, far away from the twists and turns of the bowels, the rapid flow of the blood stream, and the complicated tremblings of nerve-fibres” (875); cognition and language can be traced back, reversing the order of metaphorical leaps he enumerates, to images and then to the body’s interaction with the world.

Attributing to modernism, through Nietzsche as an exemplar, the origins of ideas about relational, embodied cognition requires that we address an important question: when Nietzsche discusses the relational nature of perception, cognition, and language—and discusses the relation between perception, cognition, and language in relational terms, as leaps between spheres—how is he conceptualizing metaphor, his chief trope for relationality? In other words, if “the mysterious ‘X’ of the thing-in-itself appears first as a nervous stimulus, then as an image, and finally as an articulated sound” (877), and if the transitions between these stages can be called metaphors, what is Nietzsche’s conception of metaphor? This issue remains of central interest to Nietzsche scholars, who sometimes
betray their own assumptions about what constitutes a metaphor even when the topic at hand is ostensibly Nietzsche’s conception of metaphor. Maudemarie Clark’s argument about Nietzsche’s conception of metaphor begins with her assumption that “[s]ince a metaphor is a particular use of language, a percept can’t literally be a metaphor” (78). Perhaps Nietzsche, she argues, “uses ‘metaphor,’ as it were, metaphorically—to call to our attention certain similarities between perception and the metaphorical use of language”:

Nietzsche calls our utterances ‘metaphors’ because they fail to ‘correspond to the original essences,’ that is, to things-in-themselves. To use language metaphorically, he seems to assume, is to say something that fails to correspond to the actual nature of an object, but communicates nonetheless how that object appears given certain workings of the human imagination. (Clark 78)

Adhering scrupulously to Nietzsche’s texts, instead of to assumptions that metaphor is “a particular use of language” (Clark 78), a similarity-based approximation, Sarah Kofman finds an understanding of metaphor that seems to be more conceptual than linguistic. Kofman traces the three stages Nietzsche describes, noting that “‘transposition’, ‘carrying over’, ‘sphere’, and ‘thing in itself’ are still metaphors. In fact all these notions imply space, the fundamental metaphorical schema: the notion of metaphor is itself just a metaphor” (40).

Christian Emden makes a particularly valuable historical contribution to recent scholarship on Nietzsche’s understanding of metaphor, further illuminating its conceptual, rather than purely linguistic, basis—and the origins of Nietzsche’s conceptual
understanding of metaphor in his catholic reading interests. Nietzsche, Emden argues, views metaphor as “an explanatory model that can comprise the complexity of nervous processes, mental representation, and language”; “this model rests on the most basic understanding of metaphor as a form of transferring or transmitting some kind of information, content, or impulse from one level to another—or as Nietzsche puts it, from one experiential sphere to another” (106). Nietzsche’s understanding of metaphor reflects his wide readings in and adoption of discursive practices from fields including: physiology and psychology (which used the term “transference” “to denote the relation between initial nerve stimulation and subsequent mental states”), electrophysics and neurophysiology (which were “dealing with the question of conductors and electrical inductions”), and philosophy (in which “the concept of induction as a principle of logical thought was becoming increasingly important”) (Emden 94, 96, 102). Nietzsche’s conception of metaphor, not confined to “specific speech acts,” makes metaphor “a broader epistemological category,” a “powerful model” to explain the leap between spheres in “[t]he step from physical functions to mental representations” (Emden 89, 111).

Emden mentions only in passing the fact that Nietzsche’s “rhetorical considerations can be seen as anticipating more recent discussions regarding the cognitive dimension of metaphorical discourse, beginning with the work of I. A. Richards, Max Black, and Hans Bluemenberg and still continuing within the philosophy of language” (45). Emden’s note appended to this remark directs the reader to Andrew Ortony’s Metaphor and Thought (1993). Yet strong connections can also be made between Nietzsche’s metaphorical model of perception, cognition, and language and
Fauconnier and Turner’s more recent work on conceptual blending.\(^{17}\) Three features in common are: 1) relational thinking as a generally unconscious process, ubiquitous and universal; 2) relational thinking as a fundamentally anthropocentric tool of compression (by which humans conceptualize their experience on scales of time and space in which they can operate efficiently and effectively), using input spaces typically derived from embodied experience to conceptualize more abstract ideas; and 3) relational thinking as rooted in compatibilities and incompatibilities (similarities and differences) between input spaces, the latter often elided as a consequence of relational thinking’s generalizing and abstracting tendencies (Fauconnier and Turner 18, 312, 29).

Most importantly, as Emden notes, Nietzsche’s conception of metaphor, rooted in induction, association, analogy, and translation, is the product of interdisciplinary thinking.\(^{18}\) In his work on Mikhail Bakhtin’s use of Einstein’s relativity theory, Jonathan Stone gestures towards a turn-of-the-century episteme, characterized in part by a refusal—evident in Nietzsche’s work as well as Bakhtin’s—to separate the projects of art and science. Mark Micale, in his recent work on intersections between the arts and psychological sciences in late nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century Europe and North America, characterizes the modernist moment as one in which the art-science

\(^{17}\) Nietzsche is not the only modernist philosopher whose work anticipates conceptual blending theory. F. Elizabeth Hart argues that the idea of cognitive embodiment “stems originally from Maurice Merleau-Ponty’s phenomenology of the body-mind connection—his (now empirically tested) idea that human brains/minds structure their conceptual representations of the world by way of the body’s perceptual interactions within that world” (230). While Hart is certainly accurate in noting the indebtedness of contemporary cognitive science theories to modernist philosophy, Nietzsche underscored the embodied basis of perception, cognition, and language before Merleau-Ponty theorized the phenomenological and corporeal foundations of perception.

\(^{18}\) The interdisciplinary modernist origins of contemporary cognitive science’s ideas about the embodied mind and its blend-based cognitive operations go a long way to defusing potential anxiety in literary circles about using vocabulary and tools from cognitive science to study literature from a period before these concepts were fully articulated. Jonathan Stone also mitigates concerns about the “applicability of modern concepts to adamantly premodern subjects” (408), noting that modernists themselves frequently made this move in their interpretations of earlier texts.
relation was “mutually originative and reciprocally enriching” (3). Micale underscores the necessity of moving beyond “a simple popularization model of influence, which runs unidirectionally from the allegedly originative realm of science to literature and the arts”; he advocates “a more flexible, dynamic, interactionist model of cultural relations” (7). In a series of questions that also gesture towards an inherently interdisciplinary modernist episteme, Micale wonders whether psychiatric medicine and the creative arts can be “viewed as autonomous expressions of a single idea of The Modern”:

[1]n formulating contemporaneous notions of perception, memory, and subjectivity, did the arts and psychological sciences draw upon a kind of macrocultural matrix that was then somehow ‘reflected’ or ‘expressed’ in local generic, disciplinary, and discursive forms? How are we to understand the simultaneous emergence of certain shared metaphors—the dissolution of the real, visualizing the unseen, the primitive in the modern—across European culture during these years? Were the psychological and aesthetic varieties of Modernism reactive to a set of common historical circumstances, such as the advent of mass democracy and industrial capitalism (that is, ironically, to political and technological modernity)? In what ways did the very different epistemological languages in which the arts and psychological medicine spoke (the objective/analytical/experimental versus the subjective/autobiographical/experiential) serve to shape their respective Modernist projects, and in what respects did they overlap . . . ? Can the very categories of ‘the
scientific,’ ‘the psychological,’ and ‘the aesthetic’ maintain their integrity in light of these studies?” (18)

While it was certainly a subject of interdisciplinary modernist inquiry and perhaps was first investigated in the modernist period, relational thinking is itself not a distinctively modernist episteme. Cognitive science’s findings are much more in line with the idea of a universal cognitive endowment that accommodates variations of time and place than with Ronald Schleifer’s assertion that the historical and cultural events of the period spanning 1880 and 1930 entirely changed the foundations of experience and the feel or experience of life itself, making “analogical thinking . . . a kind of comprehension . . . particular to our time” (7). What Schleifer says about analogical thinking is compelling—that it is a mode of explanation and representation that encompasses similarity and difference, has “alternating levels, . . . plural subjects, and . . . purposeful interested wholes” (7)—but recent work on conceptual blending suggests that relational thinking is more the cognitive endowment of what Mark Turner calls the “cognitively modern human being” than the product of a particular moment in modern history. It is, however, clear that relational thinking did come to the fore in interdisciplinary modernist discourses about perception, cognition, and language.20 Rather than being a distinctive modernist episteme, relational thinking is perhaps better viewed in the way Christian Emden views metaphor’s basis in analogical and translational modes of thinking across various disciplines: a fundamentally human mode of cognition that emerged as a site of inquiry, part of a broader intersection of various discourses and disciplines, at the turn of the twentieth century.

20 Ferdinand de Saussure’s theory of language as a formal system of differential elements further exemplifies modernism’s interest in relationality.
A New Conception of Modernist Mind Modelling and Blending Theory’s Potential for Narrative Studies

Modernist narratives are of interest to cognitivist literary scholars because they developed techniques for representing individual and intersubjective consciousness in the midst of a period featuring widespread interdisciplinary dialogues about cognition. My thesis, however, looks at mind modelling in modernist narratives in a new way, one that is particularly amenable to cognitivist literary studies; I focus not on techniques for representing consciousness, but on the ways in which and the purposes for which traces of cognition’s fundamentally relational processes were formally inscribed in narratives originating in the context of these interdisciplinary dialogues. I take a capacious view of what constitutes a modernist narrative text, a view commensurate with changes to literary production and the literary market in modernism: a greater output of authorial prefaces to accompany the growing market for collected editions; a greater output of allographic prefaces introducing narratives written about places previously unfamiliar to Western readers, in an era featuring the more frequent and rapid global circulation of people, objects, and ideas; and a proliferation of critical essays pertaining to narrative, in a period frequently described as the birthplace of narrative theory. Given the explosion of prefaces and critical essays in the modernist period, and given their potential impact on reader response, my study of reader response to inscriptions of relational thinking in modernist narratives includes prefaces and critical essays in its conception of the narrative text.

Using conceptual blending theory, a particularly cogent model—and one rooted, as I have suggested, in the modernist moment—for theorizing relational thinking, I
identify blends on various textual levels in modernist narratives.\textsuperscript{21} I focus on two interrelated aspects of these blends: the mode of reader response they invite and the way they signal shifting rhetorical dynamics involving the reader and a character, narrator, (implied) author, prefacer, and/or critic. I argue that, by inviting the reader to toggle back and forth between conceptual domains’ compatibilities and incompatibilities (similarities and differences) to generate emergent meaning, and by inviting her to interact with another mind (the character’s, narrator’s, author’s, prefacer’s, critic’s, or even the text’s) through the traces of its cognitive activities, blends on various textual levels elicit “cognitive mobility.” I use the phrase “cognitive mobility” to refer to greater flexibility or adaptability in the reader’s cognitive style—the way she thinks, processes information, and applies this information to make sense of the text and the world beyond the text. By interacting with conceptual blends in narrative, the reader moves out of her cognitive comfort zone, as she is exposed both to new connections among conceptual domains and to new ways of connecting conceptual domains: to new conceptual content and new cognitive styles, both of which help her to negotiate reading-related or real-world complexities.

Attention to conceptual blends in modernist narratives thus elucidates an important mechanism by which these narratives equipped their turn-of-the-century...

\textsuperscript{21} Identifying conceptual blends does not assume or imply the existence of a blend-free backdrop against which these blends make themselves apparent. The conceptual blends I identify are simply “higher-level” blends (linguistic traces of cognitive operations that are conscious or capable of being brought to consciousness). Thus, while the conceptual blends I identify could in many cases be labelled as metaphors or analogies, I do not use the latter terminology. Cognitive science has convincingly demonstrated that a fundamental cognitive process (conceptual blending) underlies phenomena (like metaphors and analogies) previously considered linguistic. This fundamental cognitive process has its roots in embodied cognition, which older theories of tropes do not. Furthermore, older conceptions of figurative language imply a backdrop of literal language against which tropes are discernible, whereas conceptual blending theory allows for “higher-level” blends to be discussed without assuming or implying a blend-free back-drop, since the back-drop is itself made up of unconscious (often blend-based) cognitive processes, also known as “backstage cognition.”
readers with the cognitive flexibility necessary for grappling with unprecedented complexities in narrative form and content—for example, non-sequential narration, new ways of writing character, epistemological uncertainty, and ethical ambiguity—and with the upheavals of modernity. Recent studies such as John Xiros Cooper’s *Modernism and the Culture of Market Society* (2004) underscore modernists’ uneasy relation to the rise of hegemonic, totalizing ways of thinking, associated with various aspects of turn-of-the-century modernity, from capitalism to automation to fascism. Narratives with built-in modes of inviting cognitive mobility would have held the potential not only to elicit effective reading practices but also to elicit more mobile ways of thinking about changes to the modernist social, political, economic, technological, and industrial landscapes.

My thesis demonstrates that there is something cognitively unique about blends in a narrative context, even if the fundamental cognitive operations they invite are the same ones involved in many other cognitive activities. The uniqueness of blends in a narrative context lies in a difference of degree rather than kind. With their inscriptions of relational thinking on various, often interacting, textual levels, modernist narratives expose us to and invite us to perform conceptual blending at a very high degree of sophistication or complexity, affording us an opportunity to adapt self-reflexively our cognitive preferences and to attain a very high level of cognitive mobility. Every chapter in my thesis considers the ways in which formal inscriptions of conceptual blending in modernist narratives invite cognitive mobility, but some chapters focus more on how these invitations to cultivate cognitive mobility are related to reading narrative, others to functioning in a changing world, and others to interacting with other minds (a character’s, narrator’s, author’s, preface’s, critic’s, or even text’s). Before detailing my conception of
modernist narrative’s textual levels and offering a chapter breakdown, I would like to mention a few specific gaps persisting in contemporary cognitive poetics’ and cognitive narratology’s use of blending theory. These are the gaps my cognitive-rhetorical theoretical framework for studying blending in modernist narratives aims to fill: the tendency to focus on blending in poetry instead of in the novel, inattention to blending on the structural level of narrative texts, and inattention to blending’s rhetorical dynamics in narrative texts.

Since its first theoretical formulation by Reuven Tsur in 1992, cognitive poetics has been more recently defined as “a broad notion of ‘literary comprehension’, ‘how’ it works, rather than more damned interpretations,” and, more specifically, as “an integrative approach . . . —one that interconnects the theory of literature with the study of language and the mind”: “an approach that sees literary discourse not as a relatively elite mode of cultural expression, interpretable only by the privileged few, but rather as a form of human experience grounded in humans’ general cognitive capacities for making sense of the world” (Hall 353; Herman, “Review of Gavins and Steen” 680). Margaret Freeman’s compelling work on nineteenth- and twentieth-century poetry is illustrative of cognitive poetics’ rigorous use of blending theory but also of its clear affinity for using blending theory to analyze poetry: Freeman has identified poets’ cognitive styles; studied the cognitive skills used to create and process poetry, specifically through the three types of mapping—attribute, relational, and system—she locates in metaphor construction; investigated the interplay between how we understand texts using our world knowledge and how texts can enlarge our knowledge through blending and its generation of emergent structure; and considered whether modernism or other literary-historical
periods have distinctive sets of metaphorical schemata, like those she believes are unique to the poetry of Robert Frost and Emily Dickinson. The chief lacuna in cognitive poetics’ use of blending theory—clearly related to the tendency for cognitive poetics studies to focus on poetry and not the novel—is the question of what happens to blending theory when we scale it up from the level of single sentence-level blends and recurrent schemata to narrative-sized structures. In fairness to Freeman, whose work I am using as representative of current cognitive poetics studies, she pays great attention to textual wholes, but these textual wholes are all poetic: perhaps it is cognitively easier to identify a structural-level organizing principle (generated, for example, by recurrent conceptual schemata) for a work that is readable and conceptually absorbable in one sitting. General neglect of the important movement from a narrative text’s local level to its structural level is reflective of a lacuna in literary studies’ use of blending theory, one that mirrors cognitive science’s tendency to work with a very limited range of narratives (often short and artificially constructed), thereby ignoring the kinds of narratives literary scholars work with: “naturally occurring narrative discourse—whether spoken or written, quotidian or literary” (Herman, Introduction, NTCS 20).

Responding to cognitive poetics’ and cognitive narratology’s tendency to ignore blending’s rhetorical dynamics, my thesis adds rhetorical theory to its cognitivist theoretical framework: by attending to the rhetorical effects of blends on various textual...
levels, I engage my specific training as a literary scholar, thus underscoring the unique contribution literary scholars can make to interdisciplinary cognitive studies. Some recent humanistic studies using tools from cognitive science draw productively on rhetorical theory’s strengths, but while they focus on discursive situations and the motivations of their participants, they do not attend specifically to narrative texts. Todd Oakley’s work on the relation between image and text in medical advertisements for prescription drugs is finely attentive to rhetorical relations. Oakley examines the mental simulations a medical professional launches when persuaded by such advertisements, suggesting that the blends she launches when processing the relation between the image and text are performative. The advertisements script a role for the viewer, who follows what Oakley calls a “reading path,” but the resultant blend the viewer performs has particular valences as a performative act: writing a prescription for a drug becomes a communicative act with its own desires, intentions, plans, and decisions, which have themselves been formed by the desires, intentions, plans, and decisions of the medical advertisement. In her work on oral discourse, Seana Coulson looks at “rhetorically

24 Michael Sinding’s work on cognitive science’s use of literary analogies, for example, takes a rhetorically informed approach; he argues that Daniel Dennett’s multiple draft analogy of consciousness, which focuses on unconscious processes of reporting, revision, and editing, overlooks communicative desires, intentions, plans, and decisions, which overseer a message’s formation (“Inwit of Inwit” 102-4).

25 While rhetorical theory is one of humanists’ most valuable contributions to cognitive studies, skeptics continue to articulate concerns both about whether humanists should be contributing to these studies at all and about whether cognitive science can make a legitimate and valuable contribution to literary studies. Among these concerns is Geoff Hall’s observation that cognitive approaches make grand claims about how literary comprehension works but should also pay attention to historical, discursive, and cultural contexts and reader variation (which includes difference, not just the consensual or universal). Jean Jacques Weber also calls for “a more historically, socially, culturally based stylistics” (521). Humanists engaging in cognitive studies continue to face these critiques, but F. Elizabeth Hart’s response to this line of opposition is particularly compelling: “The culturally and historically specific nature of cognitive embodiment makes cognitive linguistics its own kind of historicism, with cognitive blending its most powerful instrument for gauging ‘inputs’ among dominant and subordinate ideologies and the discourses and texts that constitute literary history” (235). Margaret Freeman’s work clearly makes this kind of intervention in the debate about cognitive poetics’ relation to historical and contextual studies: her investigation of Frost’s and Dickinson’s distinctive repertoires of metaphorical schemata leads to her exciting, though still unconfirmed, hypothesis that modernism or other literary-historical periods might have their own characteristic sets of metaphorical schemata (“Momentary Stays, Exploding Forces” 88).
motivated examples . . . to show how speakers use conceptual blending to integrate concepts with different affective valences, often so that the desired course of action is seen as consistent with their audience’s value system” (“Conceptual Blending in Thought, Rhetoric, and Ideology” 187). Her work is rigorous in its attention to the interplay between the cognitive—cultural models (static, idealized cognitive models of sociocultural phenomena)—and the rhetorical—the means by which individuals adapt cultural models for their rhetorical purposes, including humour and persuasion. My thesis aims for the kind of nuanced attentiveness to interrelated cognitive and rhetorical dynamics that Oakley and Coulson achieve; however, I orient my cognitive-rhetorical framework towards the study of blending on different textual levels in narrative in an effort to eradicate a few persistent blind spots in cognitive poetics’ and cognitive narratology’s use of blending theory.

**Conceptual Blending, Textual Levels, and Cognitive Mobility**

Taking conceptual blends as inscriptions of relational thinking in modernist narratives, I focus on the cognitively mobile modes of reading and relating to other minds these blends invite. I attend first to blends on the narrative text’s microtextual level (characters’ or narrators’ thought processes, narration, or dialogue) and then move to the macrotextual (structural) level.\(^{26, 27}\) In terms of this move from the microtextual level to

\(^{26}\) By using “level” I refer to textual rather than linguistic levels, although the two are often interrelated, as A. J. Greimas’s pioneering work on narrative units and levels demonstrates. In focusing on textual levels, I do not, however, intend to invoke the well-known concept of narrative’s representational or diegetic levels or “the multiple narrating acts that make up most narratives,” based on Gérard Genette’s model of embedding or framing, with an outermost or extradiegetic level in which an extradiegetic narrator recounts the entire narrative, and narrating acts within that narrative referred to as intradiegetic, with further embedded ones called metadiegetic, tetradiegetic, and so on (“Narrative Levels”). (William Nelles’s work on horizontal and vertical narrative embeddings—texts at the same diegetic level, but narrated by different
the macrotextual level, I use “level” to invoke the distinction David Herman makes between proposition-sized units and discourse-sized units, with cognitive science’s affinity for the former as analogous with early linguistics-based narratology’s “assumption that all the categories pertaining to sentence-level grammar could be unproblematically scaled up to the discourse level, without compromising the descriptive or explanatory power of the grammatical machinery involved” (“Structuralist Narratology” 574). As I have already noted, literary criticism’s strength in analyzing complex and richly situated narratives has thus far not been adequately reflected in cognitive poetics’ and cognitive narratology’s use of blending theory, which has focused on blends in narratives as discrete units on the microtextual level, mainly performing structural- or macrotextual-level analyses of blends in poetry. Non-cognitivist studies that make the productive leap from the microtextual level to the structural level retain the separate categories of metaphor and metonymy in order to equate—often problematically, since the fundamental cognitive operations underlying these seemingly distinct kinds of tropes are the same—each of these categories with, for example, male and female modes of thinking (as in Miriam Wallace’s work) or symbolist and realist/mimetic modes of writing. This approach to tropological analysis on the macrotextual or structural level of narrative texts is rooted in Roman Jakobson’s notion—developed in “Two Aspects of Language and Two Types of Aphasic Disturbances”

narrators, one after another, and narratives at different diegetic levels, inserted within or stacked on top of one another, respectively—is likewise based on a Russian-doll or Chinese-box concept of narrative levels.) 27 Carl Bache’s important contributions to conceptual blending theory—positing a typology of blends according to their levels of complexity and sophistication, along with a typology of conceptual disintegration—are not specifically related to literary studies, although they offer useful models for thinking about differentiating levels of blending. Todd Oakley and David Kaufer’s three-layer model of text analysis (the grammar-layer of lexical and grammatical constructions, the artifact-layer of the entire text, and the genre-layer of features and expectations) is also relevant, although it too does not focus specifically on narrative texts; its corpus is clinical case studies, articles in the journal Hospital Practice.
(1956)—that there are two primordial principles of language use, similarity (whose trope
is metaphor) and contiguity (whose trope is metonymy), analogous to poetry and prose,
respectively. Jakobson contends that the development of a discourse may take place
along two different semantic lines: one topic may lead to another either through their
similarity or through their contiguity. While these two relations, he maintains, can appear
on any verbal level—morphemic, lexical, syntactic, or phraseological28—they are also
modes of ordering or structuring discourse, independent of the particular tropes’
frequencies on the linguistic level.29

Todd Oakley’s and Barbara Dancygier’s recent studies avoid the traps into which
other critics, interested in structural-level conceptual organizing principles, have fallen
through using metaphor and metonymy to make problematic and essentializing equations
with different modes of thinking or writing. Oakley and Dancygier both advance
compelling accounts of blend-based meaning construction in narrative discourse through
systems of interacting narrative levels. Oakley analyzes blending in Art Spiegelman’s

28 Prominent extensions of Jakobson’s work on multiple-level tropological modes of discourse include
Northrop Frye’s Anatomy of Criticism (1957), Hayden White’s Metahistory (1973), and David Lodge’s The
describes realism as “an art of implicit simile” and myth as “an art of implicit metaphor,” a distinction upon
which James Mellard builds in his account of a cyclical movement among tropological modalities in Doing
Tropology (1987) (Frye 136). In his work on the structuring role of plots and tropes in historical writing,
White identifies four master tropes or modes of figurative representation (metaphor, metonymy,
synecdoche, and irony), analogizing them with four types of emplotment (tragedy, comedy, romance, and
satire, respectively). Lodge, too, treats metaphor and metonymy not in the local texture of the writing but as
different kinds of discourse with different conceptual relations between their constituent parts; he traces
modernist writers’ development either over the course of an individual work or over the course of their
entire corpuses from a metonymic/realistic to a metaphoric/symbolist representation of experience.

29 As David Lodge notes in his work on Jakobson, although Virginia Woolf’s novel Jacob’s Room has “a
great deal of metaphor and simile in the local texture of the writing, structurally [the novel] . . . belongs in
the metonymic category,” because it unfolds according to “the chain of combination—the chain of
contiguous events that is Jacob’s life” (Modes of Modern Writing 183). Conversely, the opening of E. M.
Forster’s A Passage to India exemplifies metonymic writing because it connects topics on the basis of
contiguity not similarity; even though the passage contains a few metaphors and no metonymies, it is “a
kind of chiasmus pivoting on the historical digression, its symmetrical structure duplicating on a larger
scale the dominant figures of repetition and balance within individual sentences” (Lodge, Modes of Modern
Writing 99).
graphic novel *Maus: A Survivor’s Tale* according to David McNeill’s system of narrative levels, which is rooted in the different functions of gesture in oral—spontaneous and ephemeral—narration. McNeill’s scheme of narrative levels is tripartite: narrative (references to events from the world of the story), metanarrative (storytellers’ comments about the stories they are telling), and paranarrative (discourse participants’ comments about their experiences of observing the storytelling event, such as their comments about their attitudes and feelings towards the characters in the story) (327-33). But Oakley’s development of McNeill’s system of narrative levels has limited applicability as a model for looking at blending on various levels of modernist narrative texts, both because Oakley relies heavily on the fact that “the model scene of *Maus* . . . is one person talking to another” (328) and because all three of his narrative levels are ultimately microtextual. In other words, his model seems to apply only to a limited set of narratives: homodiegetic narratives in which the addressee in narrated and said in a text—Dancygier instead concentrates on linguistic forms she calls narrative anchors, which serve as prompts for structural-level conceptual organizing principles: blends performed in the reader’s mind in the process of narrative comprehension. Narrative anchors, Dancygier argues, activate cognitive domains called narrative spaces in the reader’s mind; these narrative spaces are maintained throughout the reading experience and serve as inputs to blends the reader launches in order to construct a complete sequential story out of an incomplete set of narrated events. The story is “a narrative space constructed on the basis of the contributing narrative spaces,
via the processes of conceptual integration” (Dancygier, “The Text and the Story” 54). In other words, “[t]he emergent story arises through a gradually increasing network of narrative anchors and emergent cross-mappings. The projections that result from the ever-growing number of connections add narrative structure to all of the spaces linked, until a coherent and complete story is constructed” (Dancygier, “The Text and the Story” 62). Dancygier’s account of narrative levels is sophisticated and nuanced in its attentiveness to the relation between the linguistic level and the macro or narrative-space level, and to the reader’s cognitive activities while reading; but her account is nonetheless problematic as a model for theorizing blending in modernist narratives, which defy the kind of reading-as-ordering equation that underlies her model. While it may be true that “[t]he nonsequential modes of narration found in many fictional texts . . . cut against the grain of what seems to be a general cognitive and communicative preference” (Dancygier, “The Text and the Story” 53), modernist narratives not only defy attempts to wrest order and sequentiality from their pages but in fact seem to capitalize on the cognitively destabilizing effects of their formal experiments. Just as the reader of modernist narratives must learn to dwell in their epistemological uncertainties and ethical ambiguities, so she must learn to dwell in their non-sequentiality and other formal complexities. Dwelling in these unstable positions requires heightened cognitive mobility, and conceptual blending, with its emphasis on creativity and adaptability, is ultimately far better suited to eliciting cognitive mobility than it is to fixing meaning or sequentiality.

In terms of its conception of where blending occurs (in the text or in the reader’s mind, according to either textual invitation, guidance, or control), my account of blending
levels shares with Dancygier’s account the claim that blends are a feature of reader response, triggered by specific textual features; in my thesis, however, these textual features are also blends. I depart from Dancygier in the sense that I do not envisage this reader response as highly constrained by textual anchors and mappings that imply a right or textually sanctioned reading. Because my account of blending and textual levels does not focus so much on blending’s role in meaning construction or narrative comprehension as it does on blends as textual features inviting cognitive mobility (attained through reader-performed blends), I envisage a close relation between what happens in the text and what happens in the reader’s mind, but a relation that is nonetheless not prescriptive or directive. My argument is tailored to a conception of modernist narratives as guiding but not prescribing the reader’s cognitive activities—cognitive mobility being, after all, something that by definition can only be invited, not enforced.

Throughout my thesis, I explore this new way of thinking about the idea that modernist narratives model the mind: instead of focusing on how these narratives model (as in represent) mental functioning, I focus on how they model (as in bear inscriptions or traces of) cognition’s fundamentally relational processes, in order to model (as in shape or mould) the reader’s mind. I thus aim to make a rhetorically nuanced, reader response-based contribution to cognitive narratology, furthering our understanding of four facets of modernism: the way that cognition’s fundamentally relational processes were inscribed in narratives written in a milieu featuring widespread interdisciplinary discourses about cognition; the unique character of reader response to these narratives, which entails a high level of cognitive mobility; the impact of modernist prefaces and critical essays on this reader response; and the broad applicability of blend-based cognitive mobility as a
strategy for reading modernist narratives, for relating to other minds (the character’s, narrator’s, author’s, prefacer’s, critic’s, or even text’s), and for coping with the upheavals of modernity (the first and fourth chapters of my thesis being chiefly concerned with changes in cross-cultural relations as a consequence of the more frequent and rapid global circulation of people, objects, and ideas).

I focus on blends on the microtextual level (in characters’ or narrators’ thoughts, narration, or dialogue); the macrotextual level (the structural level or the level of the text as a whole); the peritextual level (in authorial or allographic prefaces); and the metatextual level (in critical essays). Other than in my second chapter—on macrotextual blends—many of the blends I discuss are local, micro-level phenomena, but they invite cognitive mobility and situate the reader in shifting rhetorical relations in different ways depending on where they are located—in the text proper, in prefatory peritexts, or in critical metatexts—and depending on whether they are in fact part of larger conceptual organizing structures. My thesis thus underscores the importance for reader response of understanding the relation between conceptual blends on different textual levels, a seemingly isolated blend in a preface perhaps belonging to a larger conceptual organizing structure that spans the preface and is in dialogue with blends located in the text proper, on its microtextual level and/or macrotextual level.

My first chapter focuses on the rhetorical motivations and effects on reader response of a narrative agent’s (narrator’s or character-narrator’s) blends; these microtextual-level blends are generally expressed linguistically as phrase-, sentence-, or paragraph-length phenomena. The *Silent Traveller* narratives of Chinese modernist travel writer Chiang Yee furnish me with ample evidence to support the development of a
microtextual-level blending spectrum, according to the degree of collaboration between narrative agent and reader invited by the blends. Chiang’s narratives, written during his residence and travels in various Western locales, are part of his effort to spread cross-cultural understanding around the globe. The narratives I study recount his experiences in England and his reflections on those experiences; his thinking is patently relational, for he invariably thinks of English customs, landscapes, and architecture in terms of Chinese customs, landscapes, and architecture, and vice versa. His conceptual blends invite his English and Chinese readers to see familiar things as unfamiliar and unfamiliar things as familiar. While some of his blends are completed in the narratives, others are simply triggered and left for the reader to complete, while the most sophisticated kinds are narrative agent-reflexive or reader-reflexive, inviting the reader to bring either Chiang’s or her own ways of thinking (conceptual content or cognitive style) into the blends. The cognitive mobility the reader gains through exposure to Chiang’s blends and the completion of blends simply triggered by the narratives becomes a means of reading her own mind (for examining her own culturally entrenched assumptions) and Chiang’s mind (his psychic liminality) and of dealing more flexibly and creatively with the realities of a newly globalized world, in which cross-cultural contact was becoming more frequent.

My second chapter attends to macrotextual-level blends—blends that occur on the level of the text as a whole and function as conceptual organizing structures. I focus on Virginia Woolf’s *The Waves*, replete with microtextual-level blends, but also highly amenable to an approach I theorize for identifying a novel’s macrotextual-level blends, since a novel’s conceptual framework is not necessarily conceptually absorbable in one sitting or manifested as an identifiable set of recurring conceptual schemata (like the
semantics of cocooning which, Margaret Freeman argues, generate conceptual structure
Extending my interest in inscriptions of relational thinking in modernist narratives, I look
at the way a novel models the mind through functioning as a thinking mind. The Waves
has long been read as a novel whose six voices are six parts of a single mind, but
criticism of the novel has not paid sufficient attention to what these parts are and how the
mind to which they belong thinks. Using blending theory’s terminology to theorize the
parts and processes of the narrative’s mind as conceptual domains and conceptual
blending, respectively, I argue that reading a novel in this way enables us to extend work
on conceptual blending in narrative beyond the microtextual level and to extend fictional
mind studies. Lisa Zunshine and Alan Palmer investigate the cognitive operations readers
perform during reading encounters with descriptions of fictional minds (characters’ or
narrators’); I develop a model for understanding the mobile cognitive operations we
perform when we read about a text’s mind thinking and think along with it.

My third and fourth chapters argue that authorial and allographic peritextual-level
blends, blends in authorial and allographic prefaces, respectively, are the central means
by which modernist prefaces elicit reading strategies helpful for reading the texts they
accompany. Authorial peritextual-level blends, often pertaining to changes in the author-
text-reader relation, signal conceptual models (structural-level conceptual organizing
principles) that unfold over the course of the prefaces and trigger relational thinking, the
fundamental cognitive operation underlying reading strategies ideally suited to
modernism’s changing author-text-reader relation. Joseph Conrad and Henry James,
authors of the first modernist preface and the first prefaces to theorize modernist
narrative, respectively, are my two case studies: I focus on Conrad’s labourer-observer blend in his Preface to *The Nigger of the ‘Narcissus’* and on James’s house-of-fiction blend in his Preface to *The Portrait of a Lady*. In Conrad’s case, the reading strategies invited by the Preface’s conceptual model assist us in negotiating perspectival and temporal shifts and inversions in the narrative, as well as the concomitant instability of our psychological, emotive, and ethical relations of distance and involvement with the narrator and the ship’s crew. In James’s case, the reading strategies invited by the Preface’s conceptual model assist us in negotiating the gap between the implied author and figural narration in the novel and, therefore, in finding a readerly position from which we can see double, inhabiting Isabel Archer’s consciousness and reading that consciousness as an architectural edifice. Both of these case studies feature reciprocal and mutually permeable preface-text relations: peritextual-level blends invite the cognitive mobility necessary for reading the accompanying texts, while those texts, talking back to prefaces placed before but written after, ultimately necessitate revisions to the reading strategies elicited by the prefaces.

My fourth chapter interrogates Gérard Genette’s claim that the allographic preface is “inseparable from the routines of protection and patronage,” “highjacking and interception,” by focusing on peritextual-level blends for East-West relations in prefaces accompanying narratives that thematize those relations (293). Given the more frequent and rapid global circulation of people, objects, and ideas, narratives exploring ideas about the East, the West, and East-West relations proliferated in the modernist period. Tackling East-West relations naturally involved addressing the issues of “protection and patronage,” “highjacking and interception,” that Genette locates in the allographic
preface-text relation. Focusing on Herbert Read’s Preface to Chiang Yee’s *The Silent Traveller: A Chinese Artist in Lakeland*, Van Wyck Brooks’s Preface to Chiang’s *The Silent Traveller in New York*, and James MacArthur’s Preface to Arthur Morrison’s *Tales of Mean Streets*, this chapter assesses the allographic preface-text relation in two ways: by comparing a narrative’s construction of East-West relations with its preface’s construction, through peritextual-level blends, of that relation; and by comparing the reading strategies invited by a narrative and its preface. In similar and different ways, all three case studies feature reciprocal and mutually permeable allographic preface-text relations and East-West relations, with a high degree of correlation between those relations. This chapter thus underscores the value of allographic peritextual-level blends as mechanisms for inviting the cognitive mobility necessary to reconceptualize both East-West and modernist allographic preface-text relations.

In all four chapters—and in my thesis’s envoi, which addresses metatextual-level blends in modernist literary criticism and narrative theory—I explore relational thinking inscribed in modernist narrative form and the flexible, mobile mode of reader response these inscriptions invite. The potentialities of this challenge to the reader’s cognitive style are many, with new connections among ideas and new ways of connecting ideas resulting in new reading strategies and modes of self-positioning in the world. Of interest to my thesis’s broader goal (demonstrating modernist studies’ aptitude for interdisciplinary approaches to the processes and products of human cognition), however, is the dependence of truly interdisciplinary research—and the construction of a permanent two-way bridge between the “two cultures”—on cognitive mobility.\(^{30}\) Genuinely

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interdisciplinary research requires that we be scientists without losing sight of our human-level structures of meaning and humanists without losing sight of our physical and cognitive rootedness in the material world. In other words, we must cultivate sufficient cognitive flexibility that we can move in and out of our cognitive comfort zones, our preferences for scientific or humanistic ways of thinking. Proust Was a Neuroscientist (2007)—authored by Jonah Lehrer, a neuroscience lab technician who read Proust while running experiments—is a recent study that showcases the promise of interdisciplinary research carried out by cognitively mobile minds. It is no coincidence that Lehrer finds his inspiration in modernist minds—artists who read “the science of their time” and “looked in the mirror” to discover “truths about the human mind—real, tangible truths—that science is only now rediscovering” (ix, viii, vii). My thesis suggests that reading modernist narratives today affords us an opportunity to acknowledge not only modernists’ prescient ideas about the mind but also the way these narratives model minds: inscribe ideas about the mind in their form in order to shape readers’ minds. Acknowledging the latter means acknowledging that when we read modernist narratives, as literary scholars undertaking interpretive readings or as cognitive scientists undertaking experiments (on real readers, for example), we are readers being read and experimenters being experimented on. Because science aims to remove as much as possible the experimenter from the experiment or account for her presence in the most specific and quantifiable ways, there is ultimately more potential in literary studies for the kind of self-reflexivity required in encountering modernist narratives, which have immense potential as case studies for investigations into the processes and products of Integrative Thinking.” takes the business world as its laboratory, studying leaders’ ability to bring together diverse and contradictory streams of thought into innovative ideas.
cognition. Thus, when the “two cultures” meet over the pages of Proust’s *Swann’s Way*, literary scholars bring to the collaborative, interdisciplinary enterprise not only vocabulary and skills for interpreting narrative but also the willingness to accept and even embrace the bidirectionality of the experiment: the experiment’s potential to change the experimenter in ways that cannot be—to borrow the words Stefan Collini uses in summarizing F. R. Leavis’s chief objection to C. P. Snow’s lecture—reduced to “the quantifiable, the measurable, the manageable” (Collini xxxiii).
CHAPTER ONE: MICROTEXTUAL-LEVEL BLENDS AND
COLLABORATIVE READING IN THE SILENT TRAVELLER NARRATIVES

Reading in the Blend

According to Gilles Fauconnier and Mark Turner’s formulation of conceptual blending theory, we read as we live: in the blend.¹ When we live in the blend, “our conscious apprehension is limited to the blend” (Fauconnier and Turner 83) rather than extended to the input domains and the stages by which they combine to generate emergent meaning. Every time we use computers, for example, we blend the “technological device” and “our mental conception of the work we do on a real desktop,” such as “lifting, moving, and opening” (Fauconnier and Turner 23). Yet once we have mastered the mechanics of operating computers we perform this blend unconsciously.

The ability to live in the blend is crucial to cognitive efficiency and is therefore an important cognitive adaptation for survival: Fauconnier and Turner argue that “[i]n the face of . . . [basic environmental] threats, global and immediate insight is the priority, and there is little survival value in checking step by step how that global insight is achieved. Thus we evolved to be conscious of only the blend” (84).

When we read a letter we are not conscious that we are performing elaborate conceptual blends (of “someone talking” and “some medium with marks”) (Fauconnier and Turner 211). We are drawing unconsciously on what Fauconnier and Turner call “the

¹ An earlier version of this chapter was published as an article entitled “Reading in the Blend: Collaborative Conceptual Blending in the Silent Traveller Narratives,” in Narrative 16.2 (2008): 140-62. I am grateful to The Ohio State University Press for permission to draw on that material here.
writing and reading blending network,” which uses “distinctive marks on material substances” “combined with a general mapping, evolved by culture, for connecting equivalence classes of sounds to equivalence classes of marks” (211). This chapter examines in more detail the cognitive operations involved in reading, specifically in reading modernist narratives, in which conceptual blends are inscribed on the microtextual level: in characters’ or narrators’ thought processes, narration, or dialogue. I theorize our cognitive operations when engaging with microtextual-level blends as a “higher-level” form of reading in the blend. By “higher level,” I simply mean that these cognitive operations (unlike the vast majority of the mind’s blends while reading) are more capable of being brought to and controlled by our conscious awareness. This chapter identifies various possible degrees of consciousness of this form of reading in the blend; it also considers the consequences—for our minds’ conceptual content and cognitive styles—of becoming conscious of our cognitive activities in observing or completing character or narrator blends.

My analysis of microtextual-level blends has four interrelated objectives. The first is to use conceptual blending theory to help us understand the way characters and narrators sometimes think and speak. The second objective is to use microtextual-level blends as the basis for new insights into blending’s interplay between recognizing and generating similarities and differences among concepts or conceptual domains. The third objective is to demonstrate how the way we read can facilitate our self-reflexive understanding of “the way we think,” thereby performing the work of Fauconnier and Turner’s study, defamiliarizing cognitive operations that have become automatic, but in a more experiential way. The final objective is to propose that such self-reflexivity can help
us minimize the deleterious ramifications of “the way we think” on the way we live, thereby blunting one side of blending’s double-edged sword, the side responsible for cognitive operations such as—to take an example from Fauconnier and Turner’s discussion of blend-based bureaucratic thinking in the Holocaust—the “blended concept of genocide as a bureaucratic operation” (27).²

In this chapter, I attend both to the rhetorical functions of conceptual blending in characters’ and narrators’ thought processes, narration, and dialogue, and to the concomitant cognitive operations readers perform in engaging with these microtextual-level blends. Many of my examples of conceptual blends could be considered examples of figurative thinking or speaking on the part of a character or narrator (whose thought processes, narration, or dialogue could be identified as operating analogically, for example). But in taking tropes for figurative thinking and speaking as “higher-level” conceptual blends, we can rescue them from the minefield of distinctions—analogies, metaphors, similes, and metonymies, for example—to which they have been subjected and focus on what they have in common with each other and with other cognitive operations that cannot be readily assimilated into any of these fraught categories: they are all cognitive processes, rooted in embodied experience, integrating elements from two or more domains to achieve bi- or multi-directional reconceptualization.

To use another example from Fauconnier and Turner, which I have adapted for a narrative setting, let us imagine that a character in a novel set in the early 1990s claims

² Here I am asking questions similar to those Lisa Zunshine asks in her work on cognitive psychology’s Theory of Mind (ToM) and its relation to how we read fictional characters’ behaviors as indicative of mental states (thoughts, feelings, etc.). Zunshine asks, “is it possible that literary narrative trains our capacity for mind-reading and also tests its limits?” (“Theory of Mind” 278, my emphasis). This chapter focuses on how microtextual-level blends (in characters’ or narrators’ minds, narration, or dialogue) can place high demands on our cognitive mobility (at times shifting us from automatic reading in the blend to consciousness of this process) as we move through the phases of similarity-seeing and difference-seeing invited by these blends.
that “what the United States [needs is] . . . a Margaret Thatcher” (18). Another character, the one in whom we are chiefly interested, thinks (or says aloud), “But Margaret Thatcher would never get elected here because the labor unions can’t stand her” (Fauconnier and Turner 18). It appears that this character is thinking analogically, pairing two countries, their national leaders, their electorates, and their labor unions. But, as Fauconnier and Turner remind us, the analogues are themselves products of “the construction of new imaginative meaning,” rather than being “objectively there” in the concepts of countries, national leaders, electorates, or labor unions; in other words, to perform this cognitive operation, the character has to “invent a scenario that draws from the two analogues but ends up containing more” (20, my emphasis). Furthermore, rather than being a simple case of analogical projection, in which “a base or source domain is mapped onto a target so that inferences easily available in the source are exported to the target,” this character’s blend “has some characteristics of Great Britain, some characteristics of the United States, and some properties of its own” (Fauconnier and Turner 35, 19). It also involves finding analogous matches among disanalogous elements to achieve the emergent meaning, a Margaret Thatcher who, after campaigning in the United States and invoking the ire of labor unions, is defeated in a presidential election. The import of this disanalogy about American and British political institutions could be (depending on the context of the remark and the character’s rhetorical intentions) either a comment on American electoral politics being so complicated that the very leader Americans need would never be elected or a comment on how fortunate Americans are to have such vigilant unions (Fauconnier and Turner 20).
I conceive of such microtextual-level blends as rhetorically positioned invitations to the reader for various kinds of cognitive engagement with a text. In acknowledging the literary text in its broader rhetorical situation (what James Phelan calls a “recursive relationship among authorial agency, textual phenomena . . . , and reader response” [“Rhetorical Literary Ethics” 631]), I theorize a spectrum of blends in characters’ or narrators’ thought processes, narration, or dialogue, according to the mode of author-text-reader interaction and, more specifically, the degree of cognitive collaboration (between the reader and character or narrator) the blends invite. This spectrum offers a clear way of conceiving the recursive relations among the way we read, the way we think, and the way we live—as well as among authorial agency, textual phenomena, and reader response. Occupying one extreme, the middle, and the other extreme of this spectrum are four kinds of blends: (1) Non-collaborative blends are performed entirely by the narrative agent, with the reader as an observer; (2) Collaborative blends involve collaboration between the reader and the narrative agent. The narrative agent may signal some or all of the inputs and matches, leaving the activation of the blend to the reader, or the narrative agent may perform the initial phase(s) of the blend, leaving the rest of the blend to be completed by the reader; (3) Collaborative narrative agent-reflexive blends also involve

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3 Recent studies by Todd Oakley and Seana Coulson, discussed in my introduction, are attentive to blending’s rhetorical dynamics. Coulson’s work is particularly relevant to this chapter: she focuses specifically on the means by which speakers adapt cultural models (static, idealized cognitive models of sociocultural phenomena) to integrate concepts with different affective valences to avoid alienating their audiences’ value systems, while also testing the flexibility of their conceptual systems (“Conceptual Blending in Thought, Rhetoric, and Ideology”).

4 Yrjo Engestrom uses conceptual blending theory to investigate blends developed in group situations. While Engestrom’s focus is not on narrative, his work nonetheless contends with blending as a potentially collaborative cognitive operation, one that, in the cases he studied (physicians’ meetings), led to the novel concept of care agreement, a new practice in healthcare coordination in Helsinki.

5 “Narrative agent” is used throughout this chapter in reference to the narrator or character-narrator who performs or triggers the blend. While the model I develop in this chapter focuses on case studies involving blends launched or completed by a narrative agent, it is equally applicable to blends launched or completed by non-narrating characters, as in the dialogue between two characters (neither necessarily a character-narrator) regarding Margaret Thatcher, the American presidency, and the labor unions.
collaboration between the narrative agent and the reader, but they make the narrative agent’s way of thinking (conceptual content or mind style)⁶ an input in a blend performed by the reader. These blends afford the reader a greater degree of conscious awareness about the narrative agent’s way of thinking by making one narrative agent-performed blend an input in a second, reader-performed blend; (4) **Collaborative reader-reflexive blends** are similar to collaborative narrative agent-reflexive blends, but they require the greatest degree of cognitive mobility (the movement between recognizing and generating similarities and differences, leading to greater flexibility in the way the reader connects ideas and uses them to negotiate reading-related or real-world complexities), collaboration, and self-reflexivity of all the blends on the spectrum. They make the reader’s way of thinking (again, conceptual content or mind style) an input in a blend she performs, generating self-reflexivity about her own way of thinking.

The reader’s cognitive activities are thus related to the rhetorical positioning of microtextual-level blends: either as textual features that invite imitative, often unconscious cognitive activity (as in non-collaborative blends) or as textual features that create a dynamic, collaborative, and often more conscious interchange between reader, narrative agent, and text—or somewhere in between. The difference between the two ends of the blending spectrum is, therefore, not a difference between cognitive passivity and cognitive activity; rather, the difference lies in the degree of cognitive mobility and self-reflexivity invited by the different blends. The broader concept of “reading in the blend” is thus reconceptualized: among the many cognitive activities involved in reading narrative, two of those higher-level activities with the most potential for elucidating how

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⁶ I am working with Elena Semino’s definition of mind style as “the particular conceptual structures and cognitive habits that characterise an individual’s world view” (“Cognitive Stylistic Approach” 95).
characters or narrators think and how we think are the reader’s performance of and collaboration with a narrative’s microtextual-level blends.

Modernist narratives are particularly suited to this reconceptualized account of a higher-level form of “reading in the blend” for two reasons: first, their interest in modelling the mind in the context of interdisciplinary dialogues about the relational basis of perception and cognition; and second, modernists’ use of narrative’s formal structures to challenge readers’ reading practices and ways of thinking about and relating to the world. While their form—first-person, retrospective, and sequential—might seem to preclude them from consideration as “modernist,” based on conventional equations of “modernist” with “avant-garde” or “experimental,” the earliest works in Chinese writer Chiang Yee’s English-language Silent Traveller series have something in common with Virginia Woolf’s more or less contemporaneous and quintessentially modernist, experimental narrative The Waves (1931): they demand of their readers a high degree of cognitive mobility through their microtextual-level conceptual blends. Like The Waves, which begins with strings of microtextual-level blends, Chiang’s narratives abound in blends, connected, as they are in The Waves, with the development of identity, both individual and communal. Chiang’s narratives in fact extend the reach of Woolf’s interest in the relational basis of individual and intersubjective identity: Chiang’s blends connect relational individual and group identity formation with the complexities of negotiating similarity and difference in cross-cultural encounters. This connection involves readers, through the often collaborative and reflexive orientations of Chiang’s blends, in new ways of thinking about their cultural self-positioning and their ways of relating to cultural others. This connection makes Chiang’s narratives quintessentially modernist, according
to Paul Armstrong’s important work on the social uses of modernist form. Although Chiang’s narratives (unlike the case studies Armstrong presents) do not “push the conventions of representation in ways that introduce the more radical narrative experiments of modernism,” they nevertheless use their formal structures (microtextual-level blends) to do the kind of “political work,” “shap[ing] and chang[ing] our character as social, political agents,” that Armstrong identifies in James’s, Conrad’s, Forster’s, and Joyce’s narratives: our reading experiences can have consequences for the habits, assumptions, and aims that we bring to other social engagements in our worlds. They can raise questions about such political matters as our sense of justice and responsibility. They can challenge and change our practices of relating to others, including others with conventions and beliefs different from our own. Indeed, for many people, reading is the social sphere where we are most engaged with perspectives and desires that are alien, foreign, unfamiliar—and it is therefore an experience where learning about the challenges and opportunities of negotiating differences is most likely to occur. (*Play and the Politics of Reading* xii, xi, x)

Born in Jiujiang, China, Chiang Yee (1903-1977) was a poet, author, painter, and calligrapher. Before he left China, he studied and taught chemistry, edited a newspaper, and served as a magistrate; his disillusionment with corruption in Chinese politics prompted him to take up residence in England in 1933. Following the publication of his

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7 This connection also makes his works no less relevant to our contemporary situation than they were to his own era, perhaps accounting at least in part (along with growing interest in English-language, diasporic Asian writing) for the fact that Chiang’s writing is starting to receive due, albeit belated, critical attention. See the work of Da Zheng, as well as Elaine Yee Lin Ho, Guy Brett, and Su-ching Huang.
popular book on Chinese art, *The Chinese Eye: An Interpretation of Chinese Painting* (1935), Chiang completed his first *Silent Traveller* narrative, *The Silent Traveller: A Chinese Artist in Lakeland* (1937), based on journals written during his visit to the Lake District in August 1936. Written against the backdrop of various international conflicts—the Spanish Civil War, tensions between Japan and China, and the Second World War—the early books in Chiang’s *Silent Traveller* series (which numbered at least a dozen works by 1977) feature a Chinese first-person narrator, the self-styled silent traveller, who documents cross-cultural encounters in a form that draws on autobiography, travel writing, and ethnography, and also includes landscape sketches and Chinese calligraphy. The narratives I focus on in this chapter, Chiang’s first works in this series—*The Silent Traveller: A Chinese Artist in Lakeland* (1937), *The Silent Traveller in London* (1939), *The Silent Traveller in the Yorkshire Dales* (1941), and *The Silent Traveller in Oxford* (1944)—announce themselves as projects in cross-cultural understanding: Chiang positions himself as a liminal figure, able to interpret Chinese culture to English readers and English culture to Chinese readers. While his narratives were published in England, Chiang clearly anticipated a readership in China and a Chinese readership in England in addition to his English readership: in the *Oxford* narrative he gives “prospective Chinese visitors” to Oxford, both those currently in England and those who will come to England in the years ahead, “a few hints here and now”; in the *London* narrative, moreover, he alludes to his continued journalistic output of similar material on English culture for Chinese newspapers (*Oxford* 176; *London* 58).

In the first works of the *Silent Traveller* series, Chiang records his experiences in England, but he does so in a way that makes his own cognitive operations as much the
subject of his narratives as the events he reports and the settings he describes. His
cognitive operations are patently relational: he constantly sees English and Chinese
customs, landscapes, and architecture in terms of each other, thereby mutually
reconceptualizing them and holding in tension similarities and differences between them.
Chiang’s goal—which, I will argue, is achieved by his microtextual-level conceptual
blends, both those the reader observes and those that are more collaborative and
reflexive—is to encourage English and Chinese readers to become cross-culturally open-
eyed and open-minded by seeing and thinking relationally and self-reflexively. This
mode of seeing and thinking about familiar and unfamiliar customs, landscapes, and
architecture requires the very ability to hold in tension similarity-seeing and difference-
seeing that Chiang advocates as a model for global understanding. My cognitivist reading
of Chiang’s narratives is thus inflected with a rhetorical approach that views these
narratives as events themselves, performative discourses intended to shape reader
response. This rhetorical approach is influenced by Paul Armstrong’s work, in which he
takes “the how of a text’s engagement with a reader’s assumptions and attitudes as a site
of political activity that is just as significant as the what of its representational content”
(Play and the Politics of Reading xi). In Chiang’s narratives, just as in the canonical
modernist narratives Armstrong studies, “the events dramatized” are “addressed by the
formal structures of the narrative(s)” in Chiang’s case, cross-cultural interactions are
addressed by microtextual-level blends that engage the reader, whether she is English or
Chinese, in cross-cultural cognitive collaboration (Play and the Politics of Reading xii). I

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8 Attention to the political work achieved by microtextual-level blends in Chiang’s narratives—focusing on
these formal features’ rhetorical orientations and cognitive effects—is a way “to conduct social criticism
from a position of genuine professional expertise—and to avoid falling into the trap of writing literary
criticism that sounds like naive social science” (Armstrong, Play and the Politics of Reading x) or, I would
add, that sounds like naive cognitive science.
will turn to a more detailed analysis of Chiang’s microtextual-level conceptual blends and the way they invite cross-culturally open-eyed seeing and open-minded thinking after placing conceptual blending theory and blending in Chiang’s narratives in the context of modernist philosophical interest in relational thinking.

**Similarity-Seeing and Difference-Seeing from Nietzsche to Now**

Relational thinking is central to Nietzsche’s theory of concept formation, part of his broader account of perception and cognition, which my introduction treated as exemplary of modernism’s interdisciplinary ideas about embodied, relational cognition. In “On Truth and Lying in a Non-Moral Sense” (written in 1873), Nietzsche theorized concept formation, a central cognitive operation, in terms of the ability to see things in terms of each other:

> [I]et us consider in particular how concepts are formed; each word immediately becomes a concept, not by virtue of the fact that it is intended to serve as a memory (say) of the unique, utterly individualized, primary experience to which it owes its existence, but because at the same time it must fit countless other, more or less similar cases, i.e. cases which, strictly speaking, are never equivalent, and thus nothing other than non-equivalent cases. Every concept comes into being by making equivalent that which is non-equivalent. Just as it is certain that no leaf is ever exactly the same as any other leaf, it is equally certain that the concept ‘leaf’ is formed by dropping these individual differences arbitrarily, by forgetting those features which differentiate one thing from another. (877)
According to Nietzsche, concept formation is rooted in the practice of seeing likenesses among individual phenomena in order to create concepts like “leaf,” despite the absence of total identity or sameness, but within some range of cognitively acceptable difference, beyond which a new concept must be posited. This practice can be productively conceptualized in terms of the seeing as (aspect-seeing) concept that Ludwig Wittgenstein later posited in *Philosophical Investigations* (written in the late 1940s):

Two uses of the word ‘see’.

The one: ‘What do you see there?’—‘I see this’ (and then a description, a drawing, a copy). The other: ‘I see a likeness between these two faces’—let the man I tell this to be seeing the faces as clearly as I do myself. . . .

I contemplate a face, and then suddenly notice its likeness to another. I see that it has not changed; and yet I see it differently. I call this experience ‘noticing an aspect.’ (193)

The first use of the word “see” is rooted in recognition of identity—thoroughgoing sameness—and can be captured in a mimetic act, “a description, a drawing, a copy.” The other use of the word “see,” however, is rooted in recognition of “likeness”: not total identity, but similarity that has as its co-requisite the presence of difference. This is the concept of seeing that Wittgenstein called “noticing an aspect,” also known as aspect-seeing or seeing as. It is a relational form of seeing because it involves seeing one thing in terms of another, thereby contrasting with the first kind of seeing Wittgenstein identified, which is non-relational.
The parallels between Fauconnier and Turner’s recent work on conceptual blending and Nietzsche’s broader account of the relational basis of perception and cognition have already been discussed in my introduction. But one further point of contact among Nietzsche’s early-modernist theory of concept formation, Wittgenstein’s late-modernist account of *seeing as*, and recent work on conceptual blending is particularly relevant to the cross-cultural work achieved by interacting similarity-seeing and difference-seeing in Chiang’s *Silent Traveller* narratives. This point of contact is the generative aspect of similarity-seeing. Fauconnier and Turner argue not only that similarity must exist in order for blending to take place, but also that similarity is *identified* through blending, just as similarity both pre-exists and is identified through Nietzsche’s concept formation or Wittgenstein’s *seeing as*: “[a] little matching helps the blend run, and running the blend helps us find the matches” (20). Similarity both triggers Chiang’s blends and is in turn identified by them.\(^9\) Seeing English customs, landscapes, and architecture and Chinese customs, landscapes, and architecture in terms of each other, Chiang notices similarity; in running microtextual-level blends or triggering them for the reader to run, Chiang (and thus the reader) identifies further similarity, thereby bringing together English and Chinese domains in a manner that enables them to reconceptualize each other and narrow—but not close—the gap of difference between them.

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\(^9\) Fauconnier and Turner argue that even identity and opposition, sameness and difference are “finished products provided to consciousness after elaborate work” (8). Interestingly, the similarity-seeing on which blending depends and which blending also generates may be itself a product of prior blending, as we saw in the example of Margaret Thatcher, the American presidency, and the labor unions: “elements of mental life that look like primitives for formal analysis turn out to be higher-order products of imaginative work” (Fauconnier and Turner 6). Here, Fauconnier and Turner’s work resonates closely with Nietzsche’s notion of concept formation in terms of the palimpsestic superimposition of layers upon layers of similarity-seeing or blending.
In bringing Nietzsche, Wittgenstein, Fauconnier and Turner, and Chiang together, I do not want to lose sight of the differences among them and, in particular, the distinctive qualities of Chiang’s narratives: their cross-cultural valence and their status as narratives. What Chiang’s work contributes to the already circulating, interdisciplinary modernist debates about relational thinking is its ability to frame these ideas in narrative form in the context of a world that became increasingly globalized in the fifty years between Nietzsche’s writings and his own. While Nietzsche was interested in the epistemological consequences of concept formation’s relational foundations, Chiang uses microtextual-level blends in narrative to tackle concepts like “English,” “Chinese,” and “human,” moving relational thinking’s epistemological consequences into the sphere of the reader’s lived cross-cultural experience. Chiang’s act of aspect-seeing in noting the resemblance between Sir William Beveridge and Punch, both of whom represent Englishness to a foreigner (Oxford 171), anticipates Wittgenstein’s discussion of relational seeing while also demonstrating the particular cross-cultural import of relational thinking in the Silent Traveller narratives. Collaborative, often reflexive microtextual-level conceptual blends in Chiang’s narratives offer us something we would not necessarily gain from the purely philosophical or technical discussions of Nietzsche, Wittgenstein, or Fauconnier and Turner: textually guided participation in this cognitive operation and greater awareness of its consequences for subjects’ (Chiang’s and our) lived experiences in a globalized world. Indeed, Chiang’s narratives capture what Paul Armstrong calls the “important social and political work that can only (or best) happen in the activity of reading” (Play and the Politics of Reading ix).

10 Sir William Beveridge was a British economist and social reformer (1879-1963).
Interpreting Cultures to Each Other: Chiang’s Liminality and Blending’s Double Ethnographic Orientation

In connecting his narratives with a duty to protect civilization during the international conflicts of the late 1930s and early 1940s, Chiang clearly envisages literature as a salutary and sensitizing force. He credits art with facilitating social transformation, noting that the film *The Good Earth*\(^{11}\) “has certainly increased the understanding and sympathy of the English people towards the Chinese” (*London* 166). The problem for Chiang, however, is that English orientalizing discourses about China have generated such powerfully intractable stereotypes that he knows “there must be a good number of people who still wonder why [he has] . . . no pig-tail on [his] . . . head, or who think [he] . . . must be the same sort of person as . . . Charlie Chan”\(^{12}\) (*London* x). Chiang therefore advocates greater cross-cultural understanding, an achievement requiring both the English and the Chinese to be willing to “interpret their countrymen” to each other (*Oxford* 129), just as he does in his narratives.

Chiang’s position as a liminal figure enables him to be an insider-outsider in both English and Chinese cultures, thereby interpreting them to each other. Chiang’s ability to speak English, his English style of dress, and his growing familiarity with English customs make him an insider in English culture and an outsider in Chinese culture, relative to his Chinese countrymen. His physical appearance and affinity for Chinese

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\(^{11}\) This 1937 film, based on Nobel laureate Pearl Buck’s *The Good Earth* (1931), portrays the struggles of Chinese farmers. Chiang describes an English viewer’s reaction to portrayals of Chinese characters in the film: “They’re not really Chinese—they’re human beings!” (*London* 166). “Thank heavens and Mrs. Pearl Buck,” Chiang writes, “for turning us into human beings!” (*London* 166). While much can be said about the exasperation, irony, and humour of Chiang’s reply, viewing the film likely required an act of conceptual blending that may inflect the English viewer’s remark with more complexity than is initially apparent, given the reigning Western orientalizing discourses about the East: many of the film’s actors were Westerners wearing make-up designed to make them appear Asian.

\(^{12}\) Charlie Chan, a fictional Chinese-American detective, appeared in novels and films in the early to mid twentieth century.
cultural values and customs, however, have the reverse effect. “With a double perspective,” Da Zheng writes of Chiang, “he is able to draw out differences in similarities—and similarities in differences—between East and West” (“Double Perspective” 165). Chiang’s self-representation in his narratives further underscores his liminality, as he alternates among three ways of positioning himself: as an individual, as a racial, cultural, or national representative, and as a representative human.

Just as Chiang is a culturally liminal figure and can therefore interpret English and Chinese cultures to each other, his microtextual-level blends perform this interpretive work because of their double ethnographic orientation. By integrating English cultural practices, landscapes, and architecture with Chinese cultural practices, landscapes, and architecture, these blends defamiliarize the former for English readers but familiarize them for Chinese readers, while familiarizing the latter for English readers and defamiliarizing them for Chinese readers. This double ethnographic orientation is

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13 While not theorizing them as conceptual blends, Da Zheng has discussed the pervasive “comparisons and analogies” in Chiang’s narratives in terms of their communicative function, suggesting that they reflect the insufficiencies of literal expression for capturing the essence of a feeling or scene: “[s]ince no one can attain an adequate expression of nature, Chiang resorts to comparisons and analogies to present his ‘indescribable’ emotions. The raining scene is said to be like a Chinese bamboo screen hanging down from the sky . . .; the mountains look like certain parts of the Yangtze River” (“Double Perspective” 170). Zheng further highlights the way in which “[s]uch associations and allusions offer more room for the imagination,” so that “the essence of the scene may thus be more precisely conveyed and experienced by the reader” (“Double Perspective” 170). My different but complementary approach addresses the rhetorical function and cognitive effects of what Zheng calls “comparisons and analogies,” which I call microtextual-level blends in order to capture the conceptual basis, integration, and bidirectional reconceptualization of domains involved, instead of the (problematically colonizing) projection of inferences from one domain to another. What Chiang’s narratives demonstrate in addition to blends’ bidirectional reconceptualizing power are the concomitant defamiliarizing and familiarizing effects of these blends for different readerships.

14 Viktor Shklovsky’s concept of defamiliarization, which Boris Eichenbaum popularizes in “The Theory of the ‘Formal Method’” (1926), is defined as the process by which art makes a stone stony, for example, or, in other words, releases objects from the automatism of perception. Interestingly, Shklovsky connects the use of literary tropes—specifically the simile—with defamiliarization, claiming that the more remote the simile from the subject to which it is applied, the greater will be the sense of novelty that it produces. The crucial difference between Shklovsky’s parallel between defamiliarization and simile, on the one hand, and the functioning of defamiliarization and conceptual blending in the Silent Traveller narratives, on the other hand, is that, in the latter, the bidirectional influence of both domains figuring in the blend ensures defamiliarization for one readership and familiarization for the other.
apparent in blends across the microtextual-level spectrum, from the non-collaborative to the most collaborative and reflexive.

**Non-collaborative Blends**

Chiang’s non-collaborative blends entail the bidirectional reconceptualization of domains involved and demonstrate the simultaneous defamiliarizing and familiarizing potential of relational thinking relative to the narratives’ two readerships. These blends also stage someone altering his own conceptual structures through blending. Inviting the reader to perform imitative cognitive activity, these blends move her through a process of seeing similarities and differences between concepts. Chiang’s blend of English and Chinese food prohibitions captures the essential features of non-collaborative blending:

> It may be interesting to record that I was greatly shocked when, shortly after I arrived in England, I was offered rabbit to eat. I have never even heard that rabbits could be eaten. They were not plentiful in the part of China where I lived. We used to keep a number, of different colours, as pets, and I remember hearing that it was not easy to buy them. According to Chinese astrology, I myself was born in the year of the rabbit, in identity with the Chinese Zodiacal Cycle. This made me take a special

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15 I treat conceptual blending as a universal cognitive endowment, one that accommodates variations of time, place, and culture more in the conceptual domains used and the blends generated than in the cognitive operations involved. Craig Hamilton’s study of metaphors, analogy, and allegory in Christine de Pizan’s *City of Ladies* convincingly demonstrates that the basic kinds of cognitive mapping . . . hold across time and space, and across many different readers. De Pizan and her 15th century readers had the cognitive capacity for blending just as we have the same capacity today. The differences, if any, are historical. What targets are available for mappings when given the source materials provided by de Pizan may change with reference to history, but the mapping process itself is stable enough to get us to understand a text that is almost 600 years old. (19) The fundamental cognitive processes Chiang’s English and Chinese readers share and the differences in their associations with specific conceptual domains are what enable Chiang’s narratives to use blends to perform their cross-culturally familiarizing and defamiliarizing roles.
interest in rabbits when I was young, for I thought I must be in some way connected with them. How deeply habit and custom influence one’s outlook! It is no wonder British people are shocked to hear that Chinese in certain districts eat cats and dogs. (Yorkshire Dales 18)

In this passage, Chiang notices a similarity between two cultures’ food prohibitions. He familiarizes for his English readers the Chinese practice of eating cats and dogs, in certain districts, by seeing it in terms of the English practice of eating rabbits. He also familiarizes for Chinese readers the English practice of eating rabbit by seeing it in terms of the Chinese practice of eating cats and dogs. Meanwhile, both cultures find their own practices defamiliarized by the blend. The intended outcome of this simultaneously familiarizing and defamiliarizing blend is readers’ awareness of the contingency (rather than the essential rightness) of their cultural practices. Thus, in addition to assisting Chiang’s overarching project of interpreting English and Chinese cultures to each other, microtextual-level blends in these narratives achieve what art critic Herbert Read notes about Chiang in his Preface to Chiang’s Chinese Calligraphy (1938): “[h]e is one of those rare foreigners who help us to understand ourselves” (ix). If we add to this statement recognition that Chiang, because of his liminal insider-outsider status and the double ethnographic orientation of his blends, also helps the Chinese to understand themselves, we have a fairly comprehensive picture of the cultural work being undertaken in these narratives. Non-collaborative blends, such as the one involving English and Chinese food prohibitions, are central to this cultural work: the reader is invited to perform imitative cognitive activity in following Chiang’s blends, whether they are single-stage blends that depend on recognition of a point of similarity between two
inputs (as the food prohibition blend is) or are more complex, involving shifting phases of similarity-seeing and difference-seeing.

**Collaborative Blends**

Many of Chiang’s blends, however, invite collaborative instead of imitative cognitive activity. One of the ways in which a seemingly non-collaborative blend interpellates the reader into a role demanding collaborative cognitive activity is through leaving the final stage(s) of the blend for the reader to complete, as in the following blend in the *Lakeland* narrative. Chiang prefaces the blend with a remark about newspaper accounts of the Spanish Civil War, venting his exasperation that “human beings should prey upon each other like the beasts”: “I can understand that a lion will kill and eat rabbit or deer, but I cannot imagine a lion from Africa eating one from America, however hungry it might be!” (36). The shifting phases of similarity-seeing and difference-seeing through this blend are crucial to understanding the way it is able to engage the reader’s cognitive mobility, creating space for the reader to finish the blend. Chiang’s prefatory remark emphasizes the similarity between humans and beasts, similarity where, he implies, there should be difference: humans “prey upon each other like the beasts,” which makes humans undesirably beast-like. Then Chiang acknowledges differences within the domain “beast”: beasts are differentiated as predator (lion) and prey (rabbit or deer). Given that his final emphasis falls on the fact that within the beast sub-domain “lion,” lions do not prey upon each other, the reader is invited to activate the next phase of the blend by filling in the implied “human” domain as the other input in a blend involving a “beast” domain that has been reconceived as a “lion” domain. Whereas the reader began
by seeing undesirable similarity between humans and beasts, she now recognizes the 
unfortunate difference between humans and lions: while both “prey upon” living things, 
lions do not prey upon their own kind as humans do. Humans have become lamentably 
un-beast-like, and the initial suggestion that humans are inherently superior to beasts (and 
simply need to learn to act accordingly) is interrogated.16

In other words, through activating the final stage of this blend involving humans 
and lions, the reader recognizes an essential humanity, like an essential lion-ness, that 
should preclude intra-humanity warfare, just as essential lion-ness precludes intra-lion 
aggression. The blend encourages readers to move away from thinking of constructed 
human distinctions (like racial, cultural, or national identities) in terms of natural species 
distinctions, instead thinking of human unity in terms of the unity of a single species 
irrespective of variability in individual members’ locations (Africa or America). Thus, 
the blend encourages a conceptual shift from a reigning, perhaps unconscious conceptual 
blend to another one that is more salutary for cross-cultural interactions because it 
dispenses with problematic and hierarchical ideas like predator and prey, which might 
accompany conceptions of human distinctions (like racial, cultural, or national identities) 
in terms of species distinctions. Chiang’s blend is based on shifting from similarity-
seeing to difference-seeing and back to similarity-seeing, with the reader invited to 
perform the final stages of the blend. The final similarity-seeing stage at which the reader 
arrives is not the same as the first similarity-seeing stage: humans are like beasts, but in a 
more salutary sense of species harmony—and this similarity is welcomed as opposed to 

16 Note that this suggestion seems to be more the result of Chiang’s effort to expose his readers’ 
assumptions than to communicate his own beliefs, since he repeatedly insists on his affinity with Chinese 
philosophers’ understanding of “man [as] . . . but one of the million creatures sharing in some degree the 
mysteries of life and death”; at one point Chiang connects “the theory of Evolution” with “the belief in 
man’s superiority” (Oxford 31).
being treated as a threat to the initial assumption that humans are inherently superior to beasts.\footnote{Melba Cuddy-Keane theorizes a “trope of the twist” or a “turn & turn about” method in Virginia Woolf’s critical prose: the reader “undergoes repeated repositionings” among “viable ideological locations,” with “each new perspective expos[ing] an earlier one from a new angle” (\textit{Virginia Woolf, the Intellectual, and the Public Sphere} 137-38). I read this perspectival twisting as paradigmatic of inscriptions of relational thinking in modernist narratives’ various textual levels. I am therefore particularly interested in the way that the reader’s cognitive mobility, through phases of similarity-seeing and difference-seeing, can be invited in her interaction with microtextual-level blends—and how this cognitive mobility can lead to specifically cross-cultural repositionings.}

One of Chiang’s collaborative blends in the \textit{Yorkshire Dales} narrative is particularly explicit in its association of difference-seeing with notions of hierarchy and superiority, yet Chiang’s blends in fact require difference-seeing to facilitate his preferred mode of similarity-seeing. Because similarity is not identity, the very ability to see similarity—to see things relationally—depends on the presence of difference. In other words, although Chiang underscores the problems that arise in halting at the difference-seeing stage, his blends find ways to accommodate difference and, as is apparent in this \textit{Yorkshire Dales} blend, make this difference generative of similarity-seeing:

My thoughts drifted to the robin. I have found no record of robins in old Chinese books, but I feel sure that they would live happily in China if some of them were to be transported there to found a robin colony. Robins and roses will be found living healthily and happily wherever conditions are suitable for them. They do not mind whether they are in the garden of a humble cottage or a great mansion or palace, nor would they ever spend time wondering whether their fellow-beings of England were better than those of China or in any way a different race. It is only we human beings who have these terms of ‘race’ and ‘nation’. I think we run the risk of losing the sheer joy of living born within us by constant comparison of
ourselves with other creatures and constant endeavour to show that we are superior. (26-27)

While it is not staged, there must be an initial phase of similarity-seeing involving humans, roses, and robins, something that launches the blend in the first place. The difference-seeing phase, on the other hand, is quite pronounced: unlike humans, roses and robins do not differentiate themselves from other roses and robins in socioeconomic, racial, or geographic terms. The final sentence of the passage reminds us of the potentially deleterious consequences of the kind of “constant comparison” that leads solely to difference-seeing. The blend remains open, leaving the reader to perform the similarity-seeing stage, acknowledging the fundamental similarity shared by roses, robins, and humans, each group a unified species whose unity trumps socioeconomic, racial, or geographic distinctions. The blend models the use of difference-seeing to move towards similarity-seeing, underscoring the problems of stopping at the difference-seeing stage, even though this stage is essential to the blending process.

Chiang’s concern that his readers will be preoccupied with difference-seeing is apparent when he addresses his readers on the subject of his landscape sketches (approximately a dozen are included in each Silent Traveller narrative):

In this book I have painted from the surroundings in which I have lived these last few years, and I hope my readers will not be so biased as to say that they do not like the paintings because they are not ‘Chinese.’ And I also hope some of my readers are not biased in another way and will not say that they like this kind of painting because it has a Chinese flavour. I
should like them to criticise my work without preconceptions. (London xvii)

Chiang’s concern is that his English readers either will not find his paintings different (unusual and perhaps exotic) enough or that they will like the paintings only because they are different (unusual or exotic). In fact, Chiang’s landscape sketches and their captions complement the microtextual-level blends I have been examining: they invite collaborative blending and the concomitant phases of similarity-seeing and difference-seeing, using a combination of visual and linguistic tiggers.

As Herbert Read notes in his Preface to the Lakeland narrative, Chiang’s use of Chinese methods to paint the landscape of the English Lakes disrupts his English readers’ preconceived notions that Chinese artistic techniques require Chinese content and that English content requires English techniques:

[t]hose who are already familiar with his work have accepted it as the modern expression of a national tradition. That is to say, we have regarded it as specifically Chinese painting. . . . But we still thought of Chinese art as something with a Chinese content—Chinese mountains, Chinese lakes, Chinese trees. But now the artist comes forward as if to say: ‘My vision, my technique, in short, my art is not bound by geographical limits; it is universal, and can interpret your English landscape just as well as the Chinese landscape.’ (xxv)

Chiang’s art disrupts the complacency of English readers who feel that, on account of their nationality, English poets’ and painters’ access to the spirit of their landscape is “so intimate and true that there is nothing left to celebrate, no nuance of form or feeling that
has escaped their intuitive apprehension” (Read, Preface xxvi). By “enter[ing] [their] . . .
national shrine and . . . worship[ping] there in his own way” (Read, Preface xxvi), Chiang
blends his Chinese technique of landscape painting with an English scene,
reconceptualizing both domains in this blend. The captions beneath the sketches, which
indicate in a short phrase the scene represented (as in the Lakeland narrative’s “Morning
Mist on Wastwater,” “Going to church in the rain, Wasdale Head,” or “Horse in
Buttermere”), function as triggers of blends the reader is invited to launch between
English landscapes and Chinese painting techniques. These visual blends defamiliarize
the Lakes for English readers while familiarizing them for Chinese readers, and
familiarize Chinese painting techniques for English readers while defamiliarizing them
for Chinese readers. The gaps between English and Chinese landscapes and between
English and Chinese painting techniques are narrowed but not closed, and the reader
comes to see as similar two things she has perhaps only ever seen as different, moving
through the difference-seeing stage to the similarity-seeing stage. In this way, the
landscape sketches and their captions set up visual equivalents of the collaborative
microtextual-level blends I have already discussed, all of which encourage the reader’s
cognitive mobility.

Having taken his readers on a journey through Oxford in the last of these war-
time narratives, Chiang ends the narrative with another collaborative blend he subtly
triggers. He offers advice about mediating between rival Oxford and Cambridge men,
who champion their differences from and superiority over each other. This advice follows
Chiang’s comments about the similarity of “the four famous Oxford landmarks” with
Chinese places and things:
Magdalen Tower, which might be compared to one of the square forts along our Great Wall; the Camera, like a reversed Pa-tou (a Chinese peck measure made of bamboo) with a small knob in the centre; St. Mary’s Spire, like the top of a Tibetan Lama Pagoda with eight sides; and lastly, Tom Tower, a long tablet or monument on the back of a tortoise, but in round form. (Oxford 177-78)

The comparison of Oxford and China and the discussion of rival Oxford and Cambridge men in such close proximity in the narrative point us in the direction of a blend Chiang leaves us to launch: Oxford and Cambridge with China and England, respectively, as places that defend their uniqueness and idiosyncrasies, but, when seen as similar, become even more similar, through the generative aspect of similarity-seeing and the dependence of similarity on difference, beyond which a collaborative blend must move in order to be a productive model for global relations. Thus, when we hear Chiang say at the end of this narrative that he likes Oxford “[n]ot 'arf”18 (Oxford 183), we must engage the cognitive mobility we have gained in our experience with the collaborative blends he has triggered for us: to see Chiang as an East Ender. Here, we must push our conception of the East farther than the East End of London, as far as China, thereby enlarging our minds beyond the confines of our cultural self-positioning and learning to see as similar things that appear different.

18 “Not ’arf,” equivalent to “not half,” is a Cockney (working-class East London) idiom for “very much,” as in “I don’t half like Oxford” for “I like Oxford very much.”
Collaborative Narrative Agent-reflexive Blends

Collaborative narrative agent-reflexive blends require an even greater degree of cognitive mobility on the part of the reader and offer her a concomitantly enlarged understanding of the narrative agent’s way of thinking (conceptual content or mind style). In Chiang’s narratives, these blends often begin as non-collaborative blends, performed entirely by Chiang himself, as in this blend from the Oxford narrative, involving formerly Chinese types of flowers in an English family’s garden and adopted Chinese children in English homes:

Mr. and Mrs. Gibson greeted me at the door, while a bevy of charming young flower-faces peeped at me through the window as though expecting me. Like many other youngsters born overseas, they were eager to meet one who had really come from their forefathers’ birthplace. But they dared not anger their guardians, so they waited patiently, all cramped together, making a slight sound only when the gentle wind brushed by. Mr. Gibson introduced me.

The magnolia—a fair-sized tree—grew near the house, and with the soft green Hinksey Hills in the background made a most pleasing picture. When the glass doors were opened the charming young faces retreated hurriedly. Some were smiling broadly, some opened their tiny mouths as if about to speak, some were shy. They did not know what to ask first, so they stood there gazing at me and smiling. I too was speechless, lost in admiration of their dazzling beauty. (160-61)
Here Chiang’s explicit blend of flowers and young people’s faces becomes an input in a second blend that involves Chiang (or Chiang’s way of thinking) along with the already blended domain of flower-faces. This second blend, performed entirely by the reader, generates heightened understanding both of Chiang’s psychological state in a land that seems at times familiar and at times alien to his sensibilities, and of the way blending assists Chiang in navigating these alternating (and sometimes simultaneous) feelings of identity and alterity. The subtle trigger for the reader’s blend involving Chiang and the already blended flower-faces domain is the parallel speechlessness of the flower-faces and Chiang when confronted with each other. Having activated this blend through similarity-seeing, the reader acknowledges that in attributing to Chinese flowers in an English garden the eagerness of Chinese young people to meet someone born in their birthplace, Chiang projects himself into his own blend. He projects onto the flower-faces his own desire for the sense of belonging and identification that comes from the sight of something familiar, and perhaps a desire for complete acceptance from England’s human as well as its floral inhabitants. Yet in launching his blend, Chiang gains from the flower-faces in the blend some comfort, the need for which prompted the blend in the first place—his blend has enabled him to see something comfortably familiar—thereby underscoring the complexity of blending’s interrelated motivations and effects. Chiang’s attribution to the flower-faces of a fear of angering their guardians is suggestive of Chiang’s latent concerns about his precarious role in the country that is hosting him—suggestive of the very different psychic impulse that prompted this part of the blend.

Chiang’s subsequent observation about the aesthetic rightness of the magnolia (a flowering plant, not native to England, whose existence and use was first recorded in
China) in this English garden signals the thought-changing work his blend has achieved: he has moved from the sense of dislocation he projected onto the flower-faces to the sense of belonging that enables him to see the aesthetic rightness of the originally Chinese magnolia in its new surroundings. Thus, as part of the reader’s blend, Chiang’s observation about the magnolia suggests that Chiang (like the magnolia) has begun to achieve the kind of rootedness his observation implies, with its belief in the potential for humans in new places, like flowers in new places, to set down roots and, while retaining memories of their former homes, achieve a sense of belonging in a new environment. In seeing the similarity between Chiang and the magnolia, the reader has added a further stage to her blend, one that acknowledges difference between Chiang and the already blended flower-faces domain, but uses this difference to move forward to a final process of similarity-seeing: Chiang is similar to but also different from the flower-faces, and it is his difference from the flower-faces that makes him similar to the magnolia. The flower-faces seem to have been recently transplanted from their original home, whereas Chiang (like the magnolia) has already begun to set down roots in a new country. He has gained a new way of seeing and thinking about his surroundings and his own place in them, thereby enabling him to work towards a new mode of being in the world.

Collaborative narrative agent-reflexive blends are thus tools for psychological characterization: the reader gains understanding of the origins and effects of a narrative agent’s cognitive operations by making the output of these cognitive operations the input in a second, reader-performed blend. These blends depend on the separation of the narrating-I from the experiencing-I: in this case, the narrating-I is Chiang as the first-person narrator who launches the collaborative narrative agent-reflexive blend by
(wittingly or unwittingly) planting the triggers for the reader-performed component of the blend, whereas the experiencing-I is Chiang as the silent traveller who performed the initial blend and becomes the second input in a reader’s blend. The narrating-I is thus both similar to and different from the experiencing-I—separated in time and space but linked in biological identity\textsuperscript{19}—and by processing these interrelated similarities and differences the reader moves through a collaborative narrative agent-reflexive blend.

**Collaborative Reader-reflexive Blends**

Chiang’s narratives are peppered with references to the presence of various Chinese objects—including the magnolia and the other Chinese flowers in the English garden, a bronze bell from a Ch’ing dynasty Chinese temple in Gosforth Church in the Lake District, a Chinese garden at Ingleborough House in the Yorkshire Dales, a Pekingese dog in Oxford, and an originally Chinese beverage (tea) as an idiosyncratically English addiction. The presence of these objects in English settings invites a high level of cognitive mobility on the part of the reader because they invite her to consider her culturally entrenched assumptions in much the same way that the most complex kind of collaborative reader-reflexive blends do. These blends are connected with the narratives’ discourse of seeing, in which seeing functions in a variety of interrelated ways: seeing as one of the five senses; understanding; conceptual blending (or, to use Wittgenstein’s term, *seeing as*); and the ethnographic gaze. The use of the verb “to see” in the following passage from the *London* narrative captures seeing as a form of visual perception and a form of understanding, as sight and insight:

\textsuperscript{19} To put this another way, the traveling Chiang’s online perception is embedded in the writing Chiang’s offline perception.
Had I not been born in this age of progress and destruction, fighting side by side, I should probably not have been able to see through life to the very bottom of human nature and hold my faith in its essential goodness. I cannot think that hatred really exists in mankind, in spite of all the evidence which tries to pervert my way of thinking. Between individual and individual there is no such thing. Why should not all we human beings open our eyes wider and try to see the other side? (255-56, my emphasis)

This injunction to “open our eyes wider,” whether it denotes a physical enlargement of the perceptual field or a mind freed from prejudice, is a trigger for the most complex of the collaborative blends: the kind that brings the reader’s way of thinking to her conscious awareness.

This phrase is recognized as a blending trigger in light of the narratives’ discourse of seeing and Chiang’s fairly frequent allusions to his own Chinese eyes. In blending Chinese eyes and English eyes, and perception and understanding, we find that while we might describe Chiang’s eyes as narrow physically, they possess wide-ranging sight and insight. English tourists’ mode of seeing the Lake District contrasts greatly with Chiang’s preference for “observ[ing] the scenery closely” (*Lakeland* 5). English visitors, as we learn in the first *Silent Traveller* narrative, prefer coach tours of the area, aiming for quantity of coverage rather than quality; they buy postcards and photos of beauty spots, instead of stopping to “ling-leuh”20 them directly; they are always “hurrying, scurrying” around, even while on holiday (*Lakeland* 23, 55). “[H]ow deep,” Chiang wonders, is “their impression of Wordsworth” and his beloved Lake District (*Lakeland* 61)? Chiang, on the other hand, prefers to view the same mountain or lake from all sides and from

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20 A Chinese phrase, Chiang tells us, meaning “accept into the understanding” (*Lakeland* 23).
locations near and far away, at higher and lower elevations, at various times of day and under various weather conditions. English tourists’ and Chiang’s different modes of visual perception also have different consequences for seeing as a form of understanding: “the English mind,” Chiang tells us in his London narrative, “was not always broad enough” (135). In other words, the injunction to “open our eyes wider,” triggers a blend involving the Chinese eye and the English eye and two modes of seeing (both perception and understanding), generating the English reader’s self-reflexivity about the physically wide but perceptually self-limiting and conceptually narrow English eye: the English eye needs to be opened wider, to facilitate more comprehensive sight of landscapes before it along with cross-cultural insight. Da Zheng records the contents of a contemporary review, which credits the Lakeland narrative with repositioning the reader in precisely this way:

[a] review entitled ‘A Chinaman in the Lake District’ published in New English Weekly marvels at Chiang’s talent in poetry, painting, and, above all, keen observation. It claims that Chiang, with the medium of ‘the Chinese brush-language,’ enabled Westerners, whose eyes are ‘extraordinarily narrow and conservative,’ to get ‘an entirely new angle on the Lake scenery’ through his work characterized by ‘novel strangeness.’ (“Double Perspective” 161)

Seeing their customs, landscapes, and architecture through the eyes and mind of Chiang, seeing them as he sees them (sometimes as strange and exotic, but often in terms of Chinese customs, landscapes, and architecture), English readers are encouraged to detach themselves from unexamined, self-limiting perceptual and cultural complacency. In
blending the English eye and the Chinese eye, and perceptual and conceptual vision, the English reader is taking up a blend triggered in the text and reflecting it back on herself, illuminating her own ways of seeing and thinking in the process.

Although Chiang clearly anticipated a Chinese readership in addition to his English readership, as I have already discussed, the chief readership for these narratives was undoubtedly English. Consequently, Chiang’s collaborative reader-reflexive blends are predominantly geared towards English readers. The blend involving the Chinese eye and the English eye clearly prompts self-reflexive modes of seeing and thinking for the English reader, and seems implicitly to valorize Chinese ways of seeing as more comprehensive perceptually and more open conceptually. Yet Chiang is intent throughout his narratives on comparing English and Chinese customs, landscapes, and architecture without advocating or privileging either side in these comparisons. In contrasting English and Chinese styles of rowing a boat, for example, Chiang describes the English manner of rowing backwards as “speedier and more scientific,” while the Chinese manner of rowing forwards is “poetic and appreciative” (*Lakeland* 43). Both styles have their advantages and disadvantages, depending on the purpose of the journey. In fact, while Chiang sometimes explicitly gears his cross-cultural comparisons towards encouraging English readers to be more open-eyed and open-minded, these comparisons always have a message for Chinese readers, even if it is not delivered explicitly. In the *London* narrative, Chiang makes it clear that he is not trying to convince the English to consider ageing a positive experience, as the Chinese do, but asks that they try to understand another perspective on ageing instead of taking offense when Chinese people compliment them on their age (240). There is a message here for Chinese readers too, although it is
not directly stated: to understand that English people are sensitive about ageing and to appreciate this sensitivity when offering compliments pertaining to age. Thus, even though Chiang’s collaborative reader-reflexive blends are predominantly geared towards his chief readership—English readers—the Silent Traveller narratives enable Chinese readers to see English customs, landscapes, and architecture through the eyes and mind of Chiang, who, as a liminal figure between Chinese and English cultures, offers perspectives that are new to Chinese readers; these readers are invited, just as English readers are, to detach themselves from unexamined assumptions about other people and places.

Collaboration in the Silent Traveller Narratives

Chiang’s narratives continually emphasize the importance of collaborative work in the broader project of cross-cultural interpretation and understanding. It is fitting, therefore, that collaboration should both be championed in the text and inscribed in it in the form of a spectrum of microtextual-level blends that invite varying degrees of collaboration between Chiang and the reader. When Chiang writes about the collaborative effort involved in rowing, a blend of rowing with reading or rowing with cross-cultural encounters highlights the collaborative work involved in all of these activities:

Some one has written about the general effect on the undergraduates of rowing in the Torpids or Eights:

. . . A means of social intercourse which often enables men of different taste to see and rub against each other, and also tends to make the
college as a whole identify itself with its rowing representatives. . . .

Snobbishness cannot live under such conditions; jealousy can have no place in the presence of rivalry; and egotism, whether intellectual, moral, or social, must gradually give way before the genial warmth and physical energy of training. Thus men who row together come to be tolerant. They come to realize that there are other types, other aspirations, and other modes of thought than their own, and so they learn the great lesson which life at Oxford teaches, for the most part unconsciously, but none the less most thoroughly, to tolerate others and take them as you find them.

(Oxford 135)

Throughout the Silent Traveller narratives, collaborative activity involves both the recognition of difference as valuable and the subordination of difference to the unifying purpose at hand, whether it be rowing, reading, or cross-cultural encounters. All of these activities demand both the suspension of judgment and the enjoyment of a mutually satisfying effort, as in Chiang and Professor Wheatley’s “joint painting of bamboos” (Yorkshire Dales 80). Here, in playing an “ink-game” “with a fellow-artist of another country,” Chiang practices the philosophy (explicitly championed and formally inscribed in his narratives) he preaches about abandoning the mode of comparative thinking that leads exclusively to difference-seeing and judgments of superiority: “the sense of superiority is a stumbling block in the way of the promotion of cultural relations between nations and of world civilization. So I admired Professor Wheatley’s efforts to use our brush and ink and to paint in our way on our paper” (Yorkshire Dales 80, 81). Just as Chiang declares that “art knows no narrow national or racial boundaries,” so he credits
gardening with the same benefits: “[t]his passion is no respecter of persons or creeds. Like death, it is a leveller. It abolishes the boundaries of nations; it ignores the rigid dogmas that divide men; and it may well help to promote understanding in fields far outside the walls of gardens” (London 158; Oxford 148). Common interests and collaborative activity create a base level of similarity that leads to the identification of further similarities, without erasing the importance of difference, in precisely the same way that the generative aspect of similarity-seeing in the narratives’ conceptual blends does.

Mrs. Wheatley’s collaboration with Chiang is not confined to brush-and-ink painting. She, too, is sufficiently open-eyed and open-minded that she both repeats and inverts Chiang’s tendency to see English things in terms of Chinese things: repeats because she performs the same relational thinking with the same domains, but inverts because the effect for her defamiliarizes the known English scene and familiarizes the unknown Chinese painting technique. In remarking that “at whatever season she visited the spot [a Yorkshire Dales location] it presented to her eyes a very old and good Chinese landscape painting” (Yorkshire Dales 83), Mrs. Wheatley joins Chiang in modelling the kind of seeing that the text invites us to engage in through its spectrum of microtextual-level blends: seeing as vision and seeing as understanding; seeing as a multidirectional ethnographic gaze; seeing through individual, English, Chinese, and human eyes; seeing with self-reflexivity about when, where, why, and how we blend (or, to use Wittgenstein’s term for relational seeing, see as).
New Modes of Being in the World and New Modes of World-Making

What microtextual-level blends in Chiang’s narratives show us is that blends are creative: they do not, in and of themselves, change the world, but they create new conceptual structures that can lead to real-world transformative action, which Chiang eagerly anticipates. Yet the tense international climate from which Chiang hopes to liberate his readers with his thought-changing narratives is as much a product of human ways of thinking as Chiang’s imagined new world would be. In other words, blending has the potential to lead us into ways of framing cross-cultural experience that can be, at one extreme, highly productive, and at another, very damaging, and the real-world actions prompted by these conceptual blends can be correspondingly productive or destructive. While Fauconnier and Turner generally valorize conceptual blending for its cognitive power, calling it the defining trait of the “cognitively modern human being,” one of their examples of blending admits the disastrous real-world consequences of the new frames or networks blending can produce: the “blended concept of genocide as a bureaucratic operation” (27). In this case, mass killing of certain groups of people can be blended with ordinary bureaucratic frames to produce a blended concept of genocide as a bureaucratic operation. Because the projection to the blend is only partial, people who could not bring themselves to operate in the frame of genocide may find themselves operating comfortably in the blend. Documentaries such as Claude Lanzmann’s Shoah reveal in great detail how bureaucrats in Nazi Germany could talk and think about the enormous killing machine
they served as an ordinary transfer of goods and merchandise. (Fauconnier and Turner 27-28)

What Fauconnier and Turner underscore here is the fact that blending is a double-edged sword: the genocide-as-bureaucratic-operation blend is rooted in the same kind of cognitive operation that has enabled some of humanity’s greatest achievements, including language, art forms, representation systems, technologies, and games (389).

This chapter’s model for theorizing how readers engage with microtextual-level blends (in the thought processes, narration, or dialogue of characters and narrators) has significant explanatory power when it comes to differentiating our responses to salutary and deleterious forms of reading in the blend. It demonstrates that there is a great difference—cognitively and in terms of subsequent real-world actions—between the two ends of the collaborative blending spectrum: between thinking along with a narrative agent by processing his or her non-collaborative blend or completing a collaborative blend he or she has triggered, on one end, and, on the other end, using his or her blend as an input in one’s own textually triggered blend that builds on or undermines the narrative-agent blend—and perhaps illuminates the narrative agent’s or one’s own way of thinking at the same time. Rhetorical reading, total engagement with the “words, techniques, structures, forms, and dialogic relations” (Phelan, “Rhetorical Literary Ethics” 631) of a text, enables us to identify triggers for more reflexive blends that may reinforce (in the case of Chiang Yee) or undermine (in the case of characters or narrators whose agendas or ideologies may be as nefarious as Chiang’s are salutary) the thought-

21 Here I use the terms “agenda” and “ideology” to reflect the way that microtextual-level blends in Chiang’s narratives do political work through the degrees of collaboration and reflexivity they invite. Chiang’s tendency to invite collaborative and reflexive blending is a characteristic of his mind style (“the particular conceptual structures and cognitive habits that characterise [his] . . . world view” [Semino,
changing potential of non-collaborative and non-reflexive collaborative blends. This chapter’s blend spectrum for understanding readers’ responses to microtextual-level blends thus becomes a tool for explaining one of the mechanisms underlying our conscious or unconscious identification or non-identification with particular narrative agents. Even if non-collaborative or non-reflexive collaborative blends draw us in, reflexive collaborative blends constitute a verification mechanism through which we can assess the narrative agent’s and our own ways of thinking.²²

There is something quintessentially modernist not just about the fact that Chiang uses his narratives’ formal structures to do political work but also about how he uses these structures and about the kind of political work he is doing with them. Paul Armstrong connects modernism to anxiety about nineteenth-century British liberalism’s notion that “conflicting assumptions, conventions, and models of society will ultimately harmonize”; modernist narratives instead suggested “a different model of community, not aiming for consensus or agreement, but based on reciprocity and the exchange of differences” (Play and the Politics of Reading xii). Microtextual-level blends constitute a formal inscription in Chiang’s narratives of what Armstrong calls “nonconsensual reciprocity.” These blends celebrate difference both in itself and as a pre-requisite for the identification of similarity. Even the most collaborative blends in the spectrum I have theorized prioritize reflexivity, which can be as much a mechanism of the reader’s non-consent with the narrative agent’s way of thinking (as well as with the reader’s own perhaps previously unexamined ways of thinking) as it can be a source of consent. In the

“Cognitive Stylistic Approach” 95]), so this chapter links mind style and ideological point of view in the same way that Semino does: they are complementary but not synonymous.
²² In his related work on trauma and identity, Sean McAlister uses blending theory to theorize the means by which a reader comes to recognize a narrator’s unreliability, based on his or her inability to reconcile self and subject, the two facets of identity.
Silent Traveller narratives, Chiang uses microtextual-level blends to capitalize on the rhetorical and sociopolitical potential of modernist narrative form: he offers us a mental gymnasium in which, through reading, we can exercise new modes of thinking about the world, new modes of being in the world, and perhaps even new modes of world-making. Narratives such as Chiang’s—narratives that invite us to read in the blend and allow us from time to time to glimpse ourselves doing so—may assist us in finding new ways of living in the blend too.
CHAPTER TWO: MACROTEXTUAL-LEVEL BLENDS IN THE WAVES, A NARRATIVE WITH A MIND OF ITS OWN

“A mind thinking”

Like Chiang Yee’s Silent Traveller narratives, Virginia Woolf’s The Waves (1931) abounds in microtextual-level blends. We need look no further than the first page of the text for evidence of blending’s abundance in Woolf’s prose: “like” and “as if,” explicit triggers for microtextual-level blends, pepper the page. Several Woolf critics have analyzed the prevalence of figures like metaphor, metonymy, and simile in The Waves.¹ Notably, Miriam Wallace moves beyond these microtextual-level blends to work with metonymy and metaphor as discursive modes for constructing intersubjectivity and individual identity, respectively: Wallace argues that The Waves represents intersubjectivity—relational and permeable subjectivity—as a metonymic slippage between merged states, alternating with metaphoric moments that assert individual identity: the former associated with the unconscious, the feminine, and the horizontal, and the latter with the conscious, the masculine, and the vertical (along with patriarchy, imperialism, domination, and repression).²

This chapter moves beyond microtextual-level blends to connect macrotextual-level blending in The Waves with models of subjectivity and intersubjectivity, focusing specifically on ongoing debates about whether the narrative’s six “voices” represent six

¹ See, for example, Paul Arakelian, Allison Hild, Bonnie Kime Scott, and Anne-Marie Smith-DiBiasio.
² For a study that, in contrast to Wallace’s, links metaphor to an écriture féminine, which subverts the boundaries between poetry and theory, see Defromont, who focuses on A Room of One’s Own (1929).
minds or six parts of a single mind. Susan Dick succinctly articulates the six-mind view: the narrative offers “a rich and complex dramatization of the evolution of the consciousnesses of six speakers. Susan, Jinny, and Rhoda, Louis, Neville and Bernard become individuals before our eyes as they grow self-aware and self-declaring. Each develops an identity, or self, as he or she responds to the external world” (“I Remembered, I Forgotten” 38). Dick admits that while the six “voices” “are not conventional characters,” they should not be read as “caricatures of personality traits,” as many critics who read The Waves as a representation or model of a single mind have done (“Literary Realism” 66, 67). Ralph Freedman, on the other hand, argues that the narrative “portrays these six figures not as a social group but as a single organism—one symbol of a common humanity” (252). Parts of his reading straddle one-mind and six-mind interpretations, with the six figures described both as “a single organism” and as characters whose thoughts pool together at various points in the narrative:

[t]he subtlest type of communication occurs when the characters’ memories and thoughts are ‘pooled’ in one consciousness on the occasion of a specific event which they share, such as Percival’s death. . . . Another way of pooling the figures is that of the summary, such as Bernard’s, which acts as a moment in which the six figures are unified in a mind. (Freedman 255)

Harvena Richter’s reading is less ambiguous, identifying personification as Woolf’s central technique for representing “the conscious and unconscious selves and drives within the human personality”; Richter suggests that the various combinations of the
“voices” in the narrative represent “the numberless possibilities of interchange and fusion within the personality” (121).³

The possibility that *The Waves* could be Woolf’s foray into modelling a single mind is suggested in a diary entry in which she describes the novel as “A mind thinking,” and also implied in her comment after reading a review of the novel in *The Times*: “Odd, that they . . . should praise my characters when I meant to have none” (*A Writer’s Diary*, 28 May 1929, 5 October 1931). This foray into modelling a single mind may have been heralded by her comment in “Poetry, Fiction and the Future” (1927) that the “psychological novelist has been too prone to limit psychology to the psychology of personal intercourse”—that the novel of the future “will give not only or mainly people’s relations to each other and their activities together, as the novel has hitherto done, but it will give the relation of the mind to general ideas and its soliloquy in solitude” (435). Her success in reaching this goal is celebrated in her diary entry on 16 November 1931, after she had finished *The Waves*: “I think I am about to embody at last the exact shapes my brain holds” (*A Writer’s Diary*).

Certainly, given the support for one-mind readings provided by Woolf’s comments on the novel, it is surprising that the burden of proof in *Waves* scholarship continues to rest with the one-mind reading, to the extent that the six-mind reading is often assumed by default and discussions of the narrative proceed as if “Bernard,” “Louis,” “Neville,” “Susan,” “Jinny,” and “Rhoda” refer self-evidently to separate characters. Perhaps the one-mind reading’s failure to attract a more extensive critical

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³ J. W. Graham’s seminal reading of palimpsestic traces of the narrator’s point of view Woolf originally used for the novel also gestures towards a one-mind reading: the “omniscient [narrating] consciousness . . . recounts to itself, without comment, the consciousnesses of six speakers, each of whom is talking (or thinking) to himself about his own experience” (206). “At the psychological level, the speakers are incarnations of various aspects of the individual soul of the narrating Consciousness” (Graham 206).
following is a consequence of significant terminological problems. Taken together, readings we might label “one-mind readings” (like Richter’s, Graham’s, and Shoukri’s) focus more on personality, character, temperament, and identity than they do on the mind, often mentioning the mind in passing without discussing mental functions or processes. The mind’s parts are variously termed “sensibilities,” “aspects,” “drives,” “selves,” and “strands,” and the mind’s processes or operations remain woefully under-theorized. My contention in this chapter is that reading the “voices” as six parts of the narrative’s mind—with the aid of an appropriately cognitivist terminology—generates fresh insights for cognitive narratology, specifically for our understanding of what it might mean for a narrative to have a mind of its own, a thinking mind, and for our cognitive interactions with that mind through reading. This chapter has four specific aims: 1) to highlight the central aspects of Woolf’s model of the mind that must be accounted for in a cognitivist terminology for a genuinely mind-centred reading of the narrative; 2) to suggest a terminology, derived from conceptual blending theory; 3) to use that terminology to answer the questions, “If this narrative has or is a mind of its own, by what cognitive processes does it operate? In other words, how does the narrative think?”

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4 Doris Enright-Clark Shoukri’s promising one-mind reading, for example, could be enriched with a more detailed theorization of the mind’s processes:

There is a dreamlike quality to the characters of The Waves, despite the singleness of each one’s vision, as though moods or modes of thought have through them been given plastic form. It is as though Virginia Woolf sought in the multiplicity of her own mind to unravel the several strands and present each, discrete, unbraided, and ungnarled, attached only at the end by a common tie, and whole and unified as persons are meant to be. (328)

W. J. Harvey’s mimetic theory-based reading of Charles Dickens’s Great Expectations (1860-61) resonates with Shoukri’s one-mind reading: in Dickens’s novel, Harvey argues, “the relative solidity of individual characterization does not quite conceal the fluidity of the original vision, so that characters exist not merely in the context of normal human relationships but also unite in their common reference back to the single imaginative vision from which they emerged and which, so to speak, still envelops and overflows their individual outlines” (124).

5 My reading of The Waves as a narrative with a mind of its own departs from Bruce Kawin’s concept of “the mind of the novel” because I focus more on this mind’s cognitive processes, whereas Kawin conceives of “the mind of the novel” as an “artificial system” that is “not conscious but gives consciousness a
and 4) to demonstrate that our cognitive interactions with a narrative that has a mind of its own constitute another higher-level form of reading in the blend—and enrich our understanding of inscriptions of relational thinking on modernist narratives’ macrotextual (structural) level.

Criteria for a Cognitivist Terminology

If *The Waves* is a narrative with a mind of its own, its parts personified as self-conscious “voices” and its processes represented by the ways in which these parts combine with each other and verbalize their interactions, we can identify the following central aspects of Woolf’s model of the mind that must be accounted for in a cognitivist terminology. First, whatever the parts of the mind are, they are not completely separable and are likely networked together in some way: while each of the “voices” personifying these parts is associated with particular images and phrases, some images and phrases also bleed among the different “voices.”

Second, the parts of the mind are both similar to and different from each other with these similarities and differences more or less pronounced at different times: the “voices” experience varying degrees of identification and alterity in relation to one another. Third, the mind’s operations involve activating these parts sometimes in quick succession and sometimes more slowly: the narrative playground” through its reflexivity and “self-declaration” (5, 6, 228). Kawin’s reading of William Faulkner’s *As I Lay Dying* (1930), however, resonates particularly powerfully with one-mind readings of *The Waves*. Faulkner’s novel, Kawin argues, “represents a simultaneous self—that it has not fifteen narrators but one larger, transcribing or fantasizing ‘I,’ who is named in the title and is the mind of the text” (258).

* For example, the image of the waves recurs not only in the interludes but also throughout the narrative: in Bernard’s description of “the murmur of the waves in the air”; Rhoda’s account of “rock[ing] the brown basin from side to side so that [her] . . . ships may ride the waves”; Jinny’s description of her “blood” as “brisk waves,” “bright red, whipped up, slopping against [her] . . . ribs”; Louis’s recollection of “the sullen thud of the waves; and the chained beast stamp[ing] on the beach”; and Neville’s construal of the crowds in London as a “huge uproar” “like a surge of a sea” (12, 13, 35, 46, 56, 57).
features both episodes in which the alternations among the “voices” are frequent, each
“voice” given only a short passage of verbalized thought, and episodes in which
alternations among the “voices” are less frequent, each “voice” given longer passages.
And fourth, the mind’s operations involve actions that bring these parts together but also
separate them: at times the “voices” are represented as being in the same place all
together or in pairs or groups, and at times they are represented as being in different
places. Among the questions we must ask ourselves when seeking a cognitivist
terminology for mind modelling in this narrative are: why there are so many
microtextual-level blends in the verbalized thoughts of the mind’s self-reflexive,
personified parts? What must Woolf’s idea of the mind be if she chooses to deploy an
elaborate conceptual blend (personification) to represent its parts, which are themselves
represented as thinking relationally?

Our terminology, then, needs to account for the central facets of Woolf’s model of
the mind’s parts and processes, as well as for the abundance of blends on the narrative’s
microtextual level (in the way the parts of the mind think and in the interludes\(^7\)). It also
needs to account for whatever Percival represents and for the deaths of Percival and
Rhoda. Finally, it needs to account for the instability of the reader’s position, sometimes
overhearing the verbalized thoughts of these “voices,” sometimes feeling such strong
identification with them as to inhabit their subject positions, and sometimes seeming to
be addressed by them. Gilles Fauconnier and Mark Turner’s conceptual blending theory
offers us a terminology that fulfils these criteria—that accounts for the parts of the
narrative’s mind as “conceptual domains” and the cognitive activity involving these parts

\(^7\) A detailed analysis of the interludes is beyond the scope of this chapter, but I read the interludes as a
parallel and complementary text that uses descriptions of a natural setting to represent the basic features of
the narrative mind’s fundamental cognitive operations: combination and separation.
as “conceptual blending.” Blending theory offers us a way of conceptualizing and discussing the cognitive processes Woolf models in a narrative that has a mind of its own, when extant one-mind readings of The Waves label the parts of the mind (usually with considerable slippage between the mind and personality, character, temperament, or identity) but ignore the processes in which they participate, the cognitive purposes for which these processes are carried out, and the cognitive output of these processes.

**Terminology from Conceptual Blending Theory**

Before exploring some of the profound complexities that The Waves can contribute to cognitive narratology—particularly through its inscription of blending on the macrotextual level (the whole narrative as a mind that blends)—this chapter will use the terminology provided by blending theory to elucidate specific facets of Woolf’s model of the mind. Fauconnier and Turner define conceptual domains or mental spaces as small conceptual packets constructed as we think and talk, for purposes of local understanding and action. . . . They contain elements and are typically structured by frames. They are interconnected, and can be modified as thought and discourse unfold. . . . In the neural interpretation of these cognitive processes, mental spaces are sets of activated neuronal assemblies, and the lines between elements correspond to coactivation-bindings of a certain kind. (40)
A basic mental space, used in Fauconnier and Turner’s example of a riddle involving a Buddhist Monk who meets himself at the same time of day on two separate journeys (up and down a mountain), is that of “ascent.” This mental space is connected to long-term schematic knowledge called ‘frames,’ such as the frame of walking along a path, and to long-term specific knowledge, such as a memory of the time you climbed Mount Rainier in 2001. The mental space that includes you, Mount Rainier, the year 2001, and your climbing the mountain can be activated in many different ways and for many different purposes. (Fauconnier and Turner 40)

Reading the six “voices” of Woolf’s narrative as conceptual domains or mental spaces that have been personified as self-reflexive entities and given names or labels (“Susan,” “Jinny,” “Rhoda,” “Bernard,” “Louis,” and “Neville,” instead of “ascent” or “descent”) accounts for: 1) their unusual present-tense reports, which can be read as online (real-time) verbalizations of self-conscious conceptual domains’ anthropomorphized experiences; 2) their feelings of separation and unity, or alterity and identification, which reflect their status as mental spaces that are already networked in the mind but periodically integrated with each other in various combinations by means of conceptual blending; 3) their shared images and motifs, which represent the neural networks that exist among conceptual domains; 4) episodes in which they are brought together in pairs or groups, which represent the creation and running of conceptual blends; and 5) the preponderance of microtextual-level blends in their verbalized thoughts. If the “voices” are personifications of self-conscious conceptual domains, it

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8 This riddle, solved simply by a blend of the ascent and the descent with the emergent structure of an encounter, was formulated by Arthur Koestler in *The Act of Creation* (1964).
seems logical that their anthropomorphized thoughts would be highly relational, blending concepts together and exploring them in relation to each other. After all, the six conceptual domains personified in the narrative are themselves blended together in various pairs or groups by the narrative’s mind, which thinks—as Fauconnier and Turner argue we all do—in an inherently blend-based way.⁹

The opening garden scene is the narrative’s episode with the most frequent shifts from one “voice” to another, suggesting a mind engaged in a highly complex and rapid cognitive activity. As each “voice” is introduced, a new mental space is activated by the narrative’s mind, possibly for the first time. Given the personification of these conceptual domains as the “voices” of children coming into consciousness, we can conceptualize this scene, in Fauconnier and Turner’s terms, as the narrative mind’s early-stage acquisition of conceptual domains. As Fauconnier and Turner note, “we do not learn the domains of human life separately. We do not learn meaning, language, and reasoning separately. The child picks them up and puts them together all at once” (394). If The Waves models cognitive activities in the life of a mind, it is fitting that our introduction to the narrative and thus to the narrative’s mind coincides with the narrative mind’s introduction to itself in a period of rapid cognitive expansion.

After the introductory garden scene, the episode in the narrative with the most rapid shifts among the “voices” is Percival’s farewell dinner, and the third scene of notable narrative and cognitive speed is the Hampton Court reunion. These two dinner

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⁹ Michael Kearns’s question about why we are unable to talk about the mind without deploying metaphors is answered by both cognitive science and The Waves: the mind, from which all our ideas of the mind necessarily come, thinks relationally, in terms of conceptual blends. Hence, too, the basis of my assumption that the narrative’s mind thinks like a human mind and can thus be understood via conceptual blending theory: the narrative is itself the product of a human mind and while blending is not the only cognitive operation the mind carries out, it is the one most closely tied to creativity and imagination.
episodes model the narrative’s mind engaged in highly complex cognitive activities, activating its parts in quick succession while also integrating them, in contrast with scenes in which alternations among different “voices” are less frequent and the “voices” are not portrayed as being in the same location. These dinner scenes enact the most complex form of conceptual blending: multi-input megablending. Fauconnier and Turner describe the stages of conceptual blending as follows: “[b]uilding an integration network involves setting up mental spaces, matching across spaces, projecting selectively to a blend, locating shared structures, projecting backward to the inputs, recruiting new structure to the inputs or the blend, and running various operations in the blend itself” (44). These stages in the highly complex farewell dinner and Hampton Court blends are narrated online (in real-time) by the conceptual domains involved.

**Staging a Single-Scope Blend: Bernard and Neville on the Riverbank**

The farewell dinner and Hampton Court scenes require detailed analysis, but earlier scenes in the narrative, featuring fewer conceptual domains, serve as more straightforward introductions to the central features of Woolf’s model of the mind. One of these earlier scenes is Bernard and Neville’s encounter on the riverbank during their university years. Neville’s comment as Bernard approaches reinforces a reading of this scene as a blend involving two conceptual domains. It is, Neville thinks, “painful to be recalled, to be mitigated, to have one’s self adulterated, mixed up, become part of another,” becoming “not [him]self but Neville mixed with somebody” (Woolf, *The Waves* 67).
Conceptual domains, the Bernard-Neville blend shows us, are multi-faceted and are created, maintained, and identified relationally, through the interaction of their similarities and differences during blending. As a conceptual domain, Bernard is “not one and simple, but complex and many,” wondering, in the anthropomorphic terms of the narrative’s mind-modelling exercise, “which of these people am I?” (61, 65). Neville, too, observes, “I do not know myself sometimes, or how to measure and name and count out the grains that make me what I am” (67). As the narrative’s mind brings these conceptual domains together for the blend, the tension between them, constituted by their differences, is captured in Bernard’s comment that he feels Neville’s “disapproval,” his “force” (67).

Bernard and Neville, narrating online the blend that brings them together, both feel the blend is at times in jeopardy. Bernard feels he has lost his connection with Neville when Neville slides his hand along his knee and twitches, and Neville feels Bernard has dropped their connection by “making phrases about Byron” and gesticulating with his cloak and cane (68, 69, 71). The chief reason for the blend’s precariousness is the conceptual clash between the domains involved; this clash prompts us to read the blend as a single-scope network, which Fauconnier and Turner identify as a blend consisting of

two input spaces with different organizing frames, one of which is projected to organize the blend. Its [the single-scope blend’s] defining property is that the organizing frame of the blend is an extension of the organizing frame of one of the inputs but not the other. . . . The frame that is exploited in the blend for purposes of understanding is the frame of one
input . . . , and the point of the blend is to cast light on the other input.

(126-28)

The blend itself, represented in the narrative as the connection achieved through the transfer of Neville’s poem, ultimately reconceptualizes Bernard’s self-knowledge more than it reconceptualizes Neville’s. Immediately post blend, Bernard reports:

All the mists curl off the roof of my being. . . . Like a long wave, like a roll of heavy waters, he [Neville] went over me, his devastating presence—dragging me open, laying bare the pebbles on the shore of my soul. It was humiliating; I was turned to small stones. All semblances were rolled up. ‘You are not Byron; you are your self.’ To be contracted by another person into a single being—how strange. (Woolf, The Waves 71-72)

The fact that Bernard attains greater self-knowledge suggests that, in this single-scope blend, Bernard is the focus input, subjected to the organizing frame of Neville, the framing input.

The narrative’s mind at first seems to attempt the blend the other way round, as Bernard tries to “create” Neville—to impose his organizing frame on Neville—revealing, in the anthropomorphic terms used in this model, that Neville has a “splendid clarity of . . . intelligence” and a “remorseless honesty of . . . intellect,” but does not “indulge in mystifications” (68, 69). But this blend arrangement does not succeed. Neville’s desire to exchange the poem constitutes the blend’s cognitive purpose in the model’s anthropomorphic terms. In the initial blend arrangement, Neville does not hand over his poem and seems to possess this self-understanding (which should be a product of the
blend’s ability to connect and differentiate concepts) already, knowing that he has “some fatal hesitancy” and that he “cannot go on for ever cutting these ancient inscriptions clearer with a knife” (67, 70). The reason the initial blend arrangement does not succeed is, perhaps, the fact that a conceptual domain that contains such “disparate” elements (Bernard) is unable to organize a conceptual domain that has more inherent “clarity” (Neville) (62, 67). In the Bernard-Neville blend that succeeds, the conceptual domain Neville (with its “power of fixing remorselessly upon a single object”) organizes (“fix[es]”) the conceptual domain Bernard (which tends to go “buzzing like a swarm of bees, endlessly vagrant”) (69). In Fauconnier and Turner’s terms, blends activate only some elements and frames in a conceptual domain, the ones relevant to the purpose for which the blend is constructed: in this case these are the elements of the domain Bernard that do not clash with the organizing frame provided by the domain Neville. But in this single-scope blend, which features a “highly visible type of conceptual clash” (Fauconnier and Turner 129), the facets of the focus input not aligning with the organizing frame of the framing input create instability in the blend.

The cognitive mobility that, as we will see, is evident in the narrative mind’s ability to carry out six-domain megablends is also apparent here: this relatively straightforward blend highlights the narrative mind’s self-reflexivity about the immense creative potential of blending’s connections and the cognitive effort sometimes required to make these connections in the face of conceptual differences. By reading Bernard and Neville as personified conceptual domains involved in a blend, we gain insight into aspects of conceptual blending theory that are not often discussed: blends that nearly fail because of the conceptual violence done to one or both domains through blending’s
similarity-seeing impulse. The cognitive output of the Bernard-Neville blend is “friendship” but it is achieved through “darts—there, there, again there” and the violence of the framing domain’s “devastating presence” that “contract[s]” the focus domain into a specific set of conceptual associations relevant to the blend’s cognitive purpose (Woolf, The Waves 71, 72). Bernard’s achievement of enlarged self-understanding through the blend reveals that there are aspects of his identity (or facets of Bernard as a conceptual domain) that Neville “ignores” because Bernard’s “scope embraces what Neville never reaches” (72). Bernard observes that “[w]e are not as simple as our friends would have us to meet their needs” (72). Here we have a self-conscious conceptual domain reflecting on the fact that blending enables great leaps of connection, creativity, and imagination, but through selective projection to the blend, projection of similarities that can occlude important differences: conceptual domains are not as simple as we would have them to meet our cognitive needs. What is important here is not so much ascertaining what specific conceptual domains might be represented by Bernard and Neville, or even what cognitive purpose is served by this blend, but understanding how Woolf uses a blend that nearly fails to reveal the complex negotiation of similarities and differences that occurs when the mind thinks relationally. What remains between Bernard and Neville at the end of this episode is a “line . . . lengthening its fine filament across the misty spaces of the intervening world” (72): both the lines of Neville’s poem and a fragile conceptual binding (neural network) generated by the single-scope integration the narrative’s mind has launched.
Staging a Megablend: Percival’s Farewell Dinner

Percival’s farewell dinner stages a significantly more complex mental operation requiring even greater cognitive effort: a megablend involving all six “voices.” Percival’s departure for India is, in the anthropomorphic terms of Woolf’s mind-modelling exercise, the reason for the gathering, but it is also the trigger for the cognitive process represented by the gathering, or the cognitive purpose for which the megablend is to be constructed. Percival is a cryptic figure in the narrative, not a “voice” himself and seen exclusively through the perspectives of the other “voices.” He is a riddle, analogous to Fauconnier and Turner’s aforementioned Buddhist Monk riddle, which asks us whether there is a place on a mountain path that a monk occupies at the same hour of the day on his two separate journeys, ascending and descending. The Buddhist Monk riddle is a conceptual challenge whose solution requires an act of conceptual blending. I read Percival, more specifically Percival’s departure for India, in precisely these terms: as a conceptual challenge to the narrative’s mind.

The entrance of each of the “voices” through the restaurant’s swing doors in this episode suggests that the narrative’s mind is activating various conceptual domains, setting them up in preparation for building the integration network. “[W]ithout Percival,” Neville declares, “there is no solidity. We are silhouettes, hollow phantoms moving mistily without a background” (100). Without a specific cognitive purpose, like a riddle requiring a solution, the blend cannot get underway, and the similarities shared by the conceptual domains are occluded by their differences or anthropomorphized individuality—“remorseless and savage egotism” (101). Percival’s arrival, which marks

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10 For two seminal debates on Percival’s role in the narrative, see J. W. Graham and John Hulcoop (on Percival as a heroic figure) and Jane Marcus and Patrick McGee (on Percival as a symbol of Britain’s imperialist desires).
his imminent departure for India, brings “order” (a conceptual challenge or cognitive purpose) and turns “jackals biting at each other’s heels” into “soldiers in the presence of their captain” (100, 101). As the “voices” come together and say that they “love each other” and can “issue from the darkness of solitude” to “say, brutally and directly, what is in . . . [their] minds,” Neville declares the “preparation” “over” and initiates their exchange of shared memories and images (101). This is the process in which the narrative’s mind identifies similarities among the conceptual domains it has brought together—a process of matching across mental spaces and projecting selectively to the blend. The “voices” begin to recount the formative moments they all shared, such as their departure for and experiences at school; this exchange, imaged in the narrative as drawing out “filament[s]” from “close-furled balls of string” enacts the blending process of locating shared structures (102). Some of the “voices” are integrated more tightly with each other, perhaps even already blended with each other (since megablends are often the product of linking several pre-existing blends), as is evident in their identification of structures shared only by some of them, like Neville and Bernard’s experience on the riverbank or Jinny and Rhoda’s experience at the ball.

In provisionally labelling the reason for their meeting “here and now . . . together, at a particular time, [in] . . . this particular spot” as “some deep, some common emotion,” “love of Percival,” Bernard consolidates the process of locating shared structures, restating the purpose of the blend (like the Buddhist Monk riddle) for which they, conceptual domains in the narrative’s mind, have been activated (103, 104). His image of what they have made in coming together is “a red carnation” “seen by many eyes simultaneously,” a “single flower as . . . [they] sat . . . waiting, but now a seven-sided
flower, many-petalled, red, puce, purple-shaded, stiff with silver-tinted leaves—a whole flower to which every eye brings its own contribution” (104). As an image for a conceptual blend, the red carnation is a whole made up of parts, parts that are neither separable from nor fully subsumed by the whole and that make unique contributions to the megablend. Just like the Bernard-Neville riverbank blend, this larger-scale cognitive operation is generative of new meaning, represented in the narrative by each conceptual domain’s moment of self-reflection and heightened self-awareness, achieved in part relationally, through their understanding of the relations of similarity and difference that exist among them; this phase of the cognitive operation is akin to what Fauconnier and Turner call the blending stage of projecting backward to the inputs.

The blend itself is narrated online by the conceptual domains, which describe their integration: Rhoda comments that “one thing melts into another”; Jinny observes that “[m]embranes, webs of nerve that lay white and limp, have filled and spread themselves and float round . . . like filaments”; Louis states that “[a]ll are merged”; and Neville remarks that “all things . . . run into each other” (110, 111). The blend’s emergent meaning is depicted in the narrative as a heightening of the personified conceptual domains’ anthropomorphized senses, along with their aforementioned enriched self-awareness. Yet if the purpose for which the gathering occurs (or the cognitive operation is launched) is represented by Percival’s departure for India, Neville’s comment that “India lies outside” (111) his perceptual or cognitive reach suggests the need for further additions to the cognitive apparatus being built by the narrative’s mind. Fauconnier and Turner identify this process as recruiting new structure to the blend in order for it to fulfil its cognitive function. Here, the cognitive addition (or new structure recruited to the
blend) is apparent in Bernard and Rhoda’s ability to “see India” (111). One indicator of the narrative mind’s further cognitive expansion is Rhoda’s ability to see “beyond India,” “pilgrimages, . . . moments of departure” that “start always in . . . [the others’] presence, from this table, these lights, from Percival and Susan, here and now” (113, 114, my emphasis). The narrative mind’s cognitive expansion through Rhoda is facilitated by the conceptual blend staged in this scene.

Rhoda’s tight integration with Louis (represented by their separate connection or communication) generates a core for the blend. At times this core seems threatened by the circle of other “voices” (input domains) that surround it but are not as tightly integrated; in fact, the Rhoda-Louis core is conscious of “downfalling” and “decay” in the total integration network (115). Indeed, as the dinner ends, the specific cognitive purpose triggering the network, Percival’s imminent voyage, has been fulfilled, in much the same way that the Buddhist Monk riddle is solved with the appropriate blend. The network begins to disintegrate: “the circle breaks”; “[t]he circle is destroyed”; “[w]e are thrown asunder”; “the moment . . . is over” (116, 117). The conceptual domains, blended based on their similarities, find their differences resurfacing again. But before the network disintegrates fully, it is reactivated for a short space of time, marked by Louis’s feeling that “the circle in . . . [their] blood closes in a ring” and his injunction to them: “[d]o not move, do not let the swing-door cut to pieces the thing that we have made, that globes itself here, among these lights, these peelings, this litter of bread-crumbs and people passing. Do not move, do not go. Hold it for ever” (118-19). Jinny describes the network as a “globe whose walls are made of Percival” (119). It is, as Bernard remarks,

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11 Bernard and Rhoda are discussed at length in a subsequent section of this chapter that deals with their unique characteristics as conceptual domains.
“the swelling and splendid moment created by . . . [them] from Percival” (119). The farewell dinner episode ends with Neville’s remark, “Percival is gone” (120), Percival’s departure signaling the fulfillment of the cognitive purpose for which the blend was launched. After an interlude, the narrative resumes with the conceptual domains unblended, a state suggested by their separate geographic locations. The blend does not remain activated in the narrative’s mind because it was launched in response to a specific, one-time cognitive challenge that required a specific cognitive adaptation to be solved.\textsuperscript{12} The blending process, however, will be deployed again and again, and is in fact the narrative mind’s chief cognitive tool for survival in “a world that [its] . . . own force can subjugate and make part of the illumined and everlasting road” (120).

\textbf{Living in the Blend: The Hampton Court Dinner and Bernard’s Monologue}

While the Hampton Court dinner, like Percival’s farewell dinner, is a megablend involving the six domains, the two blends are very different.\textsuperscript{13} In the farewell dinner blend, differences among the domains are easily subordinated to the similarity-seeing blending process, according to the specific, one-time cognitive challenge represented by Percival’s departure. In the Hampton Court blend, on the other hand, differences among the domains resist subordination to the similarity-based megablend. Bernard’s comment at the beginning of the Hampton Court dinner scene, that “Susan, Louis, Rhoda, Jinny, and Neville . . . have come together already,” suggests that these mental spaces have

\begin{footnotes}
\item[12] Percival’s death in India also signals the temporary nature of this blend: in anthropomorphic terms Percival dies because in cognitive terms the purpose for which the farewell dinner blend was launched (solving the riddle that is Percival or meeting the conceptual challenge of Percival’s departure) has been fulfilled.
\item[13] The same six domains can combine to generate different blends because the domains are multi-faceted and “can be activated in many different ways and for many different purposes” (Fauconnier and Turner 40).
\end{footnotes}
already been set up for a network and that the inclusion of Bernard will generate a new set-up: “In a moment, when I have joined them, another arrangement will form, another pattern” (175). Bernard, however, does not want to be “checked” and is “reluctant to suffer that compulsion,” that “the order” of his “being” be “changed” by the blend (175). The cognitive effort of this six-input network is captured in Bernard’s description of the “shock of meeting,” “joining ragged edges, raw edges” (175, 176). The clash of differences is also apparent in the hostility between Susan and Neville, which Susan describes as “battling together like beasts fighting in a field, like stags making their horns clash” (179).

It is only as the narrative speed increases that we get a sense of the more rapid activation of the conceptual domains represented by Susan, Rhoda, Jinny, and finally Louis. The differences among the domains are less apparent as “the sharp tooth of egotism” is “blunted” (187). But Bernard foils the activation of the network as he, striking his spoon on the table and crying “fight!” (188), resists integration, asserting his difference (represented by his recollection of “the shape of [his] . . . own nose,” after his face starts to become “dissolved utterly and . . . featureless and scarcely to be distinguished from another” [187]). Finally the network gets underway and what has been achieved in the narrative’s mind is again symbolized by a flower, this time “a six-sided flower; made of six lives” (191). At this point, the narrative speed is generally faster, and the “many-faceted flower,” the thing they have made, “[o]ne life,” represents the network they have achieved, albeit with difficulty, given the more apparent differences among the domains and the effort of subordinating these differences to the similarity-seeing impulse of blending (191).
Here again Rhoda and Louis function as a tightly integrated core for the megablend, which disintegrates—“There. It is over. Gone out”—as the others “vanish” in an act Rhoda describes as desertion (191). Yet even though this network seems more tenuous than the one represented in the farewell dinner scene, its Rhoda-Louis core does not perceive “death” and, despite the initial struggle in the launching process, the four returning mental spaces are all easily able to “rejoin” the network, imaged as “the body of . . . [their] mother from whom . . . [they] have been severed” (192, 194). Neville describes the restored megablend in images of unity: “[w]e are scarcely to be distinguished from the river. One cigarette end is the only point of emphasis among us. And sadness tinges our content, that we should have left you, torn the fabric” (194).

While Percival’s farewell dinner network is followed by parts of the narrative that treat the conceptual domains or “voices” separately until the next (Hampton Court) megablend is staged, the aftermath of the Hampton Court blend never features the conceptual domains separately, giving the narrative over to Bernard entirely. I read this crucial difference between the two scenes as an indication that the Hampton Court network never ends—that the blend persists in the narrative’s mind. While many of Fauconnier and Turner’s examples of conceptual blends are blends launched in response to specific, one-time conceptual challenges—like the riddle of the Buddhist Monk—others are blends that remain active in the mind even though we cease to be consciously aware of them. Fauconnier and Turner claim that “[h]ow thoroughly our conscious apprehension is limited to the blend depends on the kind of activity that blending serves”: we live in the blend for activities that are crucial to survival—perception, sensation, arousal, immediate reaction to basic environmental threats. In
the face of such threats, global and immediate insight is the priority, and there is little survival value in checking step by step how that global insight is achieved. Thus we evolved to be conscious of only the blend.

(83, 84)

When we live in the blend “[w]e manipulate . . . elaborate networks with no conscious attention to the topologies and projections across the network[s]” (Fauconnier and Turner 389). One of Fauconnier and Turner’s examples of these permanent blends, which we evolve for our survival in the world and cease to identify consciously as blends, is “the writing and reading blending network,” which uses “distinctive marks on material substances [such as paper]” “combined with a general mapping, evolved by culture, for connecting equivalence classes of sounds to equivalence classes of marks” (211). My reading of the Hampton Court blend is that it is one of these permanent blends (as opposed to the one-time blend represented in the farewell dinner scene): the fact that the Rhoda-Louis blend core does not identify decay in the network and the fact that the less tightly integrated domains return to the blend network at the end of the scene indicate a blend that persists in the mind. Permanent blends like the writing and reading blending network depend on highly complex cognitive activities, but are so crucial to our survival that, no matter how difficult they are to master at first, they quickly become so unconscious and automatic that they are, as we will see when considering the blends we perform when reading The Waves, difficult to escape (or even to identify as blends). Hence the immense cognitive challenge in the Hampton Court blend’s launching phase, with the personified domains asserting their differences and resisting integration; hence,
too, the survival of the Hampton Court blend in the narrative’s mind, despite the difficulties inherent in its set-up.

When the narrative is given over to Bernard after the Hampton Court dinner, it is not surrendering to the monologic discourse of the character Bernard, as some critics have argued, but is staging an in-depth personification of a single domain in a permanently activated conceptual blend. Bernard’s detailed account of the Hampton Court scene and its aftermath confirms a reading of the scene as an achieved blend that persists. Before the blend is launched, the conceptual domains are highly differentiated: “our discomfort was at first considerable, for each by that time was committed to a statement, and the other person . . . seemed to contradict it” (Woolf, The Waves 230-31).

The blend itself, achieved despite immense cognitive complexity, is temporarily interrupted by Bernard, who resists integration:

14 For a reading of “the quasi-monologic arrest of Bernard’s closing soliloquy” as part of Woolf’s “sustained meditation on the nearness of fascist rhetoric and sentiment to the politics and rhetoric of everyday English life,” see Gabrielle McIntire (30). See also Jane Marcus, who reads Bernard as the “white male Western author” engaged in “an act of literary hegemony; he absorbs the voices of his marginalized peers into his own voice—he needs ‘other people’s eyes’ to read him and other people’s I’s, their lives and selves, to make his stories” (137, 142). My reading of the riverbank scene suggests that there is evidence early in The Waves of a different interpretation of Bernard than the one these critics advance: if the Bernard-Neville blend enables Bernard (as a personified conceptual domain) to achieve greater self-awareness, it is surely significant that this result is achieved through the conceptual organizing action of Neville, the framing domain in the blend.

15 Here my reading aligns with (but offers a specifically cognitive narratological rationale for) Ralph Freedman’s argument that Bernard’s summary represents a “pooling [of] the figures” and with J. W. Graham’s argument that there is a single “narrating Consciousness”: Bernard’s summary reflects pooled (as in “blended”) domains in the narrative’s mind (Freedman 255; Graham 206). My reading also aligns with James Naremore’s argument that Bernard’s loss of self occurs at the end of the Hampton Court dinner.

16 Bernard’s account of the childhood garden scene also reinforces a reading of this episode as the developmental-stage differentiation of conceptual domains from a previously undifferentiated cognitive state. One conceptual domain is connected but increasingly differentiated from another, a process staged in Bernard’s self-conscious relational thinking: “I felt my indifference melt. Neville did not melt. ‘Therefore,’ I said, ‘I am myself, not Neville’” (201). “[W]e were all different. . . . We suffered terribly as we became separate bodies” (202). In his brief reference to the riverbank scene with Neville, Bernard remarks that Neville’s “quality of . . . vision” (210) was so dominant that he saw through Neville’s vision instead of his own. His comment confirms a reading of the interaction between these two conceptual domains as a single-scope blend with a dominant framing input and an illuminated focus input: “[T]he scene was cut out with such intensity and so permeated with the quality of his [Neville’s] vision that for a moment I could see it too” (210).
we had our bottle of wine, and under that seduction lost our enmity, and stopped comparing. And, half-way through dinner, we felt enlarge itself round us the huge blackness of what is outside us, of what we are not. . . . We were extinguished for a moment . . . . For me this lasts but one second. It is ended by my own pugnacity. I strike the table with a spoon. . . . We became six people at a table in Hampton Court. (231)

The blend is revived, however, as all six domains are integrated, and the emergent meaning or cognitive output is imaged as a single “life” or “identity” blazing “against some cedar tree”: “[w]e rose and walked together down the avenue. . . . Against . . . some cedar tree I saw blaze bright, Neville, Jinny, Rhoda, Louis, Susan, and myself, our life, our identity. . . . The moment was all; the moment was enough” (231-32). But the less tightly integrated domains, Bernard, Neville, Jinny, and Susan, sever the blend, detaching themselves from the Rhoda-Louis blend core: “And then Neville, Jinny, Susan and I, as a wave breaks, burst asunder, surrendered. . . . We drew apart; we were consumed in the darkness of the trees, leaving Rhoda and Louis to stand on the terrace by the urn. . . . We had lost what they had kept. We interrupted” (232). After Bernard and the others return to and reintegrate with Rhoda and Louis, Bernard finds that he is unable to separate himself again (as he did after the farewell dinner, for example): “I could not collect myself; I could not distinguish myself; I could not help letting fall the things that had made me a minute ago eager, amused, jealous, vigilant, and hosts of other things, into the water” (232-33). This “new assembly of elements” (233) is a permanent blend of which the narrative’s mind becomes unconscious after the blend’s initial activation but upon which the narrative’s mind depends for cognitive efficiency and survival. The conceptual
domains exist in an enduring network, like the writing and reading network, but also participate in other blends, both temporary and permanent; they “can be activated in many different ways and for many different purposes” (Fauconnier and Turner 40).

But what about Rhoda? Bernard’s reference to Rhoda’s death invites us to consider the question of what death is in Woolf’s mind-modelling exercise: if the conceptual domain represented by Rhoda dies in anthropomorphic terms, what does this mean in cognitive terms? Rhoda’s lifelong feeling of non-identity (“I have no face” [Woolf, The Waves 186]) and the perceived shock and violence of her encounters with the other “voices” suggest, in terms of conceptual blending theory, that she is a conceptual domain with a weak organizing frame, continually occupying the position of focusing input illuminated by various dominant framing inputs; in the narrative’s anthropomorphic terms, Rhoda’s childhood is spent copying Susan’s and Jinny’s actions and she frequently alludes to her enduring dismay that she “must go through the antics of the individual” (186). During Percival’s farewell dinner, the narrative mind’s cognitive expansion, represented through its incorporation of India into its cognitive purview, is achieved through Rhoda, but her visions are dependent on her inclusion in a blend: these visions “start always in . . . [the others’] presence, from this table, these lights, from Percival and Susan, here and now” (114). Rhoda’s centrality to the narrative mind’s cognitive enlargement is tied to her relational engagement with the other conceptual domains, specifically to their action as framing inputs. Rhoda’s death, instead of representing the narrative mind’s loss of a conceptual domain, may indicate the total assimilation of this conceptual domain into one or more permanent blending networks, so that the important conceptual material remains in the narrative’s mind but will never
again operate as an independent conceptual domain; the survival of the conceptual material represented by Rhoda is signalled by Bernard’s continuing feeling of integration with her post Hampton Court. Rhoda’s death by suicide is particularly suggestive of the possibility that something in this conceptual domain’s make-up is inherently self-obliterating, tending towards both resistance to relational differentiation and total immersion in blends, like the Hampton Court blend, that persist in the narrative’s mind.

**Deblending and Reblending: A New Understanding of Reading in the Blend**

While literature and cognitive science are not conceptual domains, we can nonetheless think of this chapter as being governed by a double-scope conceptual blend, with two inputs that have “different (and often clashing) organizing frames,” where “both organizing frames make central contributions to the blend, and their sharp differences offer the possibility of rich clashes. Far from blocking the construction of the network, such clashes offer challenges to the imagination; indeed, the resulting blends can be highly creative” (Fauconnier and Turner 131). Conceptual blending theory gives us a useful vocabulary for discussing Woolf’s mind-modelling exercise in *The Waves*: a macrotextual-level blend, in which the narrative mind’s parts and processes can be construed as conceptual domains and conceptual blending, respectively. This vocabulary fulfils the criteria, outlined at the beginning of this chapter, for a coherent and compelling one-mind reading of the narrative. This cognitive narratological approach also offers specific readings of Bernard, Rhoda, and Percival, readings that are thoroughly consistent with the one-mind view. *The Waves* in turn enriches blending theory’s understanding of higher-level forms of reading in the blend that are specific to reading narratives with
minds of their own. Fauconnier and Turner describe reading in the blend as a basic cognitive operation that allows us to see scratches on paper as related to verbal signifiers for specific signifieds, so that we read these scratches as a form of communication. But, as I argued in this thesis’s first chapter, there are higher-level forms of reading in the blend that are unique to the experience of reading narrative and have much to tell us about how our minds work both independently and intersubjectively, in relation to other minds. In Chiang Yee’s Silent Traveller narratives, reading in the blend is a process of intersubjective thinking involving participation in and collaboration with microtextual-level blends launched by a narrative agent, some of which generate reflexivity about the cognitive processes involved in and conceptual and real-world consequences of blending.

The Waves offers its reader the experience of another higher-level form of reading in the blend that also involves intersubjective thinking. Quoting Isobel Armstrong on identification in the reading experience, Melba Cuddy-Keane argues that Woolf’s “The Fascination of the Pool” (1929), in a manner characteristic of Woolf’s rhetorical style,  

17 “The Moment: Summer’s Night” (first published in 1947) can be read as another of Woolf’s experiments in writing the individual mind and its processes. In this story, four characters sitting around a table in the dark are virtually indistinct, but the ends of lit cigarettes serve as reminders of their separate existences. Like conceptual domains in an integration network, these characters are both separate and united at the same time: they are described as “a knot of consciousness; a nucleus divided up into four heads, eight legs, eight arms, and four separate bodies” (294). When one of the characters speaks, the words are described as explosions, quivers, and shootings—language that images neuronal firing and the activation of a particular network in the mind. Moments of self-assertion are reined in by the lure of whole-hearted surrender to the collective, unified mind that lives in the blend. The story’s final movement of the four characters away from the table and into the light is a movement of separation and differentiation, disrupting the achieved unity but making way for new blend-based unities generated by this cognitively mobile mind.

“Evening over Sussex: Reflections in a Motor-car” (first published in 1942) can also be read as a narrative about the parts of a mind coming together to create emergent meaning (manifested in the form of the figurine that sits on the narrator’s lap and is described as the sum of all that was collected by the narrator’s “selves” that day). The figurine is the product of a whole mind in action—an instantiation of the emergent meaning or insight about Sussex and life that has been achieved. Without implying the applicability of my argument to Woolf’s entire corpus, I would like to suggest the possibility that Woolf was experimenting with writing the individual mind and its parts and processes in To the Lighthouse (1927), where the single mind of the narrative, its narrator, achieves the conceptual integration of its three chief conceptual domains (represented by Mr. Ramsay, Mrs. Ramsay, and Lily Briscoe) with the completion of the journey to the lighthouse, following earlier blends featuring only two of these domains (Mr. and Mrs. Ramsay, and Mrs. Ramsay and Lily Briscoe).
“demands a willingness to displace one’s own thinking and to participate in ‘how the text thinks’” (Virginia Woolf, the Intellectual, and the Public Sphere 127). The instability of our position relative to the “voices” in The Waves sometimes invites us to displace our own thinking and participate in how the narrative’s mind thinks—and sometimes distances us from how the narrative’s mind thinks. Woolf’s questions about The Waves, “Who thinks it? And am I outside the thinker?” (A Writer’s Diary, 25 September 1929), are questions we ask too, as we shift among various positions, sometimes overhearing the verbalized thoughts of these “voices,” sometimes feeling such strong identification with the “voices” as to inhabit their subject positions, and sometimes seeming to be addressed by them. Short passages of verbalized thoughts, shifting rapidly among the different “voices” with the “said Susan” construction recurring frequently, make it difficult for us to inhabit the subject position of any one “voice” for very long and tend to put us into the position of overhearing these verbalized thoughts. Longer, less frequently interrupted passages, however, have the effect of drawing us into the subject position of a particular “voice.” The “voices” use different pronouns to refer to each other, sometimes third-person and sometimes second-person, and this shifting also affects our positionality. Second-person pronouns with unspecified referents tend to draw us into the position of being directly addressed by the “voices.”¹⁸ This sense of being addressed is particularly vivid in the scene in which Neville addresses his lover as “you” and in Bernard’s final

¹⁸ See Karen Schiff for an account of Bernard’s address to “you” as “an allegory of reading” in which “his words refer to and comment upon the practice of reading” (138). Schiff’s model for reading The Waves is based largely on Jean Kennard’s theory for lesbian readers and other readers who do not find their experiences captured in literature and thus “need to develop a way of reading which allows them to relate to foreign experiences or perspectives” (139). My own account of the reader’s shifting identification and alterity in relation to the narrative’s “voices” and therefore to the way the narrative thinks aligns with Kennard’s theory of “‘polar reading’ in which a reader ‘leans into’ a text that contains unfamiliar elements (as all texts do), playing with the possibility of identifying with an ‘other.’ This inevitably leads to resistance, since no one person is completely like any other. The reader can then swing back and forth between the two poles of immersion and distance” (Schiff 139).
monologue, in which he addresses his dinner companion as “you.” The narrative’s thematization of unstable, permeable, intersubjective identities further complicates our position relative to the “voices,” particularly when Neville tells his absent lover “I shall then . . . seek another, find another, you” and when Bernard tells his dinner companion “I am you” (Woolf, The Waves 150, 241). The “voices” experience alternating feelings of identity and alterity with each other, and these feelings are mirrored in our relation to the “voices” themselves—and therefore to the narrative’s mind and how it thinks. We are sometimes outside the narrative’s mind, observing its cognitive processes; yet identification with the “voices” brings us into the narrative’s mind as if we were one of its conceptual domains. Occupying the position of “you” relative to Neville and Bernard also brings us into the narrative’s mind, perhaps as an unspecified conceptual domain. Tensions in our relation to the narrative’s mind and “voices”—a sense of identity and alterity in relation to how the narrative thinks and to the subject positions of the “voices”—enable reflexive reading to occur.

The narrative’s invitation to us to read in the blend is, in fact, an invitation to replace an automatic, unconscious practice of reading in the blend with a self-reflexive one that is better attuned to how the narrative thinks. Woolf’s mind-modelling exercise defamiliarizes entrenched, blend-based interpretive conventions we have adopted as members of an interpretive community: the way, for example, that when we read labels (like “Susan”) we automatically launch blends between the signifier and a specific signified (the label “Susan” and a real person endowed with human attributes, capable of human thoughts, feelings, and behaviours). Responding to J. W. Graham’s claim that plot, character, and setting are not appropriate instruments for approaching an
antinovelistic work like *The Waves*, James Phelan argues that Woolf’s novel calls on us to reexamine our definition of character (Phelan, “Character and Judgment in Narrative and in Lyric”). Phelan suggests that we must assess the characters as lyric characters since this is a lyric novel, to be distinguished from narrative in terms of the attitude we are asked to take: he argues that we are invited to see the world through the characters’ eyes without making a judgment on their visions. While I agree that *The Waves* forces us to re-consider our understanding of character, I believe *The Waves* is asking us to interrogate character on a far more fundamental level, and, by doing so, generate self-reflexivity about the blend-based interpretive strategies we deploy unconsciously and automatically when performing higher-level operations of reading in the blend. If *The Waves* is a model of a single mind thinking, then its characters may not be characters in any sense of the word (narrative, lyric, or otherwise).

Reading this narrative on its own terms, according to the macrotextual-level blend that structures it, involves both displacing our own thinking and participating in how the narrative thinks, where participating in how the narrative thinks entails collaborating in a new, more self-reflexive mode of reading in the blend. These complementary processes of displacement and participation can be theorized, in Fauconnier and Turner’s terminology, as deblending and reblending. “Although,” Fauconnier and Turner argue, “it took us a long time to master the complex blends linked to a cultural activity like writing [and reading], once we have them, we have the greatest difficulty escaping them even

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19 While Woolf’s preoccupation with finding new ways of writing character is evident in her essays and novels, *The Waves* also underscores Woolf’s effort to generate a new interpretive community for reading character.
when we want to” (389). Reading Woolf’s narrative is an experience that demands the intense cognitive effort of focusing “attention on escaping the blends [associated with traditional strategies for reading character, for example], investigating the connections, changing the network, and rebuilding the blend [cultivating the cognitive mobility necessary for adapting our reading strategies in accordance with how a narrative thinks]” (Fauconnier and Turner 391). Thinking of the narrative as a mind, with its parts as conceptual domains and its processes as conceptual blending—this, too, is a blend, one that is launched in response to acknowledging that Woolf’s narrative is modelling the mind in ways that align very closely with blending theory, even though Woolf would not have possessed the vocabulary to discuss her model in these terms. The point of defamiliarizing our activity of reading in the blend is not to escape blends but to become more aware of them and to change them to afford us new ways of reading narrative and new insights about narrative. Barbara Dancygier’s important work on blends as structural-level organizing principles in narrative locates what I have termed “the macrotextual-level blend” in the reader’s mind, rather than in the narrative’s mind: “a narrative space constructed [in the reader’s mind] on the basis of the contributing narrative spaces, via the processes of conceptual integration” (“The Text and the Story” 54). I locate the macrotextual-level blend in both the narrative’s mind and the reader’s mind, focusing on the blends a reader performs when interacting with a narrative’s blending mind.

The final pages of *The Waves* depict Bernard, a personified conceptual domain in a mind living in the blend, undertaking the process of deblending and reblanding that the

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20 As we have seen, the narrative’s mind both takes a long time to master the Hampton Court blend and has great difficulty escaping it (cannot, in fact, escape it).
narrative demands of us. The identity of “you,” the figure whom Bernard addresses in the restaurant scene, is of particular interest to us as readers of the narrative, in large part because this portion of the narrative seems to address us and, in doing so, scripts us into the narrative’s mind as another, unfamiliar conceptual domain. Bernard’s feeling of integration with “you”—“As I talked,” Bernard tells “you,” “I felt, ‘I am you’” (Woolf, The Waves 241)—is akin to his connection with the narrative’s other conceptual domains. But here, since Bernard is part of an older mind that lives in the blend, with many of its cognitive processes automatic and unconscious, his contact with “you” forces him back into the active role of participating in new conceptual networks: “[o]nce more, I who had thought myself immune, who had said, ‘Now I am rid of all that’, find that the wave has tumbled me over, head over heels, scattering my possessions, leaving me to collect, to assemble, to heap together, summon my forces, rise and confront the enemy” (244).

When “[t]he pressure is removed” (245) as “you” leaves the restaurant, Bernard is unable to sink back into the state of a conceptual domain in a mind that lives, unconsciously and automatically, in the blend. Now the ageing mind must confront its oldest and greatest enemy, “Death.” One of the ways the human mind understands Death, Fauconnier and Turner argue, is by performing a blend of a space with an individual human dying and a space with an abstract pattern of causal tautology in which an event of a certain kind is caused by an abstract causal element (i.e. Death causes dying); this blend is subsequently used as an input in another blend featuring other domains like “reaper” and “killer” to generate the blend of Death as The Grim Reaper, for example (Fauconnier and Turner 291-94). The specific domain “enemy” in the narrative mind’s Death-enemy blend is, however, different from the domains “reaper” and “killer”; the latter two domains suggest
the achieved actions of reaping and killing, whereas the “enemy” domain does not indicate the struggle’s outcome and is in fact clearly associated with ideas of resistance (rather than victimization or passivity). Indeed, the narrative’s final image of Bernard riding against Death with his “spear couched” and his “hair flying back like a young man’s” is suggestive of the narrative mind’s effort to incorporate Death into its cognitive purview even as this effort entails significant cognitive resistance; the conceptual outcome of this clash remains ambiguous (Woolf, The Waves 247).

When the conceptual domain Bernard rides against Death to complete the Death-enemy blend and integrate Death into the narrative mind’s cognitive scope, it does so not alone but as part of a blend involving the other conceptual domains. While the conceptual domains were already (pre Hampton Court) networked together to some extent, as evidenced by their shared images and motifs, they are now (post Hampton Court) even more tightly networked, part of a blend that persists in the narrative’s mind. Ongoing connections between the conceptual domain Bernard and storytelling, phrases, narrative, and language throughout The Waves, as well as Bernard’s preoccupation with finding phrases for “ways of naming death” (243), recorded under D in his notebook, may, however, suggest that there is a specific rationale for choosing Bernard as the conceptual domain to narrate, online, the experience of a personified domain living in the blend and seeking to bring Death within the narrative mind’s cognitive purview. Woolf’s representation of the narrative’s mind seeking to understand Death through a blend involving Bernard (as the representative of the persisting Hampton Court blend) indicates her conviction that narrative is an integral part of the mind’s cognitive equipment, central to its understanding of the world and human experience, including Death.
David Herman and Mark Turner have recently articulated this view of narrative, with Herman theorizing narrative as a cognitive process as well as a cognitive product, “a domain-general resource for thinking,” and Turner theorizing blending in terms of narrative, story being “a basic principle of mind” (Herman, Introduction, *NTCS* 19; Turner *The Literary Mind* v). If Jonah Lehrer describes Woolf, along with Proust and other modernists, as a neuroscientist, prescient in her ideas about the brain, a cognitive narratological reading of *The Waves* suggests that Woolf was also a cognitive scientist, prescient in her ideas about the mind. But Woolf’s model of the mind in *The Waves* is far more than prescient, anticipatory of future neuro- and cognitive-scientific discourses. The idea that Woolf’s narrative might have a mind of its own seems to be a natural extension of readers’ and critics’ long-standing considerations of what it might mean for the “voices” in *The Waves* to be parts of a mind. As soon as we recognize the fact that the narrative’s mind thinks relationally (inscribing modernist ideas about relational thinking on its macrotextual or structural level), blending its parts together, we see that Woolf interrogates current theories from cognitive science that pertain to the experience of reading: reading in the blend, when the narrative we are reading is structured by a macrotextual-level blend, is an experience of intersubjective thinking that affords us heightened cognitive mobility and self-reflexivity about our own reading strategies. In reading Chiang Yee’s *Silent Traveller* narratives, we are invited to think intersubjectively, along with Chiang as the narrative agent; in reading *The Waves*, we are invited to think intersubjectively, along with the narrative itself. 21

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21 In the triangulated relation of reality, theory, and representation stands the reality of the human mind’s cognitive processes, theories about these processes (such as Fauconnier and Turner’s), and representations of these processes (as in *The Waves*). The experiential tie between reality and representation, when it comes to cognitive processing and representations of cognitive processing, is stronger than the tie between reality
and theory: Lisa Zunshine provides evidence for the claim that the techniques we use to read fiction are the same as those we use to read other minds in reality; Richard Gerrig also argues there is no difference in the two kinds of experience (our experience of narrative worlds is the same as our experience of the real world). Narrative and other representational forms are perhaps better suited to involving readers in the experiences of cognitive processes that cognitive science’s theoretical discourses can only explain.
CHAPTER THREE: AUTHORIAL PERITEXTUAL-LEVEL BLENDS,
CONCEPTUAL MODELS, AND READING STRATEGIES IN JOSEPH
CONRAD’S AND HENRY JAMES’S PREFACES

Mescal Narratives and Salt-and-Lemon Prefaces

Moving out from the macrotextual to the peritexual, we cross a nebulous border between two textual levels whose relation is perhaps nowhere more frequently discussed than in paratexts themselves (both peritexts and epitexts). In a letter dated 2 January 1946 to his publisher Jonathan Cape, defending *Under the Volcano* (1947) from a critical reader’s report, Malcolm Lowry develops a blend involving reading and drinking mescal, the narrative a bottle of mescal requiring the “salt and lemon” of a preface “to get it down” (499). In this epitextual letter, Lowry discusses the preface-text relation in terms of the preface’s “condition[ing]” effect on its reader, further arguing for the benefits of “a little subtle but solid elucidation in a preface or a blurb” (499). His reading/drinking blend is explicitly intended to justify writing a preface to accompany *Under the Volcano* in order to “condition” his prospective reader “ever so slightly towards the acceptance of [the novel’s] . . . slow beginning as inevitable” (499); yet the blend is also strikingly apt for thinking about the relation between modernist narratives and their prefaces. If, as many modernists themselves admitted, modernist narratives’ formal experiments place such immense demands on the reader, a preface inviting the necessary reading strategies might be just the salt and lemon required to get the narratives down—and turn their
consumption into an addiction, if the reader is anything like Lowry’s protagonist, the mescal-coholic Consul.

Brian McHale, exploring the “Modernist aspects” of Thomas Pynchon’s Gravity’s Rainbow (1973), cogently articulates a widely held view of modernist narrative: “one of Modernism’s fundamental characteristics is the relatively expanded function of the reader; or . . . the apparently new and expanded repertoire of operations which the reader is expected to undertake” (87, 88).¹ These modernist “text-processing” operations, “specific sets or repertoires of pattern-making and pattern-interpreting operations which readers must undertake in order to render texts intelligible,” include:

reconstruct[ing] the chronology of the fabula from the sometimes drastically displaced order of the syuzhet; impart[ing] intelligible motivation to sequence and transitions; motiva[ting] large-scale parallelisms, doublings, and analogies . . . ; discover[ing] narrators, and evaluat[ing] their knowledgeability and reliability; reconstruct[ing] psychological processes, and the external reality which they mediate, from such conventions as interior monologue and style indirect libre; etc..

(McHale 88)

McHale argues that these text-processing strategies are not so much new in the modernist repertoire as they are developed more frequently, more prominently, and in more sophisticated ways in modernist fiction than in earlier fiction.

One question McHale does not take up in his account of these text-processing strategies is whether and how modernist writers prepared their readers for the more

¹ McHale roots his approach to the reader’s activities in Jonathan Culler’s Structuralist Poetics: Structuralism, Linguistics and the Study of Literature (1975), in which Culler introduces “naturalization” as a term for the reader’s recuperation of textual inconsistencies by co-opting them into a larger sense-pattern.
sophisticated reading strategies modernist narratives demanded of them. Henry James and Joseph Conrad famously lamented the lukewarm receptions and misreading of their works that resulted in part from readers’ traditional ideas about the proper subjects of fiction, but also from readers’ underdeveloped reading strategies. Although James and Conrad did not use the phrase “reading strategies,” they recognized that their readers did not always know how to respond to innovations in narrative technique. Because they were written after the narratives they preface, James’s and Conrad’s prefaces to the collected editions of their works (1907-1909 and 1917-1920, respectively) can be readily construed as correctives of traditional ideas about fiction and as instructions on how best to read the accompanying narratives. But can we think of these prefaces not only as instructions on how to read but also as invitations to cultivate reading strategies relevant to James’s and Conrad’s novels? If so, what reading strategies might be invited, given that the majority of modernist prefaces do not possess many of the formal features McHale identifies as eliciting modernist text-processing strategies, like interior monologue and style indirect libre, or a fabula-syuzhet gap, which are linked to modernist fiction’s status as narrative (a designation that prefaces do not necessarily or often share)? Furthermore, would an investigation of the reading strategies modernist prefaces elicit even confirm McHale’s idea that reading modernist narratives entails “pattern-making and pattern-interpreting operations . . . [that] render texts intelligible” (McHale 88)? After all, many of the text-processing strategies in McHale’s list—like “reconstruct[ing] the chronology of the fabula from the sometimes drastically displaced order of the syuzhet . . . [and] impart[ing] intelligible motivation to sequence and transitions” (88)—imply a readerly activity of converting the modernist narrative into a
narrative with, for example, more orderly chronology and intelligible sequentiality. Do modernist narratives really invite reconstruction and recuperation?

Certainly it is not a great stretch of the imagination to think of modernist prefaces as potential sites for the cultivation of reading practices, since these prefaces were the birthplace of narrative theory and prefaces in general are often considered guides to reading. Yet studying the reading strategies prefaces invite represents a shift in the way these peritexts have thus far been theorized: a shift that demands attention to the individual preface’s form, to the formal peritextual relation between that preface and the narrative it accompanies, and to the formal peritextual relation between modernist prefaces and modernist narratives in general. Prefaces have never been studied in these terms before. Instead, they have been theorized as sites for authorial communication to the reader about a narrative, its design, the circumstances of its composition, and the author’s intentions in writing it; as defences against real or anticipated attacks; as pleas for understanding and sympathy; as venues for (auto)biographical details; as forums for the discussion of aesthetic theories; as marketing devices; as strategies for positioning the reader in relation to the ideology championed or undermined in the narrative itself; as sites for the author to become an ideal reader of his own work; as instruments of control; as manifestoes; as mediating devices between the book, the author, the reader, and the publisher; and as opportunities to allege the fictiveness of what follows.² Even when Gérard Genette discusses the preface’s function of explaining how a text should be read, he conceives of this function as “providing information and guidance for reading” (209), instead of examining reading strategies that are elicited by the preface’s form. In other

² See E. D. Blodgett, Anthony Purdy, and Steven Tökösy de Zepetnek; Gérard Genette; Herbert Gershman and Kernan Whitworth; Alasdair Gray; and Prefaces and Prologues to Famous Books.
words, he looks at the injunctions contained in a preface rather than the modes of reading it invites. Extant theories of prefaces’ functions overlook one of the important ways in which prefaces might prepare readers for the narratives these prefaces accompany.³

The scarcity of critical attention to prefaces’ form accounts for both the fact that we do not realize just how often we think of prefaces in general in terms of conceptual blends (like Lowry’s blend and Genette’s seuil) and for the fact that we tend not to notice the abundance of microtextual-level blends in modernist prefaces—particularly blends for reading, writing, and the relations among author, text, and reader.⁴ It is, however, not surprising that we think of prefaces in terms of blends, given that their textual status is inherently relational: they are prefaces only because of their peritextual relation to other texts and they exist in what Barbara Johnson calls “a strange warp of both time and space,” “[s]ituated both inside and outside, both before and after the ‘book[s]’ whose ‘book-ness’ [they] . . . both promote . . . and transgress” (xxxii). It is also not surprising that modernist prefaces in particular feature so many blends for the author-text-reader relation. The fundamental change brought about by diverse modernist experiments with narrative technique was a change in the author-text-reader relation, with the reader invited to be an active co-creator rather than a passive recipient. The reading strategies brought about by this changing author-text-reader relation were, as I will argue in this

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³ In “Outwork,” his hors d’oeuvre, extratext, foreplay, bookend, facing, prefacing text to Dissemination, Jacques Derrida declares that this text “is not a preface, at least not if by preface we mean a table, a code, an annotated summary of prominent signifieds, or an index of key words or of proper names” (8). And yet because “Outwork” itself models the deconstructive reading strategies we are invited to use in engaging with “Plato’s Pharmacy,” “The Double Session,” and “Dissemination,” we see that a preface can invite relevant reading strategies without acting as “a table, a code, an annotated summary of prominent signifieds, or an index of key words or of proper names” (8).

⁴ Perhaps inattention to the form of prefaces, particularly to the way we conceptualize them by means of blends and to the prevalence of blends in them, is partly a result of inherent challenges in theorizing prefaces, given what Genette identifies as this peritext’s variability of sender, recipient, time, and location.
chapter, more sophisticated versions of fundamentally relational cognitive processes, thus best elicited through blends that model and invite relational thinking.

While prefaces are generally not narratives, studying the way they invite modernist reading strategies can best be achieved by taking an approach similar to the one taken in narrative comprehension studies: looking at readerly activity in response to the progressive unfolding or building of textual organizing frameworks—in this case, conceptual models in prefaces. Peritextual conceptual models are non-character-based and non-plot-based organizing frameworks for prefaces. The conceptual models I focus on in this chapter revise concepts, like “author,” “text,” and “reader,” and the relations among these concepts by means of two or more peritextual-level blends that interact across an entire preface or by means of a single peritextual-level blend that appears to be localized but in fact spans the whole preface. The mode of relational thinking I have highlighted on various textual levels of modernist narratives is at the heart of modernist prefaces’ blend-based conceptual models. These conceptual models invite the reader to toggle back and forth between similarity and difference in relating two or more blends for the author-text-reader relation across a preface or in following the subtle unfolding of a single blend’s facets as a preface unfolds. Since these conceptual models explicitly address a changing author-text-reader relation, the relational reading strategies they elicit may in turn help the reader negotiate the changing author-text-reader relation apparent in modernist narratives.

The term “conceptual model” carries meanings from science (especially computer science)—such as the notion that concepts have variables that in turn have sets of logical and quantitative relations between them—that are not relevant to this chapter’s focus on the progressive unfolding of modernist prefaces’ conceptual models.
As I have demonstrated with collaborative microtextual-level blends in chapter one and the narrative mind’s macrotextual-level blend in chapter two, relational thinking is a fundamental mode of thinking that is invited at a high level of sophistication in modernist narratives. Through their proliferating blends on various textual levels, modernist narratives invite us to read in the blend and cultivate conscious awareness of the underlying cognitive mobility and negotiation between similarity-seeing and difference-seeing required to do so. These reading strategies are not so much new as they are a more sophisticated, complex, “higher-level,” and self-reflexive version of basic cognitive operations we use in reading narratives, in reading in general, and in everyday life. Our experience reading modernist narratives is not, at its most fundamental level, an experience of reconstruction, recuperation, or conversion: the most basic modes of thinking invited by modernist narratives are relational and entail continual toggling between similarity and difference, effectively resisting reconstruction’s, recuperation’s, and conversion’s organizing, stability- and closure-seeking impulses. The chief challenge of modernist narratives for readers may be the tension between the modes of thinking modernist narratives invite and the text-processing strategies readers—particularly turn-of-the-century readers—activate to convert them into more conventional kinds of narratives. The peritextual conceptual models through which modernist authors equip their readers for a new kind of reading experience are efficacious precisely because they are unfolding organizing frameworks inviting a mode of relational thinking that productively undermines the very ideas of stability, closure, and organization that we might expect in a conventional textual organizing framework, like a stable character or a coherent, orderly plot.
Throughout this chapter, I aim to make a general argument about modernist authorial prefaces and their relation to modernist narratives by engaging with the specificities of particular preface-text pairings. In this way my approach is largely, like Genette’s, synchronic; yet it is also thoroughly diachronic and historical, working against both Genette’s assertion that the authorial preface “has hardly changed at all—except in its material presentation—since Thucydides” and his corollary claim that after a (very long) period of prehistory . . . most of the themes and techniques of the preface are in place as of the mid-sixteenth century, and the subsequent variations do not reflect a true evolution but rather a set of varying choices within a repertory that is much more stable than one would believe *a priori*, and in particular much more stable than authors themselves believe. (14, 163)

As a consequence of the greater prominence, frequency, and sophistication of formal experimentation in modernist fiction, modernist authorial prefaces bore the unprecedented burden of familiarizing readers with new ideas about the author-text-reader relation and helping them cultivate reading strategies relevant to a new kind of reading experience; naturally, the “techniques of the preface” changed accordingly. The mescal narrative needed the salt-and-lemon preface “to get it down” (Lowry 499).

**The Labourer-Observer Conceptual Model in Conrad’s Preface to *The Nigger of the ‘Narcissus’***

I turn now to Joseph Conrad’s Preface to *The Nigger of the ‘Narcissus’* (1897), which Michael Levenson reads “as an entrance not into Conrad’s thought, at least not
only to his thought, but into the general situation of early modernism” (2). Concurring with Levenson’s assessment of the Preface, Michael North writes, “[i]t even seems easier, somehow, to consider this brief essay as prefatory to a whole new century than to the novel of which it was an afterthought” (37). Long discussed as an independent text, the Preface is now being studied as a peritext in relation both to The Nigger of the ‘Narcissus’ and to modernism. Despite growing interest in the Preface as a peritext, however, it continues to be studied—both as a peritext and independently—in exclusively thematic or ideological terms. Even North’s and Levenson’s recent and compelling studies relate the novel’s formal construction not to the Preface’s form but to its subject matter. Given its early date relative to Conrad’s other prefaces, all of Henry James’s prefaces, and most modernist prefaces, Conrad’s Preface is a logical starting point for investigating authorial prefaces’ central role in inviting modernist reading strategies.

The Preface, now widely accepted as the definitive statement of Conrad’s artistic aims, contributes to our understanding of his poetics—and to how modernist authorial prefaces function formally, in a pedagogical relation to modernist narratives—not just in what it says but also in how it says what it says. Describing Conrad’s thought as “in some respects refractory to conceptual analysis” on account of “additive” “expository method” and “syntax,” Ian Watt, who does tackle the Preface’s form, nevertheless overlooks the conceptual model that structures the Preface, concluding that Conrad’s “structure follows conventional expository order” (105, 107). Conrad in fact generates his conception of the

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6 Conrad wrote his Preface six months after the finishing The Nigger of the ‘Narcissus’; it was first published as an “Author’s Note” to the serial version in The New Review (December 1897); it then appeared as a pamphlet in 1902, as a pamphlet also containing a short introductory note, “To My Readers in America,” in 1914, and with the novel from 1914 onwards. For a full account of the Preface’s publication history, see Thomas Lavoie.

7 I use the terms “narrative” and “novel” throughout this chapter to discuss Conrad’s The Nigger of the ‘Narcissus’ and James’s The Portrait of a Lady both for the sake of variety and because, unlike Chiang Yee’s Silent Traveller narratives, for example, Conrad’s and James’s narratives are also novels.
artist\textsuperscript{8}-text-reader relation by means of a conceptual model built around two peritextual-level blends: the first blends the artist and the thinker or scientist; the second blends a field labourer and an observer with both the artist and the reader. No critical attention has been paid to the Preface's conceptual model: the blends in it, their relation to each other, and the reading strategies the conceptual model invites. Attention to this conceptual model changes our interpretation of Conrad's famous phrase about his artistic aim, so that our interest is not simply in \textit{what} Conrad "make[s] . . . [us] see," but in \textit{how} he "make[s] . . . [us] see": relationally (Conrad, Preface xlix).

The Preface's conceptual model begins with the first peritextual-level blend for the artist: "The artist . . . \textit{like} the thinker or the scientist, seeks the truth and makes his appeal" (xlvii, emphasis added). With the blend set-up signalled by the comparative "like," we naturally assume that what follows—a lengthy description of the aims and methods of the thinker or scientist—must be part of a blend with the artist. Thus, when we learn that the thinker and scientist "make their appeal to those qualities of our being that fit us best for the hazardous enterprise of living"; that they "speak authoritatively to our common-sense, to our intelligence, to our desire of peace or to our desire of unrest"; that "their words are heard with reverence, for their concern is with weighty matters"—when we learn all of this, we assume it applies, through the conceptual blend signalled by "like," to the artist, particularly because these aims and methods appear unquestionably laudable (xlvii). The shock that we experience as we encounter the sentence that follows—"It is \textit{otherwise} with the artist" (xlvii, my emphasis)—can itself best be described in terms of a blend: the rug has been pulled out from beneath our feet. We have

\textsuperscript{8} Throughout his Preface, Conrad refers to the author as an artist, so I use "artist" throughout this section and the next as a synonym for "author."
launched a conceptual blend to understand Conrad’s progression of thought, only to find that he is actually arguing by disanalogy. On philosophical grounds, this apparent blend is clearly rejected because it is inimical to Conrad’s view of art as anti-authoritarian and because it suggests that the artist appeals to reason, rather than to the senses, temperament, and imagination. Emphasizing the authoritative position of the thinker/scientist as well as the reverential attitude of the thinker/scientist’s audience, this conception of the artist-reader relation makes no mention of any work or critical engagement on the part of the reader. Even more striking, however, is the fact that the blend, had it continued as a blend, would have been based solely on similarity, similarity shading into the sameness or identity of the artist, the thinker, and the scientist. The formal basis for Conrad’s rejection of this blend, then, is the blend’s refusal to acknowledge difference. Like the conception of the artist-reader relation it implies, this blend is one-dimensional, unidirectional, and non-collaborative: it lacks the multidimensional and multidirectional negotiations between similarity and difference that, as we saw with Chiang Yee’s collaborative microtextual-level blends in chapter one, invite collaborative artist-reader activity. Thus, the philosophical and formal grounds for rejecting this blend are analogous.

Immediately following the collapse of his first blend for the artist-reader relation, Conrad sets off in a completely different direction. Now the artist’s aims, methods, and achievements are described point by point in the same order as those of the thinker/scientist, but they are completely dissimilar to, rather than similar or identical to, those of the thinker/scientist (xlvii-xlviii). There is no mechanism yet in place in the Preface for similarity and difference to be part of the same relational mode of thinking.
Michael North’s conclusion, that difference is both constitutive of and radically disruptive of the work announced in the Preface, also applies to the Preface’s conceptual model: difference is a pre-requisite for blending’s similarity-seeing activity and must be accounted for in a successful blend, but too much difference can either prevent a blend’s launch or, as we saw in The Waves’s Bernard-Neville riverbank blend in chapter two, create instability in a blend and ultimately threaten its viability.

Only at the end of the Preface is Conrad’s enduring conception of the artist-text-reader relation developed via a second peritextual-level blend, which I have termed a “blend complex” on account of its two significant differences from the first blend: the blend complex has two distinct phases, the second of which inverts the first, thereby acknowledging both similarity and difference in its conception of the artist’s and reader’s roles; its inversions offer the Preface’s reader an active, collaborative role, thereby inviting the very reading strategies it implicitly advocates. The first phase of this blend complex theorizes the tasks of the artist and the reader in terms of each other, establishing a physical landscape as the (textual) site where the reader and the artist, who are blended with a languid observer and a hard-working field labourer, respectively, come together. Conrad associates himself and us (the Preface’s readers), via the pronoun “we,” with the languid observer/reader: “[s]ometimes, stretched at ease in the shade of a roadside tree, we watch the motions of a labourer in a distant field, and after a time, begin to wonder languidly as to what the fellow may be at” (l, my emphasis). Then the blend complex moves into its second phase (l-li). Here, Conrad inserts himself and us into the position of

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9 North connects the Preface’s thematization of difference with the novel’s representation of James Wait as proof of the threat of difference to solidarity, on which reading and writing depend.
the artist, who has become a figure trying to halt the busy work of “them,” readers, now cast as field labourers:

[to arrest, for the space of a breath, the hands busy about the work of the earth, and compel men entranced by the sight of distant goals to glance for a moment at the surrounding vision of form and colour, of sunshine and shadows; to make them pause for a look, for a sigh, for a smile—such is the aim, difficult and evanescent, and reserved only for a very few to achieve. (li, emphasis added)]

The shift from one phase to the next involves an inversion of the blend complex’s initial terms. Not only is the reader the field labourer in the second arrangement, having been the languid observer in the first, but the artist, in whose shoes we are now positioned, is simultaneously observing the reader’s/labourer’s work and performing a different kind of labour: compelling the reader/labourer to “pause for a look, for a sigh, for a smile.” As the Preface’s readers, we shift positions over the course of the blend complex, occupying first the role of the reader and then the role of the artist, first the outsider perspective observing the labour and then a new perspective that both observes and performs labour.

The result of this inversion is not a rejection of the first phase’s arrangement, but rather a qualification of it that enables us to admit difference to what seemed to be another similarity-based blend (reader as observer and artist as labourer). What we see, then, is that both reading and writing entail labour, but that the work of the artist and the work of the reader are similar to and different from each other—are complementary—just as both figures are similar to and different from the figures of the labourer and the observer.

Furthermore, our engagement with the blend complex invites the collaborative activity
implied in its depiction of the artist-text-reader relation: there is, after all, an entire paragraph intervening between the first phase and the second, with the second discernible as part of the same peritextual-level blend complex only because of the phrase “the work of the earth,” which recalls the earlier account of the field labourer. If the text is a physical landscape in which the artist and the reader meet and perform their complementary toils, Conrad’s blend complex, part of the Preface’s textual landscape, necessitates the reader’s activity, “busy about the work of the earth,” to be activated. Activating the blend complex means not only recognizing the continuation of the labourer-observer blend through to the Preface’s final paragraph, but also moving through the positions set up by the blend complex’s inversions. Doing so cultivates relational reading strategies that enable us to see the positions of the artist and the reader relating to each other through similarity and difference across the whole blend complex, just as the two phases of the blend complex relate to each other through similarity and difference. While there are internal inversions and similarity/difference relations within the subject matter and form of Conrad’s blend complex, this blend complex also bears an external relation—also one of inversion and similarity/difference—to the first, rejected blend (involving the artist and the thinker/scientist). These internal and external inversions and similarity/difference relations, developed through peritextual-level blends, constitute a conceptual model for the Preface that sets up a new artist-text-reader relation inviting relational reading strategies.
Inversion-based Reading in *The Nigger of the ‘Narcissus’*

Turning to *The Nigger of the ‘Narcissus,*’ we find that it too is book-ended by two extended blends involving internal inversions and relations of similarity and difference; we also find that these two blends are related to each other, across the span of the whole narrative, by inversion as well as similarity and difference. Thus, we find evidence that the cognitively mobile reading strategies invited by the Preface’s conceptual model may be helpful for reading the narrative. The *Narcissus*, the central figure in Conrad’s narrative, bearing a freight of symbolic resonances, is only described at length in three places and in all three places the ship is described in relational terms. In this discussion, I will focus on the two blends for the *Narcissus* that book-end the narrative.10 As she leaves Bombay at the beginning of the narrative, the *Narcissus* is described as “a fragment detached from the earth” and as being on a “pilgrimage” (Conrad, *The Nigger of the ‘Narcissus’* 21). But at the end of the narrative, when the *Narcissus* arrives at her destination, sailing alongside the English coast and into the Channel, it is the land that is described as a ship, an anchored ship (120-21). The same domains are involved in both blends (land and ship) and, just as we see in the Preface’s conceptual model, the two blends relate to each other by means of inversion as well as similarity and difference.

The first blend (ship as land), which begins when the *Narcissus* is leaving Bombay, describes the ship being pulled along by a tugboat, given “a pluck to windward,” and catching the breeze and moving on (19). Shortly after this account of the ship’s movement, however, an inversion occurs, with the ship described as stationary and the sun moving and the land gliding away (20). Then the description inverts again as it

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10 The second lengthy description of the *Narcissus* is also blend-based: an extended blend involving the ship and a woman, but with significant adaptations of this traditional blend, which are beyond the scope of this chapter.
refers to the ship’s wake, clearly indicating that the ship is moving; shortly thereafter, the
ship is described as “moving along,” a “running ship” (20, 21). These two inversions of
the ship moving relative to the sun and land, then the sun and land moving relative to the
stationary ship, and then the ship moving again relative to these entities, entail shifts in
our spatial and perspectival positioning (ashore seeing a moving ship, onboard seeing
moving land, and ashore seeing a moving ship), akin to the shifts we experience when
relocated by the inversions in the Preface’s blend complex.

In the second blend (land as ship), when the Narcissus moves alongside the
English coast at the end of her voyage, we experience another series of spatial and
perspectival inversions. This blend begins with the land approaching the ship from both
sides: houses appear and crowd down to the edge of the banks to watch the Narcissus
(121). Then the description inverts, making it clear that the Narcissus is moving, instead
of the surroundings moving relative to a stationary ship: “[s]he swe[eps] round the
bends” in the waterway (121). As the Narcissus enters the Thames, the narrative features
a further inversion, a scene involving moving land and a stationary ship: “the land,
closing in, stopped between the ship and the sea” (121). Another inversion occurs, as the
Narcissus, now in motion again, enters a great cloud that hangs before her (121). Then
yet another inversion occurs, with the ship stationary again, while a “mad jumble of
begrimed walls loom[s] up” and “[t]he stony shores r[un] away” (122). Finally, the scene
ends with the ultimate stasis of the Narcissus in port. What we see in the Preface is a
closed, similarity-based blend being inverted and related through similarity and
difference to one that is more open, inverting, and bearing relations of similarity and
difference between its domains and phases. What we see in the narrative is a two-
inversion blend being inverted over the course of the narrative (ship as land to land as ship) to end in a four-inversion blend, related to it in terms of similarity and difference. In other words, the Preface’s dynamic conceptual model invites us to cultivate relational, cognitively mobile reading strategies, which I term “inversion-based reading strategies,” that help us negotiate the spatial and perspectival repositionings we experience in engaging with the narrative’s conceptually shifting blends for the Narcissus.

We do not, however, need these inversion-based reading strategies solely to grapple with two microtextual-level blends in the narrative or with the interaction between these blends, which creates a macrotextual-level, blend-based organizing structure for the narrative. Instead, the Preface also invites us to cultivate inversion-based reading strategies to negotiate other inversions the narrative requires of us, particularly perspectival inversions resulting from what Brian Richardson terms “multiperson narration.” Richardson’s term refers to shifts among different narrative points of view, best explained in terms of the narrator’s changing pronouns (“they,” “we,” and “I”). As the narrative unfolds, it alternates between “they” narration and “we” (first-person plural, homodiegetic) narration, sometimes rapidly and sometimes maintaining a single point of view for a longer period without interruption. At times the “they” narration seems heterodiegetic, as in the scene in which the narrator refers to both the off-duty watch and the on-duty watch with the pronoun “they,” implying that he belongs to neither group, even though the “we” narrator is clearly a member of the crew (Conrad, *The Nigger of the ‘Narcissus’* 41). At other times, however, the “they” narration seems homodiegetic, with the narrator referring to certain groups, such as the helmsmen or the officers, using the pronoun “they,” implying that he belongs to another group (such as the crew in
general or the men of the forecastle) (36). William Deresiewicz notes that critical responses to the vexed issue of point of view in the novel are varied: there are “those that ignore it, those that condemn it, those that attempt to justify or excuse it, [and] those that use it as the basis of a more populous taxonomy of narrative voices” (212).11 Richardson compellingly theorizes Conrad’s use of multiperson narration as a narrative technique for ideological work, arguing that we should not insist on a mimetic conception of the narrator (as entirely first- or third-person, homodiegetic or heterodiegetic), but should instead ask ourselves what the narration is doing at any given point in the narrative. The oscillation between individualism (“they”) and collective consciousness (“we”), one of the novel’s main themes, is re-inscribed formally, Richardson maintains, in that “the varied narrative voices . . . themselves constitute a kind of narrative that complements and underscores the central events and ideas of the story” (Unnatural Voices 42). Also relating multiperson narration to the novel’s themes, Deresiewicz argues that the two main narrative points of view are reflective of two modes of knowledge: imaginative identification that is universalistic and hierarchical (in the case of third-person narration) and particularistic knowledge or communal identity that is fraternal (in the case of “we” narration). He further argues that

[t]he duality of narrative modes embodies Conrad’s conflicting attitude toward his material, his split allegiance between the claims of authority,

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11 Surveying the range of critical responses to point of view in the novel, Richardson writes: Ian Watt identifies a single narrator, specifically, ‘a special kind of privileged narrator who functions as a collective voice . . . ’ Others postulate two (or even more) narrators. Jakob Lothe identifies two main kinds of narrator, one homodiegetic, the “‘narrator as character’ (I as personal pronoun)”; the other heterodiegetic ‘they as personal pronoun’ . . . , and goes on to claim that these two basic narrating perspectives are repeatedly modified and fused; ultimately he identifies six types of narrating positions. Still others find the text’s narration to be a mistake: Jeremy Hawthorn refers to the work’s ‘technical confusions in the manipulations of narrative perspective and distance’ . . . and Marvin Mudrick condemns Conrad’s ‘gross violation of point of view.’ (Unnatural Voices 145)
however ruthless, and the claims of sympathy, however misguided. . . .

The two voices that contend within the text are two voices, or forces, within Conrad himself; the drama on the page mirrors a drama within the author,
a drama related to Conrad’s circumstances during the novel’s composition, his transition from life as a sailor to life as a writer (Deresiewicz 213-14).

As Richardson’s, Deresiewicz’s, Ian Watt’s, and Jakob Lothe’s work
demonstrates, however, criticism on the novel’s narrative technique generally focuses on the narrator’s relation to the novel’s characters and events instead of considering how the changing points of view alter the reader’s relation to the characters and events (although the two relations are not necessarily separable, with the latter at times a consequence of or at least affected by the former). Taking the reader into consideration, John Lester argues that Conrad “juxtapose[s] two narrators throughout the book, hoping that, by this means, the frequent changes of focus would more clearly enable the reader to ‘see’ the themes and events of the novel,” through the dual advantages of omniscience (with third-person narration) and involvement or immediacy (with first-person narration) (164-66).

Inversion-based blends alter our relations to the figures of the artist, the reader, the labourer, and the observer in the Preface and to the Narcissus in the narrative; the effect of shifting points of view in the novel is analogous. As the narrative alternates between “we” narration and “they” narration, we shift in our relations of similarity-seeing

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12 In a completely different line of argumentation, Michael Levenson productively connects the novel’s shifting points of view to the Preface, arguing that shifts from third-person to first-person narration represent the novel’s leap into consciousness in response to the Preface’s appeal to temperament. The novel’s central tension—which is, Levenson claims, the central tension of modernism—is between themes (duty, anti-consciousness) and form (individuality, a reflecting consciousness). Modernism’s defence of work and solidarity, he argues, needs to find ways to accommodate the claims of consciousness and individuality, and this tension is enacted in the novel’s shifting points of view.
(feelings of identification) and difference-seeing (feelings of alterity) relative to the characters and events, continually revising our responses to and evaluations of them, including our feelings of sympathy and solidarity, which critics consider the narrative’s “polar and defining values” (Weston 344). “In the world of the novel,” John Howard Weston writes, “feelings of sympathy are detrimental to the common effort to survive, and the conviction of solidarity is beneficial” (342-43). The similarity/difference dynamics involved in Weston’s reading are intricate: a sympathizing person sees only similarity in his relation to James Wait, for example, which, because of the inherently vicarious egotism and self-pity in his position, causes him to see only difference in his relation to the crew, leading to disharmony and fragmentation of the collective. Yet there is a risk attached to solidarity, conceived in Weston’s terms: that risk is excessive similarity-seeing relative to the group, so that the individual loses his difference-based individuality. If the novel’s alternations between “we” and “they” continually shift us in and out of different perspectives in relation to individual characters and the crew as a whole, we are unable to settle in any one (similarity-based or difference-based) response to or evaluation of them. The narrative technique thus prompts a new mode of experiencing the relation between sympathy and solidarity, a mode in which we are invited, by virtue of our shifting positionality, to acknowledge and maintain both similarity and difference in our self-other relations, whether the other is an individual or a group. Instead of experiencing sympathy and solidarity as “polar,” we experience them as complementary facets of the self-other relation.

The novel’s post-storm recovery scene, in which the crew realizes that James Wait has not been seen since the storm began and may have drowned or been trapped in
his cabin, invites us to shift—through its sudden insertion of a third-person perspective in a first-person account—in our emotional and ethical relations to the characters and the narrative situation:

Belfast [who wants to find James Wait] untied himself with blind impetuosity, and all at once shot down to leeward quicker than a flash of lightning. *We* shouted all together with dismay; but with his legs overboard he held and yelled for a rope. In *our* extremity nothing could be terrible; so *we* judged him funny kicking there, and with his scared face. Some one began to laugh, and, as if hysterically infected with screaming merriment, all *those haggard men* went off laughing, wild-eyed, like a lot of maniacs tied up on a wall. (Conrad, *The Nigger of the 'Narcissus'* 47, my emphasis)

While the question of whether the narrator is one of “those haggard men” is important, the answer is not necessarily related to the position the narrative constructs for the reader because the narrative, with its “we” narration, initially invites us into a position of identification and involvement with the crew’s emotions, only to distance us from them through the shift into a third-person perspective. The effect is a sharp transition between our participation in the collective feeling that Belfast’s predicament is “funny” and our subsequent dissociation from the “wild,” maniacal “screaming merriment.” An emotional response that is at first normalized because we are positioned among the “we” collective is subsequently defamiliarized in a way that invites us to be self-reflexive about how our responses are affected or even determined by the positions into which the narrative draws us through its shifting points of view. Self-reflexivity about the grounds of our responses
enables us to make more ethical evaluations about the ethics of the crew’s actions in this scene; these evaluations are more ethical precisely because they are aware of their own contingent basis in responses that are always shifting. As Richardson says, we must pay attention to what the narration is doing at any given point in the novel, particularly to what it is doing to us—drawing us into certain responses, interpretations, judgments, and evaluations, which we may resist and revise, and which the narrative itself demands (by shifting its point of view and thereby repositioning us), sooner or later, that we resist and revise. The effect is not only, as Richardson claims, that Conrad “mirror[s], expressively, the crew’s changing cohesion through the pronouns used to describe them” (“Posthumanist Narration” 219), but also that Conrad facilitates our changing relations (of similarity and difference, identification and alterity, association and dissociation) to the crew and its individual members through the changing pronouns used to describe them. It is, indeed, “a strategy that selects a narrative voice out of functional rather than realistic motivations” (“Posthumanist Narration” 221), but these functional motivations are as related to the narrative’s continual reconstructions of the reader’s position as they are to the narrative’s thematic vision.

The temporal shifts that accompany this perspectival shifting underscore the ambiguous referentiality of the narrative’s pronouns and have the same effect of drawing us into positions of involvement and distance relative to the feelings, beliefs, and actions of the crew and its individual members. The “we” narration is at times clearly retrospective, offering an offline account (complete with clearer hindsight) of an earlier online experience, as in the passage in which Donkin’s subversive activity is narrated: “We decried our officers—who had done nothing—and listened to the fascinating
Donkin. . . . He made us forget that he, at any rate, had lost nothing of his own” (Conrad, *The Nigger of the ‘Narcissus’* 74). The realizations that the officers had done nothing to deserve such insubordination and that Donkin did not personally risk anything in fomenting rebellion are retrospective, and have the effect of aligning us with the evaluations of the offline retrospective “we,” distancing us from the limited awareness of the online narrative-world “we.” The gap between the retrospective “we” and the narrative-world “we” is, however, narrowed shortly after this assessment of Donkin’s subversive activity, so that the narrative point of view is still retrospective but lacks the hindsight of the previous retrospective position. Now we are drawn into closer identification with the narrative-world “we,” its self-pitying attitude and sense of entitlement, and its construction of its present, allegedly clearer understanding in relation to its alleged former ignorance: “We were oppressed by the injustice of the world, surprised to perceive how long we had lived under its burden without realising our unfortunate state, annoyed by the uneasy suspicion of our undiscerning stupidity” (75).

The juxtaposition of these two passages, which feature gaps of different extents between the retrospective “we” and the narrative-world “we,” between offline narration and online perception, underscores the narrative’s continual unsettling of our positionality and our attendant emotional and ethical responses to the novel’s characters and events. The narrative insists that we read it resistingly.

Our best strategy for doing so is cognitively mobile inversion-based reading, in which the Preface’s blend-based conceptual model affords us such invaluable practice. Mobility is also thematized in the novel: the *Narcissus’s* existence depends on motion and process. The two signal moments of the *Narcissus’s* distress on her voyage are
moments in which the stasis vector and the movement vector are so evenly balanced that the ship is threatened with extinction. During the violent storm, the ship is suspended in one place relative to its homeward-bound trajectory, but is also tossed up and down and side to side. Having braved this battle with the elements, the ship travels north and encounters headwinds around the Equator, which bring her again to a halt in terms of her homeward journey, but also cause her to rush “to and fro, heading north-west, heading east; . . . backwards and forwards, distracted” (106). The narrative ends when (and perhaps because) the Narcissus comes to rest in port. Stasis takes over completely in the dramatic moment when the ship “cease[s] to live” (123). If the ship bears the freight of the narrative’s various symbolic resonances, our ability to read, interpret, and evaluate the narrative may depend on our ability to keep up with the ship’s motion—via cognitively mobile inversion-based reading. Just when the narrative has unfolded long enough through one narrative point of view—“we” (limited to a greater or lesser extent to the online “we”) or “they”—that we think we are finding our sea-legs in it, with our emotional and ethical orientations relative to specific characters or to the crew settling into a particular combination of similarity and difference, identification and alterity: just at that moment we find that the narrative tips beneath our feet and “make[s] . . . [us] see” (Conrad, Preface xlix) anew.¹³

Given that our reading experience is one of perspectival and temporal instability, and that this instability is tied to the continual movement of the Narcissus, it is not

¹³ Gail Fincham argues that in Under Western Eyes (1911), “[t]he reader’s learning to ‘see’ anew is enabled by shifts in narrative perspective and in focalization”; she maintains that this narrative design is linked to “authorial/narratorial coercion,” a connection Jeremy Hawthorn makes in his reading of The Nigger of the ‘Narcissus’ (Fincham 60). My reading of The Nigger of the ‘Narcissus’ aims to revise this idea of authorial coercion by demonstrating that the narrative’s shifts in point of view invite modes of resistant reading that are by definition beyond authorial or narratorial control.
surprising that the narrative ends when (or because) the Narcissus reaches her final stasis in port. Even then, however, we do not achieve a stable perspective from which to view the characters and events of the narrative, and from which to pass a final judgment on the various interpretive and ethical questions the narrative has raised. Rather, the narrative’s final gesture is analogous to an act of tipping us overboard. The last section of the novel begins with a paragraph of “they” narration, in which the crew members are depicted making their way to the Black Horse tavern for a final drink together before they part. By now accustomed to the ambiguity of the referent for “they” and the narrator of “they” passages, we suddenly learn that this passage of “they” narration is actually being delivered from the perspective of a specific “I” narrator, a crew member who gazes at the rest of the crew “[f]rom afar” (Conrad, The Nigger of the ‘Narcissus’ 127). We are not given sufficient time to recalibrate our relations to either the crew or the “I” narrator; rather, the narrative, like the crew, drifts “out of sight” (128). But if our reading experience of The Nigger of the ‘Narcissus’ began with the Preface, before the narrative itself began, it carries on beyond the narrative’s final page, as we continue to be tipped forward and aft, starboard and port, by our own efforts to grapple with the narrative’s complex and ambiguous representations of issues that are as important to us today as they were to Conrad’s first readers: race, class, and nationality. The Preface’s conceptual model challenges our cognitive mobility and our capacity to think relationally in order to equip us with the inversion-based reading strategies necessary for tackling these complexities and ambiguities in a novel that, through its narrative techniques and thematicization of mobility, insists we keep moving.
The House-of-Fiction Conceptual Model in James’s Preface to The Portrait of a Lady

Unlike Conrad’s labourer-observer blend complex for the artist-text-reader relation, Henry James’s house-of-fiction blend has received an immense amount of critical scrutiny. Both blends, however, share the same fate in the sense that their participation in peritextual conceptual models has been overlooked. The house-of-fiction conceptual model, which spans James’s Preface to The Portrait of a Lady (1881), begins with an account of James writing the novel while gazing through his windows at a Venetian vista; it moves through the localized house-of-fiction blend to an account of Isabel Archer as the narrative’s “centre of consciousness,” around whom the architecture of the novel is built. As I will demonstrate, in tracing the unfolding house-of-fiction conceptual model and reading it in its specific peritextual context, we are able to cultivate the reading strategy of seeing double, or balancing seeing and seeing through—an invaluable strategy for negotiating the changing artist-text-reader relation brought about by James’s experiments with figural narration (the gap between who speaks [narration] and who sees or perceives [focalization]).

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14 James’s Preface to The Portrait of a Lady, in which the house-of-fiction blend appears, was one of eighteen prefaces he wrote for the New York Edition of his collected works (published 1907-1909). The prefaces were published together in two other important modernist publications: Percy Lubbock’s thirty-five volume The Novels and Stories of Henry James (1921-1923), which included the entirety of the New York Edition along with some stories James had omitted from the Edition; and Richard P. Blackmur’s compilation of the prefaces, The Art of the Novel (1934).

15 Like Conrad, James generally refers to the author as an artist, so I use “artist” throughout this section and the next as a synonym for “author.”

16 William Goetz makes the strong claim that treating James’s prefaces as practical criticism for his novels is a useless endeavour because the prefaces do not discuss the novels’ themes. Even if this assertion were true—and I do not think there is such a pronounced thematic disjunction between James’s prefaces and novels—we must still look beyond the explicit themes of the prefaces to examine whether the prefaces invite reading strategies relevant to the novels. Thomas Leitch gestures in this direction, although he focuses, as so many other readers of the prefaces do, on the prefaces as programs for reading instead of as loci for cultivating reading strategies: “Over the past twenty-five years, critics of James, provoked largely by Laurence Holland’s analysis of the prefaces, have tended to read them less as an exposition of the theory of fiction and more as a praxis or program for reading. . . . [I]n writing the prefaces, James is creating a new way of thinking about his work” (64).
The Preface opens with James’s account of writing *The Portrait of a Lady* in a literal house of fiction, his rooms on the Riva Schiavoni in Venice. In an image that anticipates the upcoming house-of-fiction blend, James describes his younger self being “driven” to his windows for inspiration (James, “Preface to *The Portrait of a Lady*” 40). Perhaps the disparity between the human scene the young James is looking at with his eyes (Venice) and the human scene he is looking at with his mind’s eye (some part of the action he wishes to represent in *The Portrait of a Lady*) accounts for his experience of “delighted senses” and a “divided, frustrated mind” (41). If, as Hershel Parker claims, the older James remembers vividly the literal houses of fiction he inhabited, so that his acts of re-reading involve remembering the place and time of writing or of a first reading (300), James’s remembrance in this Preface is surely a doubly divided one, divided not only between now and then (the offline narrating James and the online perceiving James), but also between the eye’s sight then and the mind’s eye’s sight then (and, analogously, between the eye’s sight now and the mind’s eye’s sight now). The idea of an interplay between two modes of seeing is apparent early in the Preface and is rooted in James’s embodied experience in present and former literal houses of fiction.¹⁷

The Preface’s house-of-fiction blend establishes a series of matches pertaining to the relation between the artist, his work, and the world: the “watcher” is the artist and “[t]he spreading field, the human scene” is the artist’s “‘choice of subject’” (James, “Preface to *The Portrait of a Lady*” 46). There are innumerable ways of inhabiting the

¹⁷ Achim Hölter notes that James spent his whole life writing by a window. Philip Horne connects James’s architectural figures and images with his embodied experience, drawing on cognitive science’s broader claim for “the etymological or conceptual grounding of many apparently abstract words or concepts on physical and spatial relationships. If it were not for these basic relationships we could not ‘grasp’ the meanings of the words and concepts derived from them, and many of the ways in which we speak abstractly are implicitly drawn from a realm of objective substance” (Horne 52). Horne concludes that we must pay attention to the embodied basis of James’s blends (although Horne uses the term “analogies”) for authorial revision.
house of fiction and perceiving the world outside from within it: the novel’s “million”
different potential forms are the house’s innumerable windows pierced or pierceable by
the individual artist’s vision; differences in how the human scene is represented in this
multitude of novels are related not so much to the specific literary form in which the
scene is conveyed as they are to “the consciousness of the artist” (46). If the house of
fiction is fiction conceived in generic terms and blended with a house, the blend suggests,
in purely spatial terms, that the artist stands in the (abstractly conceived) house of fiction,
looking out of it through a specific literary form that both enables him to see the world he
is trying to represent and constitutes that very representation. But where, according to the
spatial terms established by the blend, is the reader?

James’s house-of-fiction conceptual model is further developed—and illuminates
his conception of the reader’s role (and thus her location in terms of the house-of-fiction
blend)—when he returns to his account of writing The Portrait of a Lady: only a few
pages after the apparently localized house-of-fiction blend is developed, James describes
writing the novel as an exercise in constructing “a large building,” “a square and spacious
house,” around the central, focalizing character, Isabel Archer (48). According to the
terms of the house-of-fiction blend, in writing the novel, James is standing in the house of
fiction, looking out of it through the specific literary form that enables him to see and
represent a specific subject (selected from the larger “human scene”) and that constitutes
that very representation. The output of this effort is The Portrait of a Lady, a novel that,
James implies in this next stage of the Preface’s conceptual model, is another house of
fiction, one that is built up around its central character: “the centre of the subject [is
placed] in the young woman’s own consciousness” (51). In reading this novel with its
figural narration, the reader is in fact also seeing through the windows of a house of fiction: Isabel’s mind is a house in which the reader sits, Isabel’s eyes—but also her other perceptual and cognitive faculties—serving as windows through which the reader perceives the events of the narrative world. (In his “Preface to The American” (1877), James implies the extension of his house-of-fiction blend into a larger conceptual model for the artist-text-reader relation: he reminds us that we are seated at the window of Christopher Newman’s consciousness.)

James’s house-of-fiction conceptual model features nested houses of fiction. The reader is located in the innermost layer: in the house of the focalizing character’s consciousness, gazing at the narrative world through her eyes and perceiving it through her other senses, which are the windows of her consciousness. The focalizing character, in turn, is seated within the house of fiction that is the novel itself, a novel the artist has built up around her, separating her from all the other possible subjects he could have selected from the human scene. The artist, in turn, is seated within the house of fiction to which James devotes his blend—seated before the specific window of his chosen literary form, gazing at the subject he has selected from the human scene through his particular senses and sensibilities and through his chosen literary form’s conventions. He is also seated in a literal house of fiction, the rooms overlooking the Riva Schiavoni, for example, in which James wrote The Portrait of a Lady. This nested series of houses of fiction is an apt conceptual model for the artist-text-reader relation in novels featuring figural narration. Yet this conceptual model is developed in a Preface, one in which

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18 Dorothy Hale reads the localized house-of-fiction blend differently, arguing that the novel is “a window from which the reader as well as the author [can] . . . appreciate the interesting, ultimately unfathomable object before them” (51). Translating her reading into the terms established by the house-of-fiction blend, we see the author and the reader standing in the house of fiction together, looking out of a window at Isabel.
James is not only the author of *The Portrait of a Lady* but also a reader of his younger self, his former Venetian house of fiction, and his own novel: this peritextual context alters the conceptual model in a way that enables it not only to model or image artist-text-reader relations in narratives involving figural narration, but also to invite the Preface’s reader to cultivate a reading strategy helpful for engaging with figural narration.

This reading strategy, which I term “seeing double,” involves both seeing and the mode of seeing that James calls “seeing ‘through’”—“one thing through another, accordingly, and still other things through *that* . . . as many things as possible by the way” (“Preface to *What Maisie Knew*” 153-54).19 In the “Preface to *The American*,” James identifies the writing form of “seeing ‘through’” (writing a novel featuring a centre of consciousness) as “an act of personal possession”: the writer makes a “creative effort to get into the skin of the creature; an act of personal possession of one being by another at its completest” (37). But the identities of the possessor and the possessed are not specified: is James possessing the creature (in this case, Christopher Newman) or is the creature possessing James? When we read from within Isabel Archer’s consciousness, we are “seeing ‘through,’” but are we possessed by her or in full possession of her? If the threat of possession inherent in “seeing ‘through’” is the possibility of being completely taken in by Isabel’s perceptions, interpretations, and evaluations of events and other characters in the narrative world, then we must remain attentive to textual features that indicate the qualifying knowledge, beliefs, opinions, and values of the implied author.

19 The nested nature of James’s conceptual model formally instantiates “seeing ‘through.’” The conceptual model can be understood by means of Hilary Dannenberg’s concept of the portal, which she develops in a larger theory of narrative’s spatial structures. Spatial relations in narrative can be construed as paths and containers, to use Mark Johnson’s terms, but Dannenberg adds to these terms the portal, a doorway through which characters pass or a window through which they see or are seen by others. The windows in the houses of fiction on various layers of James’s conceptual model are themselves portals through which we gain views of other houses of fiction, other worlds, and other consciousnesses.
This is the “seeing” half of the seeing double reading strategy. Understood in terms of James’s house-of-fiction conceptual model, seeing double reconfigures the relations among the nested houses of fiction to establish a link between the innermost and outermost houses. In accepting the invitations made by the implied author through the text, we are able to remain seated in the house of fiction that is the focalizing character’s consciousness while also forging a link to the outermost house of fiction inhabited by the author, thereby attaining a double perspective on the narrative world.

Paul Armstrong argues that James’s prefaces offer us “a hermeneutic education that simulates modes of understanding [which he terms “a doubled act of attention”] appropriate for construing [James’s] . . . fiction” (“Reading James’s Prefaces” 126), but only if we are already familiar with James’s novels. Reading James as a centre of consciousness in his own prefaces, Armstrong maintains that we must be familiar with James’s frequent use of centres of consciousness in order to read him as one. The “peculiarity of James’s concerns” in the prefaces, Armstrong observes, makes “him seem like one of his registers—like a Fleda Vetch or a Lambert Strether whose eccentric ways of seeing are themselves a matter of interest in their own right and compel criticism of the screen through which things are observed in order to see them adequately” (“Reading James’s Prefaces” 129). Reading the prefaces is, Armstrong claims, analogous to reading The Ambassadors (1903) or The Golden Bowl (1904): the reader must perform “the impossible double act of concretizing a represented world while at the same time observing and criticizing the interpretive acts of another consciousness perceiving and reflecting about that world” (“Reading James’s Prefaces” 127-28). Given that we often have to “read against [James’s] . . . perspective to arrive at the truth” and maintain “a
healthy sense of [his] . . . fallibility [as] . . . a central intelligence,” our doubled act of attention “simulate[s] and reproduce[s] the characteristic structure of response invoked by his fictions” (Armstrong, “Reading James’s Prefaces” 129, 128). But only a reader already familiar with *Roderick Hudson* (1875) would detect the oddity of James’s “prominent and early mention” of “a relatively minor feature of this novel,” and thereby deduce, as evidence of James’s fallibility or limitations, that “a private preoccupation has overridden James’s sense of audience” (Armstrong, “Reading James’s Prefaces” 129). If the prefaces equip us with reading strategies relevant to the novels’ experiments with figural narration, we should not have to read the novels first just to identify James as a centre of consciousness and achieve the requisite doubled act of attention; otherwise we would already possess the reading strategies with which the prefaces equip us and the prefaces’ pedagogical function would be diminished. The prefaces would be, at most, venues for practicing and refining reading strategies we already possess.\(^{20}\)

There is, in fact, evidence of James’s fallibility and limitations as a centre of consciousness that comes not from familiarity with his novels but from the gap in the prefaces between the older offline narrating James and the younger online perceiving James. Reading the prefaces on their own terms, as narratives of an artist’s re-encounter with and reading of his younger self and his earlier works, involves reading strategies relevant to the novels. The *Portrait of a Lady* Preface makes a distinction between the narrating I and the experiencing I very early. James begins with a brief account of the

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\(^{20}\) Thomas Leitch, who also argues that “James’s prefaces are clearly intended for an audience that has already read the books they introduce,” describes the New York Edition as “the climactic Jamesian fiction,” with James a Strether-figure, “a superbly sensitive consciousness struggling to appreciate and so redeem a sequence of bewildering but exhilarating experiences” (65, 66). The prefaces, Leitch argues, establish “a chain of identifications with the working novelist and each surrogate consciousness” (68).
novel’s publication context and then describes the circumstances surrounding the novel’s composition, recalled through the act of re-reading:

There are pages of the book which, in the reading over, have seemed to make me see again the bristling curve of the wide Riva, the large colour-spots of the balconied houses and the repeated undulation of the little hunchbacked bridges, marked by the rise and drop again, with the wave, of foreshortened clicking pedestrians. The Venetian footfall and the Venetian cry . . . come in once more at the window, renewing one’s old impression of the delighted senses and the divided, frustrated mind.

(James, “Preface to The Portrait of a Lady” 41)

The book acts as a window or portal through which the older James is able to see, read, and make a connection with his younger self: this connection across a temporal divide is imaged as a shared spatial positioning—gazing out of a window—leading to a revival of former perceptions, as the “Venetian footfall and the Venetian cry . . . come in once more at the window.” The very effort to connect is demonstrative of the gap between the older James and the younger James, and throughout the prefaces the older James betrays ambivalence about this gap, at times attempting connection with, but at other times underscoring his separation from, his younger self. Depending on the balance of similarity-seeing and difference-seeing apparent at any given point in the prefaces, the older James’s relation to his younger self oscillates between identification and alterity, imaged spatially and temporally in various ways, such as the *Golden Bowl* Preface’s image of a traveller at times following and at times deviating from the imprint of his
earlier footsteps in the snow. The gap between the younger James and the older James invites the reader’s cognitively mobile doubled act of attention: reading the prefaces (including their portraits of the younger James and the older James) from within the older James’s centre of consciousness and reading that centre of consciousness from the outside. James’s novels, with their recurrent use of centres of consciousness, invite the same reading strategy.

The house-of-fiction conceptual model demonstrates that the artist-text-reader relation in a Jamesian novel is akin to a series of nested houses, with the artist, centre of consciousness, and reader seated at windows in the outermost, middle, and innermost houses, respectively. But the conceptual model’s location in a Preface that foregrounds its own author as a centre of consciousness generates an additional dynamic in the artist-text-reader relation that governs the Preface. This new dynamic necessitates a reconfiguration of the house-of-fiction conceptual model as it pertains to the Preface’s artist-text-reader relation and constitutes a further invitation to the reader to cultivate more sophisticated and cognitively mobile seeing-double reading strategies. In this reconfigured conceptual model, the reader sits in the innermost house of fiction, as she does in the conceptual model governing the novel’s artist-text-reader relation. This innermost house of fiction in the Preface, however, is contained within one inhabited by James as the centre of consciousness. And this middle house of fiction is contained within an outermost house of fiction inhabited by the reader, who thus reads James from two perspectives simultaneously, one within his centre of consciousness and one reading

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21 John Pearson notes that James uses two metaphor systems—the young explorer with a broad geographical range and the older painter with a narrower scope—to construct a narrative set-up akin to that of “duplex autobiographical form”: “the present creates itself as it recreates the past, working towards a union of subject and narrator. Gradually, the younger self becomes the autobiographer, and the story of the past becomes the story of writing about the past” (“Art of Self-Creation” 50).
that centre of consciousness from the outside. If James is an unwitting centre of consciousness in his own Preface, the nesting of houses stops here, its reader-James-reader configuration a variation on the James-Isabel-reader conceptual model that governs the novel’s artist-text-reader relation. But if James is a witting centre of consciousness in his own Preface—if, in other words, he is staging himself as a centre of consciousness—then the house-of-fiction conceptual model that governs the Preface has a fourth, outermost layer: this layer is occupied by James as the Preface’s implied author who constructs the conceptual model both to conceptualize the artist-text-reader relation in his fiction and to create an artist-text-reader relation in his Preface to equip the reader with strategies necessary for reading *The Portrait of a Lady*. In this case, the conceptual model is a self-reflexive externalization of the “divided, frustrated mind” (41) that writes it.

Whether James is an unwitting or a witting centre of consciousness in the Preface and thus whether the conceptual model governing the Preface has three or four nested houses of fiction: the difference between the two scenarios is really the difference between whether or not we perceive that our seemingly outermost house of fiction is actually in the shadow of a larger one. Is James always looking over our shoulders—or does even the Master sleep sometimes? Critics have generally read James’s prefaces as, to use Vivienne Rundle’s terms, “magisterial” “intellectual and interpretive imperialism” (70, 74). But if James is an unwitting centre of consciousness in the *Portrait of a Lady*

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22 Some of these readings are rooted in misreadings of the house-of-fiction blend, which critics remove from its context in *The Portrait of a Lady*. Preface’s conceptual model. Arguing that James uses the prefaces to “create the critical apparatus . . . by which his novels could be understood . . . [and] appreciated,” John Pearson says James, “the ideal consumer” of his own works on account of his position as their creator, “lead[s] his reader to the threshold of the house of fiction . . . but [cannot] . . . risk being detected inside” (*Prefaces of Henry James* 2). Pearson further suggests that the prefaces function as windows to the house of fiction, with James using this space to control readings of his novels. Sara Blair
Preface, then this reading must be revised. And even if James is a witting centre of consciousness in the Preface, by staging his own limitations and fallibility he invites the reader to turn her cognitively mobile reading strategy of seeing double on him. James affords the reader a far more active role than the one implied in accounts of his allegedly controlling presence in the prefices. Ultimately, our reading experience is the same, whether the Preface’s conceptual model has three or four houses of fiction: we are still invited to see double, reading the Preface from within James’s centre of consciousness and reading that centre of consciousness from the outside; and the Preface still functions in a pedagogical relation to the novel, cultivating relevant reading strategies.

likewise focuses on the house of fiction as a form of (specifically domestic) sanctioning of James’s literary authority, concluding that his identification with women and moral guardianship align him with a protective domestic discourse in opposition to the outside marketplace ethos of male power; she notes the similarity between James’s position at a window while writing Roderick Hudson and the spatial dynamics described in the house-of-fiction blend, but does not attend to the similar situation described at the beginning of The Portrait of a Lady Preface and thus to the larger conceptual model in which the house-of-fiction blend participates.

23 Making a compelling argument about the self-referential language and images James uses to talk about houses, faces, and fiction, Jakob Stougaard-Nielsen observes that [the ekphrastic description of narrative discourse as architecture turns the exteriority of the literary form figured in the façade (the face of the house and its windows) into the face of the author. . . . The face of the author and ekphrastic architecture function as interpretive thresholds to the texts forming the New York Edition. The artist standing behind the windows of James’s ‘house of fiction’ with his visual prostheses, eyes and field glasses, is transformed into the house itself through the blurring of conceptual borders between face and façade. (147)]

24 Reading James as a centre of consciousness in his own prefaces offers us a firm narratological basis for claims made by a vocal minority of James critics: that, to use David McWhirter’s words, James “is still very much an active, responsible agent in his text, though perhaps no longer the purveyor of the ‘lessons’ habitually attributed to this master” (3). Critics who read James as cultivating a reciprocal relation with his readers through the prefaces offer various justifications for this reading. Susanne Kappeler argues that “[o]nce the work is autonomous and is said to have a ‘life’ of its own, a public existence, its maker is no more competent to approach it than any reader. From the subjective role of an author he moves into that of an ‘objective’ critic; from being an insider he becomes an outsider” (141). Daniel Schwarz reads James’s use of “we” and “us” an act of “making common cause with the community of readers that he as an artist seeks” (46). McWhirter suggests that James counters “language of priority, paternity, origins, hierarchy, and will—the language of authority—. . . [with] a kind of writing characterized by relationships of adjacency, openness, difference, and free play” (10). Establishing a connection between the reading strategies invited by James’s prefaces and those invited by his novels creates a firm narratological basis for all other claims of James’s reciprocity with his readers in his prefaces.
Seeing Double in *The Portrait of a Lady*

Turning to *The Portrait of a Lady*, we find that the house-of-fiction conceptual model, with its central house-mind blend in its specific peritextual context, equips us with reading strategies that help us to read house-minds and read within them in the novel, while also helping us grapple with the novel’s thematization of reading minds as houses. Noting the “infinite regress of houses within houses” in James’s prefaces and his novels—the house of fiction, James’s remembered houses, James’s fictions as houses, buildings in James’s novels, and the minds of characters as houses—Ellen Eve Frank argues that the “characters inside these houses of fiction stand to the fiction as furnishings to a house, ideas to the mind” (172, 196). She analogizes the movement of characters in a Jamesian narrative with the activities in our minds during the reading experience: when characters “enter and leave houses, their activity . . . parallel[s] the complex movements of thoughts [in our minds] . . . which likewise enter and leave our minds or else remain affixed inside, furnishing and decorating our perceptual structures” (Frank 197). Yet our reading experience of *The Portrait of a Lady* seems to invert the terms of Frank’s blend between the narrative’s houses and our minds: instead of the characters entering and exiting or remaining in the houses of our minds, we enter and exit or remain in the houses

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25 James’s “edifice complex” (Stallman 7) has been discussed extensively. R. W. Stallman and Elizabeth Sabiston both read the novel’s houses as symbolic of their inhabitants. The front of Osmond’s Florentine villa, “pierced with a few windows in irregular relations,” is suggestive, Stallman argues, of Osmond’s irregular relations with Madame Merle, just as the villa’s “[a]ngles, crooked piazza, and irregular windows—all hint at Osmond’s moral obliquity” (James, *The Portrait of a Lady* 249; Stallman 10). Stallman also reads the novel’s houses as part of a broader thematic opposition between enclosure and spaciousness, which he associates with the opposition between darkness and light. Following Stallman, Sandra Fischer reads Isabel’s retreats into houses as evidence of her preference for enclosure, isolation, and darkness; she is, Fischer argues, sexually frigid and prefers watching life to the exposure inherent in living life. Elizabeth Boyle Machlan reads the novel’s houses differently, arguing that Isabel is shaped by the houses she inhabits. Rather than being a reflection of facets of Isabel’s personality, the houses in the novel each invoke one or more literary genres for Isabel and for the reader: each house is, therefore, a way of organizing experience. Isabel’s departure from Gardencourt, for example, represents her rejection of the Gardencourt romance plot.
of their minds through the novel’s use of figural narration. The majority of our reading experience occurs from within Isabel’s house-mind; the novel is largely focalized through her perceptions, interpretations, and evaluations of events and other characters in the narrative world. There are, however, scenes in the novel focalized through other characters’ consciousnesses; during these scenes, we enter into and take up temporary lodging in the houses of these characters’ minds. When Lord Warburton bids farewell to Isabel and Gilbert Osmond in Rome, for example, James’s use of free indirect style temporarily takes us into Warburton’s consciousness. The novel thus calls for a reconfiguration of the conceptual model the Preface develops for the novel’s artist-text-reader relation: we must add to the conceptual model’s innermost layer a series of house-minds for the reader to occupy, Isabel’s foremost, but also Warburton’s, for example, as we see in this farewell scene.  

Given that we spend most of our reading experience within Isabel’s consciousness, the most convenient bridge the narrative offers us to the perceptions, interpretations, and evaluations of the implied author (other than the scenes in which Isabel is not present, featuring important conversations that provide us with information we might not otherwise possess) is the opportunity to inhabit other house-minds, thus reading Isabel from the outside and gaining a different view of the narrative world. It is in these scenes that our ability to see double is most rigorously challenged.

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26 This discussion of nested house-minds can be productively conceptualized through William Nelles’s account of two structurally distinct types of narrative embedding: Nelles’s horizontal variety (in which texts at the same diegetic level, but narrated by different narrators, follow one another) accounts for the series of character house-minds the novel opens to the reader, while the vertical variety (in which narratives at different diegetic levels are inserted within or stacked on top of one another) accounts for the nesting of house-minds in the novel and Preface.

27 These scenes include the conversations between Ralph and Daniel Touchett (about leaving Isabel a legacy), Madame Merle and Gilbert Osmond (about their plots to secure Isabel in marriage and unite Pansy with Lord Warburton), Madame Merle and Ned Rosier (about Rosier’s suit for Pansy’s hand), and Madame Merle and Lydia Touchett (about Madame Merle’s betrayal of Lydia Touchett’s request that she prevent Isabel and Gilbert Osmond’s marriage), to name only a few.
We are invited to undertake a cognitively mobile doubled act of attention: Isabel is a house we inhabit through focalization and a house to be read from the outside, just as the narrative world must be seen and seen through her consciousness.

The novel thematizes the failure to attain this doubled act of attention with respect to others’ house-minds as a consequence of constructing intimate self-other relations as acts of colonization. The novel opens with a blend involving the face of a house and the face of a character, both of which can be observed and read from the outside: Gardencourt has a “complexion” and a “physiognomy,” and these words are also used to describe the faces of its inhabitants, Daniel and Ralph Touchett (James, *The Portrait of a Lady* 20, 21). Throughout the narrative, the characters use blends to describe each other’s minds and their own minds as houses, acknowledging the limitations of only being able to take an external view, but refusing the vulnerability that attends opening the doors of one’s own house-mind to others. Ralph Touchett describes Isabel as “a Gothic cathedral” whose windows he can look through, but which he cannot enter; he likewise describes himself as an inner chamber protected by an ante-room in which a band is always playing to create the illusion of perpetual dancing inside (81, 78). Isabel wishes she could gain entrance to Ralph’s inner chamber just as Ralph wishes he had the right key to enter Isabel’s Gothic cathedral; they strive for a glimpse of each other’s house-minds from within, but shore up the doors of their own house-minds to keep out intruders. Gilbert Osmond, on the other hand, is both fully conversant in the novel’s discourse of imaging mind and body as houses and expertly capable at colonizing the house-minds of other characters (namely his daughter Pansy and Isabel) or co-opting them into his own house-
mind. During her fireside vigil, Isabel acknowledges that she has not “read him right,” a realization that coincides with her sense that Gilbert Osmond’s mind “appear[s] to have become her habitation” (458, 459). She lives in “the house of darkness, the house of dumbness, the house of suffocation. Osmond’s beautiful mind gave it neither light nor air; Osmond’s beautiful mind seemed to peep down from a small high window and mock at her”; “[h]er mind was to be his—attached to his own like a small garden-plot to a deer-park” (461, 463).

Only at the end of the novel does Isabel reveal her newfound ability to undertake the doubled act of attention necessary for right readings of her fellow characters’ house-minds and for a non-colonizing approach to intimate self-other relations. When Isabel visits Ralph, his deathly pale face is “as still as the lid of a box,” yet “when he open[s] his eyes to greet her it [is] . . . as if she were looking into immeasurable space” (610). Following this inaugural doubled vision of outside and inside, enclosure and spaciousness, Isabel experiences her first moment of genuine openness, connection, and vulnerability; she no longer wears a “mask,” “fixed and mechanical,” but opens the doors of her “Gothic cathedral” to Ralph, just as he allows her to enter the inner chambers beyond his ante-room (422, 81). This connection is imaged as an act of taking up lodging in the house of the other’s mind; its chief difference from the scene at the beginning of

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28 He describes Lord Warburton’s courtship of Pansy as looking at one’s daughter as if she were a suite of apartments; he tries the door-handles and looks out of the windows, raps on the walls and almost thinks he’ll take the place. Will you be so good as to draw up a lease? Then, on the whole, he decides that the rooms are too small; he doesn’t think he could live on a third floor; he must look out for a piano nobile. And he goes away after having got a month’s lodging in the poor little apartment for nothing. (523)

Osmond similarly observes that living with Caspar Goodwood would be “like living under some tall belfry which would strike all the hours and make a queer vibration in the upper air” (527).
the novel—in which these desires for complete understanding are first expressed—is the fact that it is reciprocal and thus not a unidirectional act of penetration or colonization.

When Isabel proves capable of this doubled act of attention, capable of understanding another mind as a house to be read from the outside and as a house to live in through a reciprocal open-door attitude towards intimate self-other relations, our relation to her changes. Throughout the novel, she is a filter we must see and see through precisely because she is unable to see double—to attain, through a reciprocal connection with another mind, another, qualifying perspective on the world around her. But when Isabel proves capable of seeing double, the gap between the story as perceived from inside her consciousness and the story as perceived from an outside view narrows. Her ability to see double thus diminishes our need to see double. We are instead invited to enter into a new seeing-double relation to Isabel, in which we make the same kind of connection with her that she makes with Ralph: to see through Isabel and be seen by her, we must open the doors of our own house-minds to let her in, taking on her perspective as one that, no longer needing such extensive qualification from other characters’ and the implied author’s perspectives, is capable of qualifying our perspectives. Our openness to Isabel’s entrance into our minds and to the possibility that her perspective might valuably qualify our own requires open-mindedness about her decision to return to Rome and reject the offer Caspar Goodwood makes her. Whatever the reason for Isabel’s decision, the decision is one that the narrative invites us to think with, rather than against, because a reconfigured seeing-double relation to Isabel necessitates that we entertain her

29 Her promise to Pansy, her adherence to the sanctity of marriage, her acceptance of responsibility for a choice she made freely, and her desire to be free from Caspar Goodwood’s “act of possession” (627) have all been suggested, the latter resonating most convincingly with the narrative’s advocacy of non-colonizing self-other relations.
perspective, including decisions we might not have made or might have made but for different reasons. When our relation to Isabel changes and we allow her to enter our house-minds, the conceptual model the Preface sets out for the artist-text-reader relation in the novel is significantly reconfigured: we are no longer in the innermost house of fiction, within Isabel’s consciousness, seeking connections with the implied author (in the outermost house) to establish checks and balances on Isabel’s perspective. Instead, the nesting dynamic collapses and James as the implied author, Isabel as the centre of consciousness, and us as readers all cohabit the same house of fiction.

As the novel concludes, its description of Caspar Goodwood’s kiss, an “act of possession” (627), recalls James’s comment in the Preface to *The American* that writing from within a centre of consciousness is “an act of personal possession of one being by another at its completest,” “a creative effort to get into the skin of the creature” (37). While the identities of possessor and possessed are unclear in the passage from the “Preface to *The American,*” perhaps betraying James’s ambivalence about possession in the self-other relation, the very presence of possession as a concept in the writing form of “seeing ‘through’” may signal James’s role as a fallible centre of consciousness in his own prefaces. Certainly *The Portrait of a Lady* replaces the model of one creature inhabiting another’s skin in an act of possession with the model of two creatures inhabiting each other’s house-minds in an act of cohabitation. This cohabitation model applies, as we have seen, to Isabel and Ralph within the narrative world, to our relation with Isabel, and to Isabel’s relation to James as the implied author. Perhaps, then, the possession model for writing within a consciousness was only ever an optative (rather than realized) one for the version of James staged (wittingly or unwittingly) in the
“Preface to *The American*” and, by extension, in the prefaces in general. After all, James’s novels and the reading strategies they and their prefaces invite, suggest the impossibility and undesirability of this kind of self-other relation.

**Mescal Narratives and Salt-and-Lemon Prefaces . . . Revisited**

Nor are possession and colonization characteristic of the relation between a modernist authorial preface and the narrative it accompanies. Peritextual-level blends and conceptual models for the changing author-text-reader relation invite fundamentally relational reading strategies, strategies helpful for reading modernist narratives. Inversion-based reading necessitates that the reader view her present position in relation to former and anticipated repositionings, so that her emotional and ethical responses to characters and events are self-reflexively contingent. Seeing double is likewise a fundamentally relational mode of reading, with its simultaneous acts of seeing the narrative world and seeing it through the perspective of a centre of consciousness, and seeing that centre of consciousness from without and from within. While the conceptual models developed in Conrad’s and James’s prefaces invite reading strategies relevant to reading the narratives, the prefaces do not formally colonize the narratives, because the narratives are not venues for the reader simply to apply these reading strategies. Conrad’s final, unanticipated shift to “I” narration in *The Nigger of the ‘Narcissus’* and Isabel Archer’s achievement of a doubled act of attention and a non-colonizing self-other relation with Ralph in *The Portrait of a Lady* both throw us into new relations with the narratives, their (implied) authors, and their characters; we are required to enhance the flexibility of our reading strategies by adapting them to these new relations. These case
studies thus underscore the reciprocity and mutual permeability of the modernist
authorial preface-text relation in terms of the reading strategies invited.

Conrad’s and James’s prefaces, written after but placed before, help us to read
narratives that, although they were written before but placed after, paradoxically talk
back. Certainly Malcolm Lowry’s blend has resonances beyond its original context,
resonances that capture the modernist authorial preface-text relation’s essential features:
the mescal narrative needs the salt-and-lemon preface to get it down. But closer attention
to the matches in Lowry’s blend reveals a massive clash between conventional mescal-
drinking practices and the way Lowry uses the mescal-drinking domain: this clash aptly
models changes to the reader’s role in modernism and the reciprocity and mutual
permeability of the modernist authorial preface-text relation. Lowry blends the reader
with the drinker, suggesting that the reader needs the salt-and-lemon preface to get the
mescal narrative (Under the Volcano) down. Although Lowry knows only too well that
the salt is consumed before the mescal and the lemon after the mescal, he develops his
blend specifically to argue that the preface needs to come first to prepare the reader for
“that slow beginning [of Under the Volcano] as inevitable” (499). As a blend for the
reading experience Lowry explicitly advocates, preface first and then narrative, the blend
features an unconventional drinker who consumes first the salt and lemon together and
then the mescal. The blended reader/drinker, no passive slave to the reading/drinking
experience’s conventions, actively forges new reading/drinking practices. The mescal
becomes a chaser for the salt and lemon: instead of the salt and lemon heightening the
taste of the mescal before and after the shot, respectively, here the mescal revises or
heightens the taste of the salt and lemon; the narrative revises the preface.
Perhaps an unmentioned but central element in the conceptual domain for mescal drinking can help us generate a blend to conceptualize the way Lowry’s blend unfolds and understand why it works so well as a blend for the modernist authorial preface-text relation: this unmentioned but central element is the worm or, more accurately, larvae traditionally placed in mescal bottles. Lowry’s blend is larva-like, twisting and turning back on itself as it uses the mescal-drinking domain in a way that seems at first glance straightforward but in fact transgresses our conventional associations with this domain. Lowry’s blend thus captures the essential twists and turns or paradoxes of the modernist authorial preface-text relation, in which what is written after prepares us with reading strategies for what was written before, and what was written before revises the conceptual models governing what is written after. By insisting on our active engagement—the blend only succeeds if we notice the way it revises conventional mescal-drinking practices—this blend also invites the mode of reading that it explicitly advocates in the blended reading/drinking space and that modernist prefaces and narratives require of us.\footnote{Lowry’s blend thus functions much like Conrad’s and James’s peritextual-level blends and the conceptual models in which they participate, but Lowry’s blend is located in a letter to his publisher—an epitext that refers to a peritext (a preface) he ultimately never wrote. Lowry’s epitext that was never quite a peritext prompts us to reexamine not only other Conrad and James prefaces and other modernist authorial prefaces, but also other modernist authorial peritexts (and perhaps modernist authorial epitexts too), like Ford Madox Ford’s dedicatory letter to \textit{The Good Soldier} (1915) or the genealogy William Faulkner appends to \textit{Absalom, Absalom!} (1936); perhaps they, through peritextual-level blends, conceptual models, or other formal features, invite reading strategies applicable to the narratives they accompany.}

This chapter’s dual focus, on the value of authorial prefaces (and, by extension, peritexts in general) as aids to reading narratives and on the reciprocity and mutual permeability of this relation, does not prescribe a specific chronological order for reading modernist peritexts and narratives. Rather, given the reigning assumption in criticism of James’s and Conrad’s prefaces, that readers need the mescal narrative to get the salt-and-lemon prefaces down, this chapter sees the relation the other way round, \textit{inverting} the
order so as to see double, applying to the authorial preface-text relation the reading strategies with which these prefaces and narratives equip us. In other words, whether we read the peritext first or the text first, the reciprocity and mutual permeability of the modernist authorial peritext-text relation ultimately mean that the peritext offers us reading strategies for reading the text, and vice versa; the peritext and the text condition and dialogue with each other; the mescal narrative and the salt-and-lemon peritext get each other down.
CHAPTER FOUR: ALLOGRAPHIC PERITEXTUAL-LEVEL BLENDS AND EAST-WEST AND PREFACE-TEXT RELATIONS

Modernist Allographic Prefaces: Highjacking and Interception, or Reciprocity and Mutual Permeability?

According to Gérard Genette, the allographic (non-authorial) preface is “inseparable from the routines of protection and patronage as well as—sometimes— . . . those of highjacking and interception” (293).¹ Genette’s assertion implicitly questions the applicability to the modernist allographic preface-text relation of the dynamics that I argued, in chapter three, inform the modernist authorial preface-text relation. Chapter three’s central claim is that because authorial peritextual-level blends signal conceptual models inviting relational reading strategies, and because we adapt these reading strategies in response to our changing relations with the narratives, their (implied) authors, and their characters, the modernist authorial preface-text relation is non-colonizing, non-possessive, and in fact reciprocal and mutually permeable. To what extent, despite Genette’s caution, can the allographic preface-text relation function in the same or similar ways? The possibilities are perhaps nowhere better tested than in allographic preface-text pairings that discuss or thematize ideas about the East, the West, and East-West relations. During the modernist period, more frequent and rapid global circulation of people, objects, and ideas triggered the proliferation of narratives written

¹ Genette describes allography as “a separation between the sender of the text (the author) and the sender of the preface (the preface-writer),” and the allographic prefacer as a “literary or ideological ‘godfather’” (263, 273).
about East-West relations. In tackling these relations, modernist narratives grappled with issues of “protection and patronage,” “highjacking and interception,” as well as reciprocity and mutual permeability. Allographic prefaces to these narratives naturally joined the conversation about East-West relations: but did they do so in a way that rendered the allographic preface-text relation one of “protection and patronage,” “highjacking and interception” or reciprocity and mutual permeability? This chapter suggests two modes of assessing these allographic preface-text pairings. The first is to compare the allographic preface’s construction, through its peritextual-level blends, of the East-West relation with the narrative’s construction of that relation; the second is to compare the reading strategies invited by the preface, again through its blends for the East-West relation, with those invited by the narrative. The allographic preface-text relation’s thematic, ideological, and formal facets are in effect correlated to the East-West relation, as it is constructed by a modernist narrative and its peritextual-level blends.

This chapter focuses initially on peritextual-level blends in Herbert Read’s Preface to the first of Chiang Yee’s Silent Traveller narratives set in England, The Silent Traveller: A Chinese Artist in Lakeland (1937), and in Van Wyck Brooks’s Preface to the first Silent Traveller narrative set in America, The Silent Traveller in New York (1950). As we saw in chapter one, Chiang’s war-time narratives set in England develop collaborative microtextual-level blends that function differently for his English readers and his Chinese readers but elicit modes of relational thinking from both readerships, with salutary consequences for cross-cultural, East-West relations. Studying Read’s and Brooks’s prefaces to Chiang’s narratives enables us to ascertain whether peritextual-level blends construct the East-West relation in ways that are compatible with Chiang’s
construction of that relation; elicit reading strategies that are helpful for reading Chiang’s narratives; and signal a protecting, patronizing, highjacking, and intercepting, or a reciprocal and mutually permeable allographic preface-text relation. In the first case study, which pairs Read’s Preface with Chiang’s Lakeland narrative, the connection between the East-West relation (as it is constructed in the narrative and by its peritextual-level blends) and the allographic preface-text relation is particularly apparent, since the author-prefacer relation is itself a relation between East(erner) and West(erner).2 The second case study further illuminates the connection between the East-West relation and the allographic preface-text relation: Brooks’s Preface simultaneously triangulates the East-West, China-England relation through its emphasis on America, and the allographic preface-text relation through peritextual-level blends that respond to and dialogue with Read’s peritextual-level blends.

In his assessment of postcolonial discourses, Arun Mukherjee warns against slipping into a critical mode that totalizes, essentializes, and universalizes the colonizer, colonized, and their relations. Chiang’s narratives and their allographic prefaces do not tackle colonizer-colonized relations specifically, but Mukherjee’s warning applies just as well to the critical tendency to totalize, essentialize, and universalize ideas about the East, the West, the East-West relation, and the allographic preface-text relation. This chapter’s third and final case study functions as a verification mechanism for the first two case studies’ conclusions about the allographic preface-text relation, conclusions that should

2 Amardeep Singh, who studies “prefaces written by white European writers to poetry, prose, and criticism in the modernist idiom by non-European writers from colonial locales” (2), describes such prefaces (including W. B. Yeats’s 1912 Preface to Rabindranath Tagore’s Gitanjali, E. M. Forster’s 1935 Preface to Mulk Raj Anand’s Untouchable, and André Breton’s 1943 Preface to Aimé Césaire’s Notebook of a Return to My Native Land) as ambivalent: they contain orientalist ideas, enforce colonial authority, challenge the independence of the text, imply vassalage or dependency in their acts of legitimation, subsume the novel’s author into the prefacer’s image of modernism, and assume the unfamiliarity and remoteness of the other culture; yet they also expand modernism into a new time and space.
neither be too broadly generalized (totalized, essentialized, or universalized) nor viewed as applicable only to pairings involving an Eastern writer and a Western allographic preface. Modernist writer Arthur Morrison, known for his slum fiction, his Martin Hewitt detective stories, and his seminal work on Japanese painting, also tackles ideas about the East, the West, and East-West relations, but differs from Chiang in three significant ways. First, Morrison is a Western writer tackling East-West relations. Second, the East he considers, the East End of London, is actually embedded in his Western home. And third, the allographic preface to his short story collection, *Tales of Mean Streets* (1894), is written by another Westerner, Scottish-born American dramatist and author James MacArthur. The similarities between Morrison’s short story collection and Chiang’s narratives—particularly their problematization of ideas about the East, the West, and East-West relations—enable these texts to be brought together in a study of the peritextual-level blend’s role in the modernist allographic preface-text relation. Yet the differences between Morrison’s and Chiang’s texts and their dates at the beginning and end of the modernist period, respectively, ensure that any conclusions drawn have a sufficiently broad basis to counter legitimately Genette’s claim about the allographic preface being “inseparable from the routines of protection and patronage,” “highjacking and interception.”

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3 Born and raised in the East End, journalist and author Arthur Morrison (1863-1945) devoted a great deal of his journalistic and creative output to exposing dire living conditions in this part of London. Morrison’s best-known work in the slum fiction subgenre of the English realist novel is *A Child of the Jago* (1896), a novel about Dicky Perrott and his life of poverty and hardship in the Jago, a fictionalized version of the Old Nichol Street Rookery.

4 Morrison’s two-volume study, *The Painters of Japan*, was published in 1911.
**The Chiang-Wordsworth Conceptual Blend**

In his Preface to Chiang’s first *Silent Traveller* narrative, literature and art critic Herbert Read introduces Chiang and his narrative to a potentially hostile English readership, while also being attentive to the Chinese readership Chiang anticipated—particularly other Chinese people living in England. Read invites his readers to reconceptualize their ideas about the East, the West, and East-West relations through a multi-stage peritextual-level blend involving Chiang and Wordsworth. The Chiang-Wordsworth blend defamiliarizes Wordsworth and familiarizes Chiang for English readers, and defamiliarizes Chiang and familiarizes Wordsworth for Chinese readers. The blend also prepares both readerships for the cognitive operations invited by the narrative’s microtextual-level blends, which integrate English and Chinese conceptual domains (usually English customs, landscapes, or architecture, and Chinese customs, landscapes, or architecture) and invite a mode of thinking with particularly salutary consequences for cross-cultural relations.

If English readers knew Chiang at all, they knew him as a painter, so Read begins his Preface with a discussion of Chiang’s mastery in landscape painting and his seminal work on Chinese art, *The Chinese Eye* (1935). The central difference between Chiang’s earlier work and the *Lakeland* narrative is, Read notes, Chiang’s turn to English subjects, a turn that English readers might perceive as threatening on aesthetic or nationalistic grounds:

> Those who are already familiar with his work have accepted it as the modern expression of a national tradition. That is to say, we have regarded it as specifically Chinese painting, and we have been grateful to Mr
Chiang in particular because in his earlier book, *The Chinese Eye*, he has explained the Chinese conception of art so clearly and thus enabled us to appreciate its qualities with a true aesthetic understanding. But we still thought of Chinese art as something with a Chinese content—Chinese mountains, Chinese lakes, Chinese trees. But now the artist comes forward as if to say: ‘My vision, my technique, in short, my art is not bound by geographical limits; it is universal, and can interpret your English landscape just as well as the Chinese landscape.’ (xxv, my emphasis)

In his subsequent description of the English as “rather sensitive about . . . [their] landscape,” Read anticipates the potential threat Chiang’s narrative—its prose, poetry, and landscape sketches—poses to English readers’ sense that “painters like Constable, Turner, Crome, Girtin, Cotman, and many others of their school, have depicted the very spirit of [their] . . . hills and streams, [their] . . . meadows and villages” (xxv). Chiang’s poetry about the English landscape might be viewed analogously: “No less legitimately,” Read writes, “might we claim that our poets—Shakespeare, Thomson, Gray, Collins, Wordsworth, Keats and Tennyson—have created a unique poetry of landscape, so intimate and true that there is nothing left to celebrate, no nuance of form or feeling that has escaped their intuitive apprehension” (xxv-xxvi). Read is aware that English readers might view Chiang’s *Lakeland* narrative as a challenge to everything they hold holy, aesthetically or in terms of their national identity. Chiang has, Read notes, dared to enter our national shrine and to worship there in his own way. He has taken his pen and his brush and has written a book and painted a series of landscapes which challenge our complacency. He has gone to the very
holy of holies of our nature poets—to the Lake District—and has followed in the footsteps of the great prophets of our cult, Wordsworth and Ruskin.

(xxvi)

Having confronted his English readers with the potential threat to their sensibilities and traditions posed by Chiang’s difference, unfamiliarity, and foreignness, Read halts their defensive response by launching his Chiang-Wordsworth blend. “In his direct way,” Read’s blend begins, Chiang “has proved what some years ago I ventured to assert as a paradox—the nearness of Wordsworth’s poetry to certain oriental modes of feeling and thinking” (xxvi).

What is striking about Read’s blend is the fact that oriental modes of feeling and thinking are not the blend’s target domain. With Wordsworth as its target domain, the Chiang-Wordsworth blend in effect prompts English readers to see Wordsworth’s poetry anew, instead of offering them familiarity with oriental modes of feeling and thinking, or, more specifically, with Chiang’s writing or painting. Given that Read’s primary goal is ostensibly to introduce Chiang’s work to English readers (while taking into consideration Chiang’s Chinese readers), this blend seems at first glance counter-productive; it is, however, highly strategic. The Chiang-Wordsworth blend challenges English readers’ complacency and their unexamined ideas about the East, the West, and East-West relations. The blend’s first challenge is to English readers’ assumption that because they are English they are naturally and completely familiar with Wordsworth’s poetry, more familiar than a foreigner would be. The second challenge is to the assumption that Wordsworth is thoroughly English in his modes of feeling and thinking. The third challenge is to the assumption that Wordsworth’s thoroughly English modes of feeling
and thinking are so well attuned to capturing the spirit of the English landscape that this process of aesthetic “apprehension” is “intuitive” (xxvi). The fourth and final challenge is to the assumption that no one without thoroughly English modes of feeling and thinking could possibly capture the spirit of the English landscape with the same intimacy and truth. In reconceptualizing Wordsworth as an oriental, Read’s blend prompts English readers to see Wordsworth in a new light, in turn questioning both the very existence of purely English modes of feeling and thinking and the idea that the apprehension of English landscapes requires English modes of feeling and thinking. Chinese readers, on the other hand, are invited to reconceptualize oriental modes of feeling and thinking as rooted not necessarily in ethnicity or culture but in sensibilities, so that Wordsworth is as much an oriental as Chiang is.

Ultimately uncomfortable with “these geographical and nationalistic comparisons” (xxvi), Read renovates the similarity he has identified between Chiang and Wordsworth, from a similarity suggesting that Wordsworth is oriental to a similarity suggesting that both Chiang and Wordsworth are essentially human. “What Mr Chiang shows, no less clearly than Wordsworth,” Read declares, “is the universality of all true modes of feeling and thinking” (xxvi). This new phase in the Chiang-Wordsworth blend identifies similarity across national, ethnic, or cultural borders and then posits this similarity as reflective of common humanity, a move that is also apparent in Chiang’s narrative’s microtextual-level blends. Read thus borrows a mode of relational thinking from Chiang’s narrative and uses it to introduce the narrative to Chiang’s readers: launching a conceptual blend to highlight the similarity between two ostensibly Eastern and Western conceptual domains, often renovating this similarity to call into question the
idea that these domains are in fact specifically Eastern or Western. The result is a conceptual shift for the Preface’s English readers and its Chinese readers: both readerships are invited to see Wordsworth in a new light, as English, oriental, and fundamentally human, and Chiang in a new light too, as a Chinese exile and a representative human.

Read’s Preface ends with the final phase of his Chiang-Wordsworth blend, an inversion of the blend’s initial terms. This inversion begins with a passage from the famous “spots of time” section of *The Prelude*’s Book XII, in which Wordsworth describes memory’s power to restore us and underscores the imperative to enshrine “the spirit of the Past / For future restoration” (XII, 285-86). Read’s selection from *The Prelude* includes Wordsworth’s claim that man’s “greatness” is rooted in “simple childhood,” as well as Wordsworth’s famous assertion about greatness: “That from thyself it comes, that thou must give / Else never canst receive” (XII, 274-77). Man’s greatness, as this passage and the lines preceding it in *The Prelude* tell us, is rooted in his ability to self-restore through the generative power of past feeling and past strength. Read equates “simple childhood,” Wordsworth’s point of origin for this self-healing capacity, with “the innocent and incorruptible vision of the poet and the painter,” and claims that “[i]t is this vision which Mr Chiang has brought to our beloved lakes and mountains, whose subtle essence he expresses with such fidelity” (xxvi). Here, then, Read inverts his Chiang-Wordsworth blend to make Chiang the target domain: having made

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5 Read quotes a slightly modified version of the 1850 *Prelude*, whose lines “That from thy self it comes, that thou must give / Else never canst receive” vary from the 1805 “That from thyself it is that thou must give / Else never canst receive” (1850, XII, 276-77; 1805, XII, 332-33). I am therefore quoting from the 1850 *Prelude*.

6 The lines immediately preceding the passage Read excerpts read: “So feeling comes in aid / Of feeling, and diversity of strength / Attends us, if but once we have been strong” (XII, 325-27).
Wordsworth an English Chiang, Read now makes Chiang a Chinese Wordsworth by observing that the vision Chiang possesses is the same as the one apparent in Wordsworth’s *Prelude*. The Chiang-Wordsworth blend’s final phase underscores the sensibility that both artists share, a sensibility that is no longer conceptualized as an English or oriental, Western or Eastern mode of feeling and thinking.

Read’s Preface, with its Chiang-Wordsworth blend, paves the reader’s way forward into Chiang’s narrative, preparing her for similarity-seeing and difference-seeing across English and Chinese conceptual domains in Chiang’s microtextual-level blends, as well as the salutary consequences of this mode of relational thinking for cross-cultural interactions. Read’s blend, however, is in fact borrowed from Chiang’s introduction to the *Lakeland* narrative, in which Chiang uses his similarities and differences in relation to Wordsworth to invite readers to interrogate their ideas about the East, the West, and East-West relations. Yet Read’s act of borrowing is not an act of appropriation. The two Chiang-Wordsworth blends, similar and different in the way they use Chiang and Wordsworth as conceptual domains to reconceptualize ideas about the East, the West, and East-West relations, are in dialogue with each other. The dialogue between the blends, a dialogue between preface and text, prefacer and author, West(erner) and East(erner), formally instantiates the reciprocal, mutually permeable, and collaborative dialogism that Chiang’s *Silent Traveller* narratives advocate—and invite through their microtextual-level blends—for improved cross-cultural relations.

While in many ways Chiang’s blend reconceptualizes the reader’s ideas about Chiang’s identity, sensibilities, and modes of thinking in a manner similar to Read’s blend, the self-reflexivity of Chiang’s blend—it is a blend in which Chiang makes
himself a conceptual domain—significantly affects the cognitive operations the reader performs when engaging with it. Chiang begins his introduction to the *Lakeland* narrative in much the same way that Read begins his Preface: highlighting Chiang’s paradoxical foreignness and familiarity in his English readers’ eyes. Even as Chiang establishes a connection with his English readers through a reference to Wordsworth’s poetry, he suggests that the East, to which Wordsworth’s reputation has travelled, is very “Far” (*Lakeland* 1) away indeed. Immediately thereafter, however, Chiang problematizes the separability of East and West when he observes—in phrases that Read clearly borrows for his blend—that many of Wordsworth’s poems appeal “very closely” to Chinese “sensibility” and share “elements in common” with Chinese “great masters of natural description” (1). The affinity between Chiang and Wordsworth—an affinity that further complicates the idea of distinct and distinctive oriental or English aesthetic sensibilities—becomes increasingly apparent as Chiang’s introduction unfolds: just as Wordsworth does in *The Prelude* or “Tintern Abbey,” Chiang makes “imaginary revisitings” to the Lakes, with these returns inspiring creative output and restoration amidst London’s “traffic—the noise of buses and cars; . . . the shops rigged out day after day in their gaudy colours; . . . the people pushing and hurrying in the streets[,] . . . working under electric light and walking in a smoky and foggy atmosphere” (*Lakeland* 6, 4). Pointing out, in equal measure, Chiang’s idiosyncrasies, the traits that make him Chinese, the qualities of his essential humanity, and the sensibilities he and Wordsworth share, Chiang’s blend seems, relative to Read’s, to maintain more firmly its connections to its separate input domains. In other words, interspersed with suggestions of the similarities Wordsworth and Chiang share are clear indications of Chiang’s difference, which underscore his
reluctance to operate entirely in the Chiang-Wordsworth blended space, to collapse completely the distinction between himself and Wordsworth. His blend’s reconceptualizing power—for himself and for the reader—depends on the blended Chiang-Wordsworth space remaining connected to and capable of drawing from and projecting back to its input domains, Chiang and Wordsworth. Furthermore, even as Chiang’s introduction and narrative interrogate ideas about the East and the West and demonstrate the reciprocity and mutual permeability of the East-West relation, the introduction and narrative do not completely collapse the distinction between East and West. Chiang’s invitations to his English and Chinese readers to trade perspectives depend for their reconceptualizing power on the possibility that there are English and Chinese perspectives, albeit not totalized, essentialized, or universalized.

Read’s Preface, on the other hand, seems to work entirely in the Chiang-Wordsworth blended space, reconfiguring that space’s similarity-based emergent meaning from an English Chiang to an essential humanity to a Chinese Wordsworth. Read’s decision is surely a pragmatic one: given that he is writing for a potentially hostile English readership, while trying to accommodate Chiang’s Chinese readers, Read must underscore the similarities between Chiang and Wordsworth, East and West, to deflect anxieties about the differences apparent in Chiang’s narrative and pictorial versions of Lakeland. Laying out these differences early in his Preface, Read never returns to them in his Chiang-Wordsworth blend, so that the blend’s reconceptualizing effect is that it allows readers to see similarity where they only ever saw difference. The reconceptualizing power of Chiang’s blend, on the other hand, is that it allows him (in his reconfigured self-conception) and his readers to see similarity where they saw difference,
but also to see difference where they have learned to see similarity, no longer threatened
by that difference, since it is situated in more sophisticated and fully understood
similarity-difference relations. Chiang thus installs difference in the Chiang-Wordsworth
blend, eliciting from readers a greater degree of cognitive mobility that will allow them to
reconceptualize not only Chiang, Wordsworth, the East, the West, and East-West
relations, but also Read’s version of the Chiang-Wordsworth blend, which was
paradoxically configured after Chiang’s version. Chiang’s narrative thus talks back to its
Preface, placed before but written after. This dialogue between preface and text through
their respective versions of the Chiang-Wordsworth blend is a dialogue between a
Western prefacer and an Eastern author and between a peritextual-level blend and a
microtextual-level blend. Both dialogues are characterized by reciprocity and mutual
permeability in the way they similarly and differently conceptualize the East-West
relation and invite the cognitive mobility necessary for reading in the blend—for the
reader’s upcoming encounter with the narrative’s vast range of microtextual-level blends.

The Chiang-Wordsworth Conceptual Blend Borrowed—Again—and Discarded

In his Preface to Chiang’s *The Silent Traveller in New York* (1950), the first *Silent
Traveller* narrative set in America, American literary critic, biographer, and historian Van
Wyck Brooks introduces Chiang to American readers, fulfilling the role Read plays
relative to Chiang’s English readers. Brooks’s Preface is in dialogue with the *New York*
narrative, but more significant in terms of its ramifications for the modernist allographic
preface-text relation is the Preface’s dialogue with the Read-Chiang preface-text pairing;
triangulating the Read-Chiang pairing and the East-West relation established in that
pairing, Brooks’s Preface is in effect doubly allographic. Like Read’s Preface and Chiang’s *Lakeland* narrative, Brooks’s Preface launches a Chiang-Wordsworth blend, but Brooks replaces it with a series of blends that increasingly problematize ideas about the East, the West, and East-West relations. The beginning of Brooks’s Preface signals his interest in origins, the central issue in his problematization of East-West relations, with an account of Chiang’s years in China before emigrating to England. Brooks goes on to develop his Chiang-Wordsworth blend, which, unlike Read’s, begins with Chiang as the target domain: “Mr. Chiang Yee shared Wordsworth’s pleasure in the meanest flower that blows” (Brooks viii). Brooks’s blend, beginning where Read’s ends, is not a helpful means of familiarizing Chiang for American readers—Brooks’s chief goal in the Preface. In declaring that the Lakes are not like New York, Brooks implies that Wordsworth is too English a conceptual domain to succeed in familiarizing Chiang for American readers. Brooks, like Read and Chiang, hopes to shift his readers out of insular, complacent, nationalistic ways of thinking, but he does so by initially carrying his readers along on a search for that elusive American figure (perhaps an American Wordsworth?) who might serve as a conceptual domain in a blend with Chiang; meanwhile Brooks develops a series of blends that cumulatively and radically problematize the ideas of East, West, the East-West relation, and national identity—the ideas upon which the very existence of an essentially American conceptual domain depends.

Having dispensed with the possibility of focusing on Chiang as a Chinese Wordsworth, Brooks goes straight to the core of Read’s Chiang-Wordsworth blend,

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7 Brooks was clearly familiar with Read’s Preface and Chiang’s narrative, both of which he references in his Preface to *The Silent Traveller in New York*.

8 Brooks’s source domain is Wordsworth and, more specifically, sentiments expressed in the uncited quotation from Wordsworth’s “Ode: Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood”: “To me the meanest flower that blows can give / Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears” (202-3).
which shifts the reader from “geographical and nationalistic comparisons” (Read xxvi) to acknowledging essential humanity. Brooks attempts this shift via a new conceptual blend: “[t]he fact is that Mr. Chiang Yee is a true citizen of the world, like Goldsmith’s observer from China, everywhere at home” (ix). Brooks’s reference is to Oliver Goldsmith’s Lien Chi, a fictional Chinese travel writer whom Goldsmith used, in *The Citizen of the World*, a series of letters published in the *Public Ledger* in the 1760s, as a vehicle for ironic commentary on British customs. Brooks’s Chiang-Lien Chi blend is ultimately not a significant improvement over the Chiang-Wordsworth blend because its source domain, an eighteenth-century Englishman’s problematic and value-laden mixture of fact and stereotype, is neither familiar to American readers nor likely to prompt recognition of essential humanity or to familiarize Chiang.

Brooks turns next to a blend involving an ostensibly American domain, but this next blend demonstrates that even a seemingly straightforward American conceptual domain contains elements that call into question the very idea of its essential American-ness, while also problematizing an East-West relation in which East and West are clearly distinguishable and independent. “An American admirer,” Brooks writes, “can only hope that he [Chiang] will visit other regions—Concord, perhaps, and Walden pond where Confucius and Mencius found wise readers who had the Chinese feeling for Shan-Shui also” (x).⁹ Brooks’s move recalls the initial stage of Read’s Chiang-Wordsworth blend, as Brooks suggests that America’s holiest of holy writers, its Massachusetts-based Transcendentalists, were, to use Read’s language, near “to certain oriental modes of feeling and thinking” (Read xxvi). Despite the trajectory of Brooks’s Preface, which seems to be moving towards a quintessentially American conceptual domain for a blend

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⁹ Shan-Shui is a brush-and-ink style of Chinese landscape painting.
with Chiang that will familiarize Chiang for American readers, the American domain he selects (Transcendentalists) turns out to be already blended: the very possibility of an essentially American identity is interrogated, as the influence of Eastern philosophy on quintessentially American figures is revealed. Brooks’s reference to Chiang’s habit of remembering American Transcendentalists’ sayings, such as Thoreau’s “winter clears the head” (Brooks 18), further underscores Brooks’s problematization of national identity and East-West relations. If Chiang recalls American Transcendentalists when he makes philosophical observations, we must not forget that these American writers were—as Brooks has already underscored—influenced by Chinese philosophers. Chiang remembers the American sources but they are already intertwined with Chinese sources.

Brooks’s central aims in this Chiang-Thoreau blend are two-fold: to uncover multidirectional networks (rather than unidirectional lines) of origin and influence in art and culture; and to demonstrate the already blended nature of the ostensibly pure conceptual domains “English,” “American,” and “Chinese,” or “Wordsworth,” “Thoreau,” and “Chiang.” English art, for example, has not only the oriental influences Read acknowledges, but also American influences: “There are the Carolinas too,” Brooks writes, “where Audubon spent happy months among the scenes of William Bartram’s Travels, the charming book that suggested to Wordsworth and Coleridge some of the images that appeared in their poems” (x). Brooks is ostensibly highlighting the American landscape as a worthy subject for Chiang’s artistic treatment, recommending the Carolinas, frequented by American ornithologist and painter John James Audubon. But by suggesting that English Romantic poetry gained some of its natural imagery from American naturalist William Bartram’s book, Brooks also sets up an East-West relation
involving England and America, thereby underscoring multidirectional networks of artistic and cultural origin and influence: English art (Wordsworth) was influenced by oriental modes of feeling and thinking and by American art (Bartram); American (Transcendentalist) thought and art was also influenced by oriental thought and art (Confucius, Mencius, and Shan-Shui); and Chiang is influenced by both English (Wordsworth) and American (Thoreau) artists and thinkers.

Brooks’s search for a purely American conceptual domain has ended unsuccessfully, but his observation, that Chiang would find in America “the azaleas that ‘set the hills on fire’ in Ruth”\(^{10}\) (x), constitutes an even more radical move in his interrogation of ideas about the East, the West, East-West relations, and national identity. In Wordsworth’s poem, Ruth meets “a Youth from Georgia’s shore” (Wordsworth, “Ruth” 13) during her wanderings after her mother’s death.\(^{11}\) The Youth woos Ruth with his enchanting tales of life in America, all of which centre on suggestions of illusion, like “plants divine and strange / That ev’ry day their blossoms change, / Ten thousand lovely hues” (49-51). One of this rhetorical conjuror’s stories is about “flowers that with one scarlet gleam / Cover a hundred leagues and seem / To set the hills on fire” (58-60); these flowers are the azaleas Brooks mentions in connection with rhododendrons (the family to which azaleas belong) and flowering magnolia trees, all of which Chiang’s narratives associate with China. The rhododendron’s largest genus is endemic to China, with the azalea

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intimately [associated] . . . with an almost unparalleled vainglory & exclusiveness in [horticulture] . . . of the . . . [nineteenth] century through
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\(^{10}\) Wordsworth’s poem appeared in the second edition of *Lyrical Ballads* (1800).

\(^{11}\) I am quoting from the 1800 version of “Ruth”; the passages upon which my reading is based remain unaltered in the poem’s 1802 and 1805 versions.
the concentrated efforts to [introduce] . . . & hybridize particularly the
Asiatic [species] . . . by the wealthy & privileged of [Western Europe]
. . . , over 500 [species] . . . having been [cultivated] . . . in [Great Britain]
. . . alone. (Mabberley 614)

The magnolia, now commonly cultivated in England, as Chiang observes in The Silent
Traveller in Oxford, is native to the East as well as to Eastern North America and tropical
America (Mabberley 430), likely introduced to Europe during eighteenth- and nineteenth-
century imperial conquests. Plants as apparently “English” as azaleas and magnolias have
complex, distant, and often hybrid origins in places to the east (Asia) and the west (the
Americas) of England. In other words, the apparently “English” origins of these plants
are illusory, as is the sight of the azaleas setting the hills on fire in Wordsworth’s “Ruth.”

Brooks’s reference to “Ruth” is perhaps not solely horticultural: the poem also
thematizes the problematization of origins and national identity through its representation
of the Youth. At first glance the Youth seems to embody the threat rebellious America
posed to England when “Ruth” was written, but the poem emphasizes the problematic
ascription of self-other binaries in English-American relations. The Youth’s seduction of
Ruth via escape fantasies from “a world of woe” (Wordsworth, “Ruth” 77) and his mixed
moral nature are indicative of English fears about America, but he is English by ancestry
and perhaps even by birth. Furthermore, it is in England, among the English “wild men,”
that the Youth slips back into “vices,” and the poem’s speaker makes it clear that the
Youth is both corrupting and corrupted:

But ill he liv’d, much evil saw

With men to whom no better law
Nor better life was known;
Deliberately and undeceiv’d
Those wild men’s vices he receiv’d
And gave them back his own. (139-44)

England’s perception of America as a vice-ridden other belies the imbricated nature of English-American identities. Indeed, English-American relations in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries made the determination of origins and the ascription of self-other binaries as the basis of national identity highly problematic.\(^\text{12}\) Having already demonstrated the multidirectional flows of cultural and artistic origins and influences, Brooks, by referring to “Ruth,” also highlights the multidirectional flows of horticulture and national identity.

Brook’s Preface concludes with his final, most radical suggestion pertaining to ideas about the East, the West, and East-West relations. In America, Brooks suggests, Chiang would find “the rhododendrons he always associates with China and the flowering magnolia trees that he knew as a child; and if he went to the Southwest he would find the American Indians who were ancien tly connected, as he remarks, with his own honourable race” (x). Like its cultural, artistic, and horticultural ties, America’s historical ties to China are strong: human civilization most likely arrived in the Americas from Eurasia. But Brooks’s point does not seem to be a nationalistic one, a game of one-upmanship with Read that seeks to present America’s ties to China as stronger than England’s ties to China; nor does his remark aim to establish definitive origins for human

\(^\text{12}\) While America is geographically west of England, the poem inverts this geographical relation by exoticizing the Youth, who wears a “military Casque” “drest” “[w]ith splendid feathers” “[h]e brought . . . from the Cherokees”; the poem also constructs an even more exoticized group, “the Indians,” whose very name evokes an orientalizing discourse (14-16, 37).
civilization in America. Nor does Brook’s comment about Leo Stein—“If Mr. Chiang Yee were to read Mrs. Mabel Dodge Luhan’s *Winter in Taos*, he might well wish to fly or even walk there. Taos was the ‘only place that actually realized’ for Leo Stein ‘the vision of the great Chinese landscape painters’” (x)—seem to be a nationalistic one, a game of one-upmanship with Chiang. In commenting that Taos is the only place that realizes “‘the vision of the great Chinese landscape painters’” (Brooks x), Leo Stein suggests that the New Mexico landscape is better suited than even the Chinese landscape for the specific vision of Chinese landscape artists. In the context of Brooks’s series of blends involving Chiang and Wordsworth, Chiang and Lien Chi, and ostensibly English, American, and Chinese figures, this final stage in Brooks’s Preface gestures towards a conception of the world in which ostensibly national or cultural ideas and aesthetic movements are both influenced by others, multidirectionally, and dependent on others for their fullest actualization. Triangulating the East-West or China-England relation with the inclusion of America, in relation to which China is west and England is east, Brooks also triangulates the preface-text relation. His Preface is in dialogue not only with the narrative it accompanies but also with Read’s Preface and Chiang’s *Lakeland* narrative, which are already in dialogue with each other. Brooks borrows and then discards the Chiang-Wordsworth blend, discarding along with it the ideas of Eastern and Western conceptual domains that both support and are questioned, to different degrees, in Read’s and Chiang’s versions of the blend. Already conceived as reciprocal and mutually permeable in the *Lakeland* preface-text pairing, East-West and allographic preface-text

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13 Leo Stein was Gertrude Stein’s brother and an esteemed American art collector and critic.
14 Dodge, a wealthy American patron of the arts, was associated with a colony of artists in Taos, New Mexico.
relations are thus shown to be multidirectional, not just bidirectional, in their reciprocity and mutual permeability.

**The East End-Central Africa Conceptual Blend**

Unlike Chiang’s *Lakeland* and *New York* narratives, Arthur Morrison’s *Tales of Mean Streets* is a Western-authored account, accompanied by a Western-authored Preface, of East-West relations within Morrison’s Western home, focusing on London’s East End. Yet like this chapter’s first two case studies, the MacArthur-Morrison pairing illuminates different facets of the allographic preface-text relation and underscores that relation’s reciprocity and mutual permeability. Morrison’s short story collection was a critical success in 1894 when it was first published and decades after its original publication it remained wildly popular. As American critic H. L. Mencken noted in his 1918 Preface to the collection, “People read it, talk about it, ask for it in the bookstores; periodically it gets out of print” (vii-ix). Unlike other representations of the East End, Morrison’s collection was, Mencken believed, not in tune with the decade’s “dominant note,” which “was rather romantic, ameliorative, sweet-singing; its high god was Kipling, the sentimental optimist. The Empire was flourishing; the British public was in good humor; life seemed a lovely thing. In the midst of all this the voice of Morrison had a raucous touch of it” (x). Geoff Ginn’s more recent work on late nineteenth-century representations of the East End in journalism and pamphlet literature contrasts two dominant forms of sensationalism, sentimental depictions of the honest poor and lurid

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15 Morrison’s work in the slum fiction genre began with his sketch “The Street,” first published in *Macmillan’s Magazine* in 1891, where it caught the attention of newspaper editor W. E. Henley, who invited Morrison to submit further material about the East End to *The National Observer*. Morrison’s stories were collected and published as *Tales of Mean Streets* (1894).
accounts of human depravity. Ginn further contrasts both of these sensationalist versions of the East End with depictions by clergymen Samuel Barnett and novelist Walter Besant, who offered versions aligned with their own reform goals. While Morrison’s account was clearly not in tune with the sentimental version or with a moralized version essentially advertising specific reform goals, I will argue in this chapter that Morrison’s insider vision\textsuperscript{16} was not entirely in tune with the lurid version either and that Morrison was, in effect, doing something new in *Tales of Mean Streets*.

In his Preface to the 1895 first American edition of the collection, James MacArthur\textsuperscript{17} launches an East End-Central Africa blend, drawing on what John Greenfield calls the era’s most prominent discourse “available for describing, stereotyping, and reifying the newly discovered East End” (89). Citing William Booth’s “direct analogy between Stanley’s ventures into Africa and his own [Booth’s] ventures into the dark, mysterious, and crime-ridden East End,” Greenfield argues that “[i]t is perhaps no accident that interest in the African question and in the East End of London peaked at the same time” (89).\textsuperscript{18,19} MacArthur’s Preface begins in a way that sets up both

\textsuperscript{16}Morrison worked for several years as the secretary of an East-End charity trust before he wrote *Tales of Mean Streets*.

\textsuperscript{17}The only James MacArthur mentioned in archival records of the period is a Scottish-born dramatist and author (1866-1909) who lived and worked in the United States. Volume IV of *Herringshaw’s National Library of American Biography* (1914) contains an entry on this MacArthur, likely the same person who signed the Preface to Morrison’s *Tales of Mean Streets*: “Since 1901 he has been general literary adviser for Harper brothers of New York City. He has dramatized the Bonny Brier Bush; and Pilgrim’s Progress. He is part author of The Mask of the White Rose and Kronstadt; and The Spoilers” (“MacArthur, James”).

I would like to thank Lisa Sherlock, Head of Reader Services at the Victoria University Library, University of Toronto, for her assistance in locating this reference.

\textsuperscript{18}William Booth (1829-1912) was the Methodist preacher who founded the Christian Revival Society in the East End in 1865; Booth renamed the society the “Salvation Army” in 1878. In his book *In Darkest England and the Way Out* (1890), Booth makes this “direct analogy” between London’s East End and “Darkest Africa.”

\textsuperscript{19}Like Joseph Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness* (1899), Greenfield argues, Arthur Morrison’s work “lead[s] . . . middle-class readers into a foreign world and direct[s] their gaze upon inferior ‘others,’ feed[s] their voyeuristic curiosity for ‘unspeakable rites,’ but finally soothe[s] their bourgeois consciences with a dose of moral indignation” (89). Kevin Swafford agrees that Morrison’s representation of the East End participates in this imperialist discourse: “[f]requently the East End was characterized as ‘darkest England,’ and thus
the imperialist discourse underwriting its East End-Central Africa blend and his rhetorical positioning in relation to his readers. He portrays Walter Besant as an “intrepid” figure who “invaded the great East End of London and drew upon its unknown wealth of varied material to people [his] . . . novel” (MacArthur, Preface 9). MacArthur’s description evokes a bold imperialist enterprise that yielded plentiful spoils. His observation that, until Besant’s invasion, “the West End knew little of its contiguous neighbor in the East” (9, my emphasis), implies his and his American readers’ distance from London and its internal East-West relations. The third-person possessive “its,” however, soon gives way to the first-person plural possessive “our,” as MacArthur positions himself and his American readers among West Londoners and begins his East End-Central Africa blend by lamenting the present state of “our knowledge of the existing conditions of human life in that community [the East End]” (9, my emphasis). Given that the Preface goes on to offer biographical details about Morrison and bibliographical details about Tales of Mean Streets that would have been necessary only for first-time American readers, and that he only uses “our” once more, MacArthur’s decision to position himself and his readers among West Londoners in the East End-Central Africa blend is a deliberate rhetorical strategy: it indicted everyone, not just West Londoners, for ignorance and complicity in the imperialist discourse about the urban poor.²⁰

much of the ‘explorative’ writing of the period tended to represent the indigent sectors of the working class as savages, deviants, and grotesques, not unlike those reportedly found in ‘darkest Africa’”; “the slums were simply alien zones, located within the heart of the nation and empire” (51). Swafford’s central argument about Morrison’s slum fiction, in particular A Child of the Jago, is that it represses “the historical relationship of class determination and class struggle,” eliding “gross inequities of material wealth and access” and portraying the slum dwellers as absolutely Other; it exposes through silence the fact that the slums are not self-determined (59).

²⁰ MacArthur’s broad indictment is further indicated when he extends the relevance of Morrison’s inquiry to “the seamy side of our great cities” (13, my emphasis).
Far from participating unconsciously in this imperialist discourse, MacArthur’s East End-Central Africa blend in fact uses the discourse to prompt new ways of reflecting on it and on how it conceptualizes East-West relations in general:

Mr. Besant may be fairly considered as the pioneer of those who have since descended to the great unchartered region of East London, about which, so far as our knowledge of the existing conditions of human life in that community are concerned, we remained until, as it were yesterday, almost as ignorant as of the undiscovered territories in Central Africa. Contemporaneous with Mr. Besant’s ‘discovery’ of East London began the eastward march of the Salvation Army, which has since honeycombed this quarter of the metropolis with its militant camps. Gradually the barriers were thrown down, and the East has become accessible to literature and to civilization as it never had been to the various Charity and Church missionary organizations. (10) The East End-Central Africa blend’s triggers for a new way of thinking about the discourse in which it participates are its two central ambiguities: about what it means for a place to “become accessible to literature and to civilization”; and about the relation between “Charity and Church missionary organizations,” on the one hand, and making a place “accessible to literature and to civilization,” on the other. Does making a place “accessible to literature and to civilization” mean bringing to its inhabitants the knowledge, skills, or sensibilities that will enable them to cultivate literary pursuits and other facets of civilization they did not already possess—or did not possess in ways recognizable to and valued by their colonizers? Or does making a place “accessible to
literature and to civilization” mean gaining sufficient knowledge of the place and its inhabitants to write about them and make their knowledge, skills, or sensibilities available to one’s own civilization? The former sense of the phrase obviously participates in the “routines” of “protection and patronage,” “highjacking and interception”—to use Genette’s terms for the allographic preface-text relation—that an essentialized version of postcolonial theory finds in the East-West relation; but the latter sense of the phrase is not necessarily uninvolved in these “routines.” After all, Walter Besant’s “charming novel, ‘All Sorts and Conditions of Men [1882]’” (MacArthur, Preface 9), resulted from his efforts to make the East End “accessible to literature,” but MacArthur depicts these efforts in the imperialist terms already discussed. Moreover, Morrison’s representation of the East End is so unlike Besant’s depiction of a populace whose chief need is an injection of culture (a People’s Palace) that we cannot help but notice the contingency of any version of a place—given its author’s sensibilities, agenda, chosen generic conventions, and sense of the literary market—made “accessible to literature.”

As for the relation between charitable and spiritual outreach, on the one hand, and making a place “accessible to literature and to civilization,” on the other: MacArthur’s blend initially states that Besant’s “‘discovery’” of the East End was “[c]ontemporaneous” with the Salvation Army’s “eastward march,” but then goes on to imply that “the East” only became “accessible to literature and to civilization” following the “throw[ing] down” of “barriers,” a somewhat martial feat accomplished by the Salvation Army and its “militant camps.”

21 If the blend is suggesting that charitable and spiritual outreach are the necessary precursors of making a place “accessible to literature

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21 The Salvation Army was, in fact, modelled on the military, with its own flag, music, uniforms, and organizational structure, headed by General William Booth.
“barriers” with the statement that the East End “has become accessible to literature and to civilization as it never had been to the various Charity and Church missionary organizations,” given that the Salvation Army is a Charity and Church missionary organization. Is MacArthur contrasting the Salvation Army with other “Charity and Church missionary organizations” or is he making a point about charitable and spiritual outreach in general? The East End-Central Africa blend, with its ambiguities about what it means for a region “to become accessible to literature and to civilization” and about what the relation is between charitable and spiritual outreach, on the one hand, and making a place “accessible to literature and to civilization,” on the other, erects conceptual barriers to our understanding, while also extending invitations to us to acknowledge the conceptual barriers that, along with physical barriers, surround “the East” (the East End or Central Africa)—barriers that have been firmly built and maintained from the outside, the products of an “ignorance” which, MacArthur implies, we all share. In this way, MacArthur’s East End-Central Africa blend, inviting awareness of and efforts to demolish conceptual barriers, triggers conceptual expansion. The blend thus does not reflect ruling discourses about the colonies and the urban poor, but reflects

22 MacArthur subsequently refers to Arthur Waugh’s recommendation that Americans read Morrison’s collection because they “will learn from its pages more of the degradation and misery of a certain side of London life than they could in many weeks of philanthropic ‘slumming’” (13, my emphasis). Charitable and spiritual outreach can have valuable humanitarian consequences, but the phrase “philanthropic ‘slumming’” suggests that attitudes of superiority and condescension may underlie this outreach. Indeed, in A Child of the Jago, Morrison uses a ceremony for the opening of a charitable institute’s new wing to “satiriz[e] those West End eminences, including a Bishop, who come to witness the results of their own charity and congratulate themselves on the effects of ‘Pansophic Elevation’ among the degraded classes” (Brome 9). Vincent Brome cogently articulates Morrison’s attitude towards “the smugness and humbug” underlying “Philanthropy and its half-sister charity” in the East End (Brome 11).
on these discourses, on the “protection and patronage,” “highjacking and interception” that characterize them and on the conceptual “barriers” they erect between East and West. In doing so, MacArthur’s blend also invites the cognitive mobility necessary for reading Morrison’s short story collection, an experience involving a violation of the schemata and scripts turn-of-the-century readers were accustomed to deploying when reading slum fiction.

While the East End-Central Africa blend in MacArthur’s Preface deploys an existing discourse in order to examine it from within, Morrison’s collection invites readers to deploy a new set of schemata and scripts both to examine them from within and to interrogate their pre-existing schemata and scripts for slum fiction and, concomitantly, for East-West, self-other relations. Morrison’s tales raise and frustrate his turn-of-the-century readers’ expectations for romanticized, sentimental representations of the urban poor. Each story in the collection mounts an intensifying cognitive assault on readers’ pre-existing schemata and scripts (derived partly from their world knowledge but chiefly, in this case, from their knowledge of literary genre and period conventions), exposing them to the “mean” tales’ very different set of schemata and scripts. The collection’s first story, “Lizerunt,” begins with a chapter entitled “Lizer’s Wooing” and a blazon-like description of young Lizerunt’s “beauty”: “her cheeks were very red, her

23 Conceptual expansion (breaking down conceptual barriers between East and West) is the co-requisite, and perhaps even the prerequisite, of literal journeys or tangible outreach projects. Morrison’s story “Without Visible Means,” which portrays the struggles of men forced to leave London because of interminable strikes, suggests the importance of understanding alongside or before intervention: “East London was very noisy and largely hungry; and the rest of the world looked on with intense interest, making earnest suggestions, and comprehending nothing” (57).

24 Derived from our real-world experience and our knowledge of literary conventions, schemata (knowledge representations of relatively static objects and relations) and scripts (knowledge representations of dynamic processes) generate expectations about the structure of domains of experience and the unfolding of sequences of events, respectively (“Schemata”). They supply defaults that enable narrative comprehension by prompting readers to fill gaps in the text.
teeth were very large and white, her nose was small and snub, and her fringe was long and shiny; while her face, new-washed, was susceptible of a high polish” (Morrison 29).

The introduction of Billy Chope immediately after a reference to the belatedness of Lizerunt’s first romantic experience triggers schemata and scripts for a romantic courtship, with attendant expectations for the unfolding of the plot and the characterization of its two protagonists. These prompts to deploy schemata and scripts for a romantic courtship have been part of our reading heritage for hundreds of years, but would have been particularly common in a decade flooded with sentimental literature about the urban poor.

Increasingly, though, we are confronted with textual details that violate our expectations. The first is Billy’s courtship techniques, which, although Lizerunt is reported to be “greatly pleased” by them—indeed, she views the evening as one of “great things”—, are jarring: “taking the nearer hand from his pocket, [Billy] caught and twisted her arm, bumping her against the wall” (30). Shortly thereafter, we learn that Billy resolves “to get all he could from . . . [his mother] by blandishing and bullying” (31). References like this one are both violent in their content and violent in the means by which they clash with the schemata and scripts we have begun to deploy in reading this story, all the more so because they seem to be normalized by the heterodiegetic narrator’s account. In other words, these references have such a powerful effect precisely because they are made so nonchalantly, by a narrator who, far from being fazed by the events he recounts, seems to integrate them readily into his worldview. He praises Whit Monday’s fair on Wanstead Flats, for example, in the following manner: “you may be drunk and disorderly [there] without being locked up,—for the stations won’t hold everybody,—and
when all else has palled, you may set fire to the turf” (31). Violence in the collection’s first story reaches unprecedented levels, inviting us not only to establish new schemata and scripts for this narrative world, but also to examine schemata and scripts for sentimental slum fiction, perhaps for the first time. By “flouting . . . Victorian complacency . . . [and] plowing up . . . sour soils” (Mencken x), Morrison’s “mean” tales of “mean streets” expose the “protection and patronage,” “highjacking and interception” inherent in idealized, romanticized, sentimental, and one-dimensional view of the urban poor.

While we gradually learn the topography not only of the “mean streets” but also of the “mean” tales, we learn to expect unrelieved misery, violence, and futility. In “Without Visible Means,” the collection’s second tale, gravely ill Joey Clayton is forced to leave London because of interminable strikes, but one of his traveling mates steals his possessions along the way; another traveling mate, Dave Burge, supports Joey in a manner we sense, according to our new expectations for the collection’s plots and characterization, may be abnormally and suspiciously altruistic, and we wait expectantly for Dave to commit some outrage against his defenceless companion. We are not wrong: by the end of the story, Dave leaves Joey asleep in a tavern, takes Joey’s remaining money and what is left of a two-penny loaf, and leaves a note on the table—“dr. sir. for god sake take him to the work House” (69). If the beginning of “Lizerunt” activates the schemata and scripts of a romantic courtship, with concomitant expectations about Lizerunt and Billy Chope as protagonists and about how their relationship will unfold, by “Without Visible Means” we begin to recognize the “mean”-tale genre’s different schemata and scripts: characters are either duplicitous, avaricious, and self-serving, or
victimized, helpless, and ignorant; plots involve the former’s schemes against the latter and the latter’s unrelieved misery.

But Morrison’s stories, despite their emphasis on violence in the East End, are not in tune with the lurid sensationalism characteristic of the era’s other chief mode for representing the urban poor. Because many of Morrison’s stories make misreading a central element in their plots, they thematize the need for schema and script replacement. In “Behind the Shade,” for example, the community is spiteful towards the Perkins mother and daughter, who are considered “well-to-do” because they occupy a single-family dwelling, run a school out of their backroom, offer piano lessons, and have “a well-dusted shade of fruit in the front window” (98). The neighbours, misreading the fact that the Perkineses cease to trade in the neighborhood as a sign of miserliness, and misreading Miss Perkins’s package of cheap shirts cut out for stitching as the deliberate appropriation of work belonging to those who really need it, do not notice the household gradually being decimated of its possessions at night. When the landlord finally enters the neglected house, he finds the two women dead “from syncope, the result of inanition” (105). The neighbours fall into the trap we fall into when we begin reading Morrison’s collection: filling gaps with schemata and scripts that clash with the narrative world’s reality.

Significantly, though, the schemata and scripts on which the neighbours over-rely and which the story suggests need to be replaced, are the same ones we initially develop in response to the collection’s “mean” narrative world, when we acknowledge that this world does not align with sentimental schemata and scripts and then deploy schemata and scripts associated to some degree with lurid sensationalism, the other dominant mode for
representing the East End. By thematizing misreading caused by over-reliance on “mean” schemata and scripts, “Behind the Shade” invites us to reevaluate the schemata and scripts we have been using, since the collection’s first story, to become suspicious of motives and anticipate deception and avarice in the narrative world. Narrative irony also acts as a check on our over-reliance on or normalization of these “mean” schemata and scripts. The gaps between the extremity of the events the narrator relates and the offhand manner of his representation, on the one hand, and between the offhand manner of the narrator’s representation and Morrison’s well-known commitment to humanitarianism, on the other hand, are the products of narrative irony. Vincent Brome detects narrative irony in Morrison’s *A Child of the Jago*, and his assessment is certainly applicable to *Tales of Mean Streets*: in *A Child of the Jago*, the author’s “acid sarcasm” releases the “bursts of emotion” he tries to exclude from his detached account of urban poverty (11).

One value of the “mean” schemata and scripts to which Morrison’s collection exposes us is that they highlight the one-dimensional and appropriative nature of sentimental schemata and scripts for literary representations of the urban poor. But Morrison’s collection also draws us into “mean” schemata and scripts in order to examine them from within and acknowledge that they, too, participate in “routines” of “protection and patronage,” “highjacking and interception.” Constructing the urban poor as totally alien in their brutal lifestyles and “mean” ethics, the “mean” schemata and scripts are also one-dimensional and appropriative. Morrison’s collection thus invites us to see similarity and difference both in the dynamics of schema and script deployment and replacement and in East-West, self-other relations. Tzvetan Todorov’s argument about genres, that transgressions initiate new generic norms, inviting further transgressions, underscores
one of the chief values of genres: that they enable us to identify violations or innovations (14-15). But focusing exclusively on transgressions in either generic norms or schema and script deployment and replacement can occlude the ways in which the superceding generic norm, schema, or script is similar to the superceded generic norm, schema, or script. In Morrison’s collection, these similarities are meaningful in ideological terms, in the way that, despite their differences, the superceded sentimental and the superceding “mean” schemata and scripts both construct East-West, self-other relations in problematic ways. The former are based on indiscriminate merging, similarity-seeing that absorbs the Eastern other into the Western reader’s idealized constructions of human existence; the latter on absolute distancing, difference-seeing that, by rendering the Eastern other entirely foreign in its unfathomable brutality, occludes and projects the Western self’s brutality. Acknowledging similarity and difference in self-other, East-West relations and in the relation between superceded and superceding schemata and scripts affords us the cognitive mobility necessary for continual adaptations of the way we read, relate to fictional or real-world others, and position ourselves in the world.

MacArthur’s peritextual-level East End-Central Africa blend participates in an imperialist discourse in an ambivalent way that invites us to interrogate the discourse underwriting that blend. MacArthur’s blend thereby prepares us for a similar reading experience in the collection: responding to invitations to deploy and replace our schemata and scripts for slum fiction. Morrison’s collection, which insists that we recognize the similarities as well as the differences between our new and our old schemata and scripts for slum fiction, returns us to the Preface with the understanding that whatever discourse we adopt to replace the East End-Central Africa blend should accommodate both
similarity and difference in its conception of the East-West, self-other relation. Otherwise, like the East End-Central Africa blend and the sentimental and “mean” schemata and scripts for slum fiction, it will be ideologically appropriative and colonizing. The reciprocity and mutual permeability inherent in the MacArthur-Morrison preface-text pairing ultimately depend on the existence of similarities and differences between preface and text. There are sufficient similarities that the preface prepares the reader for the text (particularly through eliciting relevant reading strategies) and that there is a basis for thematic, ideological, or formal dialogue; and sufficient differences that there is a basis for bidirectional reconceptualization in that thematic, ideological, or formal dialogue.

De-essentializing and Reconceptualizing Allographic Preface-Text and East-West Relations

Totalizing, essentializing, and universalizing claims about the allographic preface-text relation, like Genette’s claim about that relation’s “protection and patronage,” “highjacking and interception” or Monika Fludernik’s claim that paratexts in general are the formal instantiation of alterity in narrative (“Identity/Alterity” 266), are not true of all allographic preface-text pairings. This chapter’s three case studies demonstrate, in similar and different ways, the reciprocity and mutual permeability of their allographic preface-text relations in thematic, ideological, and formal terms. While these case studies prove that “protection and patronage,” “highjacking and interception” are not characteristic of all allographic preface-text pairings, they do not form the basis of a new totalizing, essentializing, and universalizing claim about the allographic preface-text relation’s
reciprocity and mutual permeability. Rather, these case studies underscore the importance of paying attention to peritextual-level blends in allographic prefaces. In the Read-Chiang pairing, Brooks-Read-Chiang grouping, and MacArthur-Morrison pairing, allographic peritextual-level blends for East-West relations invite the cognitive mobility necessary to enable continual reconceptualizations of the discourses framing East-West, self-other relations and of the schemata and scripts supporting our narrative comprehension of texts thematizing those relations. Expectations about the allographic preface as a genre, or schemata and scripts about the allographic preface’s elements and the way it unfolds, can hinder as well as help the reading experience. As these three case studies demonstrate, allographic peritextual-level blends, by inviting the cognitive mobility necessary for reconceptualizing East-West, self-other relations and schemata and scripts pertaining to narratives thematizing those relations, also establish allographic preface-text relations that are reciprocal and mutually permeable. These allographic peritextual-level blends thus indirectly signal the extent to which generic expectations or schemata and scripts pertaining to the allographic preface need to be reconceptualized. As blends, they invite the cognitive mobility and movement between similarity-seeing and difference-seeing that enable this reconceptualization.
ENVOI: METATEXTUAL-LEVEL BLENDS AND A NEW BLEND OF COGNITIVE THEORY AND NARRATOLOGY

Blend-based reciprocity and mutual permeability in modernist (authorial and allographic) preface-text relations underscore both the central potentiality and the underlying paradox in this thesis’s defining approach. The fundamental hypotheses of distinct blends and distinct textual levels are problematized by the fact that so many of the blends considered in this thesis thematize fuzzy or absent boundaries and operate across textual levels that the thesis’s typological set-up implies are distinct. In effect, however, the critical analysis I pursue models a capacious view of the narrative text as a textual system with interacting and borderless microtextual, macrotextual, peritextual, and, as I will now demonstrate, metatextual levels; blends on these interacting and borderless levels are often also interacting and borderless, and my thesis discusses them in those terms. My thesis thus signals the central potentiality and the underlying paradox in much contemporary (especially classical narratology-influenced) narrative theory: its conceptually useful typological structures at times threaten to overshadow its claims to be theorizing interacting and borderless narrative phenomena. Genette’s theory of paratexts is highly self-reflexive, acknowledging that the borders between the textual entities it theorizes, like peritext and epitext, or paratext and metatext, are often fuzzy or even absent. Genette observes, for example, that “the critical and theoretical dimension of the allographic preface clearly draws it toward the border that separates (or rather, toward the absence of a border that does not sharply separate) paratext from metatext and, more
concretely, preface from critical essay” (270). In this envoi, which functions more as my thesis’s self-reflection than its summary, I cross the absent paratext-metatext border to reflect on modernist metatexts and on the differences between their blend-based critical practices and the self-reflexive typological framing that my thesis shares with Genette’s theory of paratexts.

In declaring that “[i]t arrived, in truth, the novel, late at self-consciousness” (“Future of the Novel” 48), Henry James heralded modernism as the birthplace of interest in narrative technique, but without a discourse upon which to build, modernists faced the challenge of devising a narrative poetics.1 Attention to how modernists articulated narrative theory instead of or in addition to what they were asserting reveals a proliferation of blends in modernist criticism. A survey of these blends finds great diversity in the conceptual domains used to theorize narrative form (often quintessentially “modernist” domains like new technologies, new scientific concepts, or everyday phenomena) and the ways in which the blends were used (extended development or passing mention, alone or in a series, to discuss a specific novel or a narrative technique, and to theorize modernist narrative technique either independently or through comparisons with Victorian narrative technique). Modernist critics’ tendency to use blends in writing about narrative technique can be attributed to a constellation of factors: the absence of an established critical vocabulary for narrative theory;2 a new conception

1 James is laudatory about narrative experimentation in France, but because my thesis focuses on English-language narratives, I concentrate here on the emergence of Anglo-American narrative poetics (undoubtedly influenced by earlier French literature and criticism) and locate this emergence in modernism.
2 Just as the smashing and crashing of Victorian stability, order, and assumptions promised modernists both a threatening void and a horizon of limitless possibilities, so the “singular poverty” of the era’s “critical vocabulary” constituted an intimidating and inspiring challenge for critics attempting to formulate a poetics of narrative (Matz 7; Lubbock 21). Though central to his seminal work The Craft of Fiction (1921), terms like “form,” Lubbock lamented, “bear no defined, delimited meanings; they have not been rounded and hardened by passing constantly from one critic’s hand to another’s” (21). The absence of an established
of novelistic mimesis as inherently relational; circulating ideas about the essay as a form (a form naturally suited to the incorporation of blends); and narrative subjects and styles modelling the figuratively thinking mind. In the discussion that follows, I have two aims: first, to take a modernist metatextual-level blend and show both how it was developed to perform narrative criticism and how it can be used today, as a critical tool to conceptualize blend-based reciprocal and mutually permeable relations among textual levels; and second, to consider the rhetorical and cognitive values and limitations of modernist criticism’s widespread use of blends.

critical vocabulary surely accounts in part for modernist critics’ tendency to use conceptual blends in their writings. As Keith Holyoak and Paul Thagard argue about “analogic” thinking, and as I am indeed arguing throughout this thesis, “[c]onfronted with unfamiliar or surprising situations that do not readily fit into known patterns . . . [a] good way to proceed is to try to understand the novel challenge in terms of what is already known, even if making the connection requires a mental leap” (1-2). In other words, it may be cognitively easier to say what something unfamiliar or hitherto undescribed is like than to say what it is.

Dorothy Hale’s cogent account of modernists’ changing ideas about individual identity and its representation in narrative—that “individual identity is radically constituted by its interpersonal relations and that this relational subjectivity can be objectified in representational forms” (18)—offers a compelling reason for the proliferation of blends in modernist criticism. The relationality of identity and of the novel’s representation of social life may require relational modes of thinking to be theorized: in other words, formal relationality in the novel may require conceptual relationality in narrative criticism and theory. There is thus something about the novel, conceptualized in the modernist period as having “a generic disposition to embody social relatedness” (Hale 14), that lends itself to theorization via conceptual blends.

Elena Gualtieri’s account of Lukács’s and Adorno’s intersecting ideas about the essay provides evidence for thinking about the essay as an essentially modernist genre, one whose form may be naturally suited to the incorporation of conceptual blends. Gualtieri notes that, in his introductory chapter to Soul and Form (1911), “Lukács insisted that the essence of the essay lies precisely in its ability to bring together modes of being and of thinking that are commonly thought of as being in opposition to each other” (Gualtieri 4). Conceptual blending is a natural vehicle for bringing together different, sometimes oppositional modes of thinking, themselves rooted in and capable of influencing modes of being. Blends in modernist criticism may also be a vehicle for the kind of non-identity thinking Adorno celebrates as being characteristic of the essay. Non-identity thinking “breaks up the appearance of absolute equivalence between, on the one hand, different objects and, on the other, objects and concepts”; for Adorno, Gualtieri argues, citing Gillian Rose’s seminal work, the essay is “the form that remains most faithful to non-identity thinking as it refuses to resolve thought into either a logical argument or a story-line,” instead following a digressive logic (Gualtieri 7, 8). The blend explosion in modernist critical essays can thus be conceptualized by means of both Lukács’s and Adorno’s theories (early-modernist and late-modernist, respectively) of the essay as a form uniquely suited to incorporating oppositional modes of thinking and privileging difference and similarity over opposition and sameness.
The Hourglass Metatextual-level Blend

In his chapter on pattern and rhythm in Aspects of the Novel (1927), E. M. Forster devises an hourglass blend to read the overall pattern of Henry James’s The Ambassadors (1903); he explains that the hourglass highlights the rigidity of the text’s form and the grounds of our aesthetic response to texts “of the rigid type,” in which “[e]verything is planned, everything fits,” with the two central characters converging, crossing, and receding “with mathematical precision” (137, 135). Attention to Forster’s critical manoeuvres, however, reveals that the blend he fashions as a critical tool and the reading he produces with it are by no means rigid. In James’s novel, Strether and Chad certainly “change places,” thereby enacting the hourglass, with Paris gleaming at its centre (Forster 137). But Forster actually charts more turns than just the one in which Strether and Chad change places: Strether’s first turn is one that Forster does not mention explicitly, although he does refer to Strether doubting his mission when Strether finds Chad amidst gracious friends, with no sign of a woman in the case. Then a turn ensues: there is a woman in the case, but she is noble, refined, and sympathetic, so Strether turns to fight not against Paris but for it, and a new set of ambassadors arrives from America. Then another turn ensues: Strether catches sight of something new—that Chad’s “fineness” is “played out” and that he is treating Paris as “a place for a spree” that will ultimately come to an end (Forster 140-41). Thus, even as Forster declares that Strether and Chad have changed places, he in fact shows us that Strether moves through a series of turns—turns that are plot twists, perspectival reversals, and ethical and moral reorientations in relation to his mission, the other characters, and himself.
While Forster’s definition of pattern implies that it is something seen in retrospect, giving us a unified shape for the aesthetic pleasure we have felt in reading, he uses the hourglass to talk about a series of twists and turns, which are experienced in the reading process, rather than simply recognized when that process has come to its conclusion. The gap between how Forster defines the hourglass pattern and how it actually plays out in his reading of *The Ambassadors* may well be a consequence of his valorization of rhythm as a unifying force, one that he uses in his own novel, *A Passage to India* (1924). Just as the hourglass is an image of reversals and Forster’s reading of *The Ambassadors* acknowledges a series of reversals, so Forster’s criticism engages in a series of turns that capture his ambivalence about the beauty and heavy price of novels constructed according to patterns—and his ambivalence about using terms like “pattern,” “rhythm,” “hourglass,” and “grand chain” when they are so “vague” and when critics use terms like “curves” because they “do not know what they want to say” (134, 136). The hourglass effectively becomes a tool for reading not only James’s novel, but also Forster’s critical manoeuvres and ambivalence about his own critical practice, especially his aesthetic values and terminology.

The hourglass blend is also a particularly useful critical tool for conceptualizing the blend-based reciprocal and mutually permeable relations in chapter three’s pairing of Joseph Conrad’s *The Nigger of the ‘Narcissus’* and its Preface. As an image of process and fluidity, via the movement of sand through its bulbs, and of inversions, via the action of flipping it to measure a new period of time, the hourglass is a helpful narratological tool for conceptualizing inversions in the Preface’s blend-based, labourer-observer conceptual model and in the novel’s perspectival and temporal shifts. The hourglass’s
nautical resonances are part of its narratological value as a critical tool in this case: chapter three underscores inversion-based reading’s relation to the *Narcissus*’s motion. The hourglass is thus a metatextual-level blend for conceptualizing both inversion-based reading and the back-and-forth movement between preface and text characteristic of reciprocal and mutually permeable modernist preface-text relations in this thesis’s case studies.

**Rhetorical and Cognitive Values and Limitations of Metatextual-Level Blends**

Many modernist critics were aware—often with consequently ambivalent feelings—of their tendency to use blends to talk about narrative form. In “The Creator as Critic” (1931), Forster openly proclaims the value of using blends in criticism, declaring that when “we’re treating literature, . . . it is better to keep to metaphors, and to analogies with natural states—they will lead us closer to our answer” (65). In the same series of lectures, Forster subsequently states that he will “use H[enry] J[ames]’s fondness for metaphors and similes in criticism,” which Coleridge shares (83). But now he is less confident about the rhetorical value and cognitive effects of blending in criticism, claiming that the “fondness for metaphors and similes in criticism” “is the sediment deposited by creative work, and perhaps it is a defect, because it distracts the reader away from the subject matter” (83). Even here, however, in casting doubt on blending’s place or usefulness in criticism, Forster uses a blend—the “fondness for metaphors and similes in criticism” “is the sediment deposited by creative work”—to articulate those doubts.

Virginia Woolf was also aware of her tendency to use blends in talking about narrative form, but her blends for the form of Jane Austen’s *Pride and Prejudice* reflect a
particularly effective use of blending in modernist criticism. In “Phases of Fiction” (1929), Woolf suggests that thinking and speaking about a novel’s form are inherently relational acts: when we try to describe a novel’s form, “the mind . . . has recourse to images,” making “a likeness of the thing, and, by giving it another shape, cherish[es] the illusion that it is explaining it, whereas it is, in fact, only looking at it afresh” (77). This act of criticism entails a process of shifting among different blends, using images to see “the same thing under a different guise”: *Pride and Prejudice*, for example, “is like a shell, a gem, a crystal” (77). Assessing the novel’s form involves comparing *Pride and Prejudice* “to something concrete . . . to express the sense we have in other novels imperfectly, here with distinctness, of a quality which is not in the story but above it, not in the things themselves but in their arrangement”: “when the book is finished, we seem to see (it is strange how visual the impression is) . . . it shaped and symmetrical with dome and column complete” (77, 101). When blends are used to conceptualize modernist narrative form and techniques, their central rhetorical value is their ability to morph into new blends, as we see in Woolf’s transition from conceptualizing Austen’s novel as a shell to conceptualizing it as a gem, a crystal, and a shaped and symmetrical edifice with domes and columns. When metatextual-level blends morph into new blends, sometimes building on, reblending, or deblending previous blends, they invite the reader to see the same thing in different ways; when the conceptual domains used in these strings of blends are taken from very different spheres of human experience, the reading experience involves a high level of cognitive mobility.\(^5\)

\(^5\) Blending is thus a central rhetorical strategy underpinning modernists’ tendency not to produce definitive and totalizing theories of narrative. Deborah Parsons notes, of modernist writers, that “ultimately they question more than they answer, no fixed paradigm or critical concept of the ‘modernist novel’ emerging directly from their work. Rather than espousing any single and homogeneous theory of the novel, Joyce,
If, however, a single blend is used as the definitive conceptualization of a particular narrative form or technique, it can become rigid, totalizing, and petrified beyond usefulness, in effect losing its chief rhetorical value of inviting cognitive mobility (shifting among conceptual domains and phases of similarity-seeing and difference-seeing to invite new connections among conceptual domains and new ways of connecting conceptual domains). Even worse, a single blend can be used indiscriminately, with reference to so many different narrative techniques that it flattens out important differences among the narrative techniques it is being used to conceptualize, thereby erasing the specific basis of its original development and occluding the uniqueness of its previous instantiations and uses. This is, perhaps, the fate of the stream-of-consciousness blend, which has had a pernicious effect on narrative criticism because of overuse.

Keith Holyoak and Paul Thagard’s work on analogy, although it predates the full ascendance of conceptual blending theory, is nonetheless useful in helping us to understand some of the strengths and pitfalls of blending in modernist criticism. Noting that “[s]ome of the mental leaps accomplished by analogy have ended in creative triumphs,” but “others have ended in dismal failures,” Oakley and Thagard suggest that “[a]nalogy must be recognized as a source of plausible conjectures, not irrefutable conclusions” (7). Because “analogy carries with it the potential for traps as well as triumphs,” we must remember that “[e]ven a fruitful analogy, like that between water and sound waves, is likely to involve important differences between the domains that need to be taken into account” (Holyoak and Thagard 12). The chief pitfalls identified here are totalizing and universalizing “irrefutable conclusions” and sameness-seeing. Oakley and Woolf and Richardson were committed to a constant exploration and renegotiation of modern fiction’s limits and possibilities” (15).
Thagard recommend, as ways of mitigating against these pitfalls, “point[ing] out explicitly . . . the places where the analogy breaks down, . . . [or] us[ing] multiple analogs,” strategies used frequently in blend-filled modernist criticism (208).

Constructing a blend may help to illuminate the potential rhetorical and cognitive values and limitations of blending in modernist criticism: we can think of a metatextual-level blend as a disposable camera, a lens through which to conceptualize a modernist narrative form or technique, valid only for a limited number of uses, with the built-in assumption that another camera will be needed thereafter for further photographic (read “conceptualizing”) attempts. Blends used in this fashion promote a kind of thinking that is always in search of new ways of conceptualizing a given form or technique, always shifting views, angles, or perspectives on it—and consequently inviting cognitive mobility as a central facet of reader response. Lest this disposable-camera blend become a rigid or totalizing conceptualization of modernist metatextual-level blends, I will add that sometimes we need not just a new camera but an entirely different kind of equipment by means of which we might conceptualize a particular narrative form or technique.

**Contemporary Narrative Theory: The Demise of the Metatextual-level Blend**

Narrative criticism and theory have changed a great deal since the early twentieth century, but one of the least acknowledged facets of this change is the relative demise of explicit blends as critical or theoretical tools. (I use the adjective “explicit” because blending pervades so much of our cognition and resulting spoken or written texts that, of course, blending is still a feature of current narrative criticism and theory; but explicit metatextual-level blends, the phenomena we might, without the benefit of blending
theory, call analogies and metaphors, are now largely absent.) Some of the reasons I have proposed for the modernist metatextual-level blend explosion—particularly widespread interdisciplinary dialogues about fundamentally relational cognition, the rapid changes of modernity, ideas about relational identity, and interest in writing about the mind—are as much features of our era as they were features of the turn of the twentieth century.

Others—like theories about the essay as a genre and the absence of a narratological vocabulary—are distinctive characteristics of modernism. Unique to modernism, too, is the fact that modernist critics were typically literary writers, not professional critics, so their modes of writing criticism were naturally akin to their modes of writing novels and prefaces. As this thesis has demonstrated, blending pervades modernist narratives, prefaces, and criticism—all included in a capacious view of the modernist narrative text—and is a central modernist rhetorical strategy for inviting cognitive mobility in reader response. While we have the terminology, blending theory, to talk about what literary modernists were doing, we no longer use blends explicitly in our own writing about modernist literature—even though blend-based criticism might be ideally suited to discussing and eliciting the mode of reader response this literature invites. In lieu of explicit blends, we have, particularly in narrative theory influenced by classical narratology, adopted a more scientific, often typological cast.

While adopting this kind of typological cast, my thesis also aims for self-reflexivity in doing so: in much the same way that Genette acknowledges the fuzzy or even absent borders that separate (or do not separate) the textual entities he theorizes, I acknowledge and so hope to deflect the potential for my typological cast to overshadow my capacious view of the narrative text as a textual system with interacting and
borderless microtextual, macrotextual, peritextual, and metatextual levels and my argument that blends on these interacting and borderless levels are often also interacting and borderless. Considering modernist novels alongside modernist prefaces and criticism, I thus use conceptual blending theory’s vocabulary and tools while acknowledging the roots of my own enterprise in a very different mode of critical practice. In doing so, and in considering modernist narrative texts in the context of widespread modernist interdisciplinary dialogues about fundamentally relational cognition, I make a historically informed contribution to cognitive narratology.

Having demonstrated that conceptual blends on interacting and borderless textual levels in modernist narratives invite a high level of cognitive mobility, I entertain the possibility that modernist narrative texts, by modelling (as in shaping) our minds, might change our brains. In his recent work on neuroplasticity, *The Brain That Changes Itself* (2007), Norman Doidge argues that our thoughts can change the structure and functions of our brains: might the cognitive mobility invited by modernist narrative texts have the same effect? Even if this connection is optative or unverifiable, it is neither optative nor unverifiable to herald modernist narrative texts as a corpus that can direct us towards a new blend of cognitive theory and narratology. Rhetorically nuanced and historically informed, this new way of doing cognitive narratology is a manifestation not of “what science offers the humanities” (as in the title of Edward Slingerland’s recent book) but of what the humanities offer science—and, ultimately, what science and the humanities offer each other.
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